

Read Walker Of The Worlds

Chapter 11 - Selling The Pelts And The Horn

Northern Town was one of the four satellite towns of Wu Lim city. Each town was named according to the cardinal direction they were in, with respect to Wu Lim city. The different towns also had their different characteristics.

The Northern town had spirit apple orchards, which were the chief export of Wu Lim city and reaped large profits for the mayor each year.

Eastern town had grain fields and was the major source of grain for the other three towns and Wu Lim city. Grains such as wheat, rice, and some millets were grown there. It also had the largest population of all the four towns, with most of its townsmen being farmers.

The Western town was originally a checkpoint for the raw materials brought by merchants and traders from the different counties, but later had become a complete trade center; with most of the townsmen catering to the needs of the merchants that came to do business.

The Shuang Kingdom had an army base that was located in the Southern town. It was a veiled attempt to keep the Mayor of Wu Lim city in check and not let his influence get too strong, though officially the reason was to provide support to the Northern frontier in case of an invasion. The army base took up over sixty percent of the area of the southern town. Because of the army base, there were many blacksmiths, taverns, inns, and courtesans in the Southern town, which all provided their services and entertainment to the soldiers.

The first thing Lin Mu noticed upon entering the town was the unusually high amount of guards. Looking closer at the guards, one could see that they were not just from the town's guard but also from the city guard.

'Why are there guards from Wu Lim city here? What could have made them come here?'

Lin Mu followed the road while checking out the various sights of the town. He was looking for a shop that would buy his pelts and the horn. He could not go to the shops he used to go before, as the shopkeepers would definitely decline buying them after the incident.

He had to look for a shop he had not been to before. Thinking over it more, he instead decided to go to the tannery; and if they did not buy the pelts, then he would go search for other shops. Switching his path, he made his way to the tannery. The pungent smell of rotten flesh and carrion could be felt from far, and as one got closer you could also smell the odor of various chemicals mixed with it.

Lin Mu covered his mouth and nose with his hand to prevent the vile stench of the tannery from making him vomit. Eventually, he reached the entrance of the tannery where hunters and trades could be seen standing. He saw a man writing down something in a register after talking to those hunters and traders.

Lin Mu approached the clerk,

"I would like to sell some pelts."

The clerk who was busy writing in the register, turned his eyes up and looked at Lin Mu who had just spoken.

"How many?"

"Two pelts."

The clerk raised his brows in question,

"Just two? What kind of pelts are you looking to sell?"

"One pelt of the Black horned rabbit and one of the Thorn tailed rat."

The clerk's face had a look of annoyance after hearing what Lin Mu had come to sell.

With an annoyed tone, he spoke,

"Make trouble somewhere else boy, do not bother me. What use are the pelts that you are selling? We only buy pelts from bigger beasts, not one's such as that you are trying to sell."

Some of the hunters who had heard the conversation started laughing.

"Hahaha, look what people are calling pelts these days."

"Those pelts are useless, boy. Come back when you have the pelt of a bigger beast."

"Look at the boy, with how scrawny he is I doubt he can even hunt a common deer; not to mention a beast."

Hearing the mocking tones the hunters made, Lin Mu felt embarrassed. Not wanting to bother trying to sell the pelts here, he decided to try his luck some place else. As the stench of the tannery faded, Lin Mu felt better as he breathed in the fresh air. He wondered which shop would buy his pelts if the people at tannery said they were useless.

He walked through the streets looking at shops such as tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths. There were few blacksmiths in Northern town and the ones he'd been to before would not buy from him, so his choices were rather slim. He visited multiple shops, but all of them rejected him, not wanting to buy his pelts. All of them had the same response: that the pelts were not of much use and to look elsewhere.

Eventually, it was afternoon, and Lin Mu heard his stomach rumble from hunger. He had expected that he would have sold the pelts before the afternoon and would be able to have a meal from the coins he would get, but luck was not in his favor today.

Sweeping through the streets, he found an old sign hanging at the entrance of an alley that branched from the street. He went closer to check it out, but could not make out what was written on it. The sign was mottled and abused by the elements over the years it had hung there. The only thing barely visible on it was the pattern of an anvil.

'I guess I can check out this place, not like I have many other options left, anyway.'

Lin Mu entered the alley and looked around. Most of the shops were closed with their doors and windows barred, which undoubtedly had been for a long time; judging from the conditions. He finally found the shop, which had the same sign as that was hung on the entrance of the alley.

The name on the sign read 'Jing Wei's Emporium', and there were more patterns on the sign than just the anvil. There was a pattern of a dagger, a small flower, and a gauntlet along with the anvil. Lin Mu held the handle of the shop's door and pushed, but it did not budge. He put more force into it and the door moved with a loud creak.

One could see the dust floating in the air, which induced a sneeze as they walked through it. Lin Mu looked at the wide array of objects in the shop. Some placed on the shelves, some hanging on the wall, and some just simply laying on the floor. There was dust on every object in the shop, thus Lin Mu thought about whether or not the shop even operated.

There were so many different objects that Lin Mu wondered if this was simply a pawn shop. There were weapons like rusty old swords, spears, daggers, bows, random pieces of armors, books, dried herbs, boots, and a wide assortment of miscellaneous items such that it would probably take many days to go through them all.

Another thing that made Lin Mu confused was that the shop was much bigger than it looked from the outside. He wondered if the other shops in the alley were as such. There was no shopkeeper or clerk at the counter that Lin Mu could talk to. He rang the small bell that was kept on the counter, but no one answered.

Lin Mu tried ringing it a few times until he heard the voice of a woman coming from a closed-door that was behind the counter.

"Have some patience, I'm coming."

As soon as he heard the voice, he withdrew the pelts and horn from the ring or it would be hard to explain to the shopkeeper where he got them from when he was not holding anything in his hands before. He watched the door, anticipating for it to open, but it was not until five minutes later that it did.

The door behind the counter opened and out walked a woman that looked to be in her early thirties. She was dressed in a blue robe and had a wooden hairpin holding up her hair in a bun. She was not outright beautiful, but had a subtle charm to her; her face had no wrinkles, but one could see a tinge of rouge on her cheeks.

"What do you want?" the woman said in a rather curt tone.

"I would like to sell some goods, do you buy them here?"

Lin Mu asked as he was not even sure if the shop bought goods from people or just sold them, because if they did not then he would have wasted his time coming here.

"Show me what you want to sell."

Upon getting a positive response from the woman, Lin Mu felt a tinge of joy. At least someone was willing to buy from him, unlike the other shops; rejecting him straight away. Lin Mu placed the pelts on the counter towards one side and the small black horn on the other.

The woman eyed the items, flipping the pelts to see both the sides and checking for any damage, cuts, or stains. Then turned her gaze towards Lin Mu.

"This is a rather weird way to skin a beast, but the pelts are fine and don't have any tears."

A smile appeared on Lin Mu's face upon hearing the woman's assessment, but then turned bitter on hearing her next words.

"The pelts are small so they are not worth much, I can give you 20 copper coins for the black-horned rabbit's pelt and 10 copper coins for the thorn tailed rat's."

"Umm, and the horn?" Lin Mu asked upon not hearing a price for the horn.

"Nothing."

"Excuse me?"

"The horn has no use, I won't buy it." The woman replied with a rather straight face.

With a pleading tone, Lin Mu spoke,

"But can't you make weapons with it? Or some other equipment?"

"The effort in making it would not be enough compared to how much such a piece of equipment would sell for."

Taking a pause, she added,

"Rather than selling it, you may as well just keep it as a small trinket. No one else would buy it, but seeing as you've come to this shop, I reckon you have tried to sell these things before."

Lin Mu felt a slight pinch in his heart upon hearing the words of the woman. He nodded his head and said,

"Okay, I accept the price. Also, if I bring more such pelts or goods, would you be willing to buy them?"

Still having a straight face the woman replied,

"I must see them first before deciding. But it would be better if you bring something more substantial than this."

Lin Mu thought in his mind, 'If I could, I would have sold them in the shops I had visited before and not in a place such as this,' but did not show any change of expression on his face as he did not want the woman to get offended.

The woman removed a pouch from the counter and counted 30 coins before placing them before Lin Mu, who picked them up and put them in the small pouch he had tied to his waist.

He walked out of the old and dusty shop, closing the door upon his exit. Now that he had some coins, the first thing he wanted to do was to satisfy his hunger; thus he made his way towards the street where food stalls were located.

Once Lin Mu was gone from the shop, the woman, who was still standing at the counter, heard an old voice coming from the door behind her.

"Who was it, Ke'er?"

The woman replied but with a more affectionate voice this time, completely unlike how she talked with Lin Mu,

"Just some boy."

