

Witch 8

Chapter 8 Months of the Demons (Part 1)

If Roland wanted to develop his territory well, he had to build strong roots in this place. Even though this land was a wasteland it could be easily reclaimed, when the territory was too small it could be expanded outwards, but all talk was useless if the people weren't willing to stay.

If they could be forced to abandon a plot of land at any time, then who would be willing to purchase it? Who would want to improve its production?

After the assistant minister left, Roland called in Knight Commander Carter and ordered, "Assemble your men, go and find some of the local guards, hunters and farmers, they must have lived here for more than five years, and experienced the Months of the Demons. If there is someone who can fight it would be even better."

After the knight saluted and left, Roland rubbed his forehead, continuing to look at the data compiled by the Assistant Minister.

The main exports of the border town were from mining and hunting, and the bulk of the imports were food items. Everything would be transported through Longsong stronghold or directly through the Chishui River in Willow town.

The mining exports contained all kinds of minerals, like iron, copper, sulfur, rock crystal, ruby, sapphire... This was completely against the concept of associated minerals. He thought of what Anna had said to him, that the North Mine had been rumored to be an unknown underground lair, until now there was no proven bottom to the mine and it was also unknown how many forks the mine had.

The minerals exported by the town weren't paid for with the kingdom's gold royals, instead they were paid for with the foodstuffs that arrived. It stands to reason that, since the gems could be regarded as a high priced luxury, that in these last five years the border town could save a surplus of grain, but in the end there was no surplus.

In other words, the annual output of the mining of the border town was only enough for two thousand people's yearly rations. Before the prince arrived here, the border town was governed by the duke who also took charge of Longsong stronghold, and he had set up this arrangement. In his point of view, he could save food and had a warning for the monsters.

The fur trade was part of the local people's own proceeds, they ventured into the westward forest, hunted some birds and other animals, maybe sold them to the Longsong Stronghold, or to the residents of the small town of Willowleaf. Because of this no transaction would be made in the border town and so no tax could be collected.

Roland thought, since he came, it couldn't go on in this way; the minerals could no longer be paid for with food. The Chishui river ran through the whole kingdom, and the traffic was not blocked. There was a transportation artery, even if we would no longer buy food from the Longsong Stronghold, there were still other places to provide them.

This was all built on the premise that he could stay here in the Border Town, blocking those damn monsters.

Carter worked quickly, by the next day he had found two local guards and a hunter and reported, "These two men are from the town patrol, every year they are responsible for lighting the beacon. The hunter said he and the demons had crossed paths, he returned with a demon beast head, which he cut off with his own hands."

The three people bowed simultaneously.

Roland nodded, permitting them to stand up; one of them stepped forward to speak.

"Honor... respected prince... Your highness", the first guard who was called up, was too nervous to even speak clearly, "Brian and I are... are the people, uh... When it begins to snows, we... We will go to the north slope of the mining area... to the Beacon Tower. There it's first possible... it is the first point to see the demon movements, if they cross over in great numbers... we will conceal ourselves in the forest... ignite the flames, from childhood... The road we will withdraw at and the boat is prepared previously... then we leave."

"Since you both were together, let your partner answer it", Roland covered his face to hide his disapproval," the demon beasts, can they be killed? "

The other guard was also very nervous, but at least he did not stammer, "Your Highness, it should be so. They were just ordinary animals in the forest, but through the influence of the evil miasma they become manic and ferocious, but they can still be killed. Every Months of the Demons in the past, Longsong Stronghold would sent cavalry, cleansing the land from the stronghold to Border Town of the remnants of the demon monsters. "

"The Months of the Demon last how long?" Roland asked.

"Generally two to three months..... it depends on the sun, "said Brian.

"Depends on the sun?" Roland asked doubtfully.

"Yes," the guard explained, "Your Highness came to this town not long ago , so you do not know. In this Border town, once the snow begins to fall it will not stop, until the sun shines again, then the snow will be gone."

"So the snow indicates the end of the Months of the Demon?" Roland recalled that at least in Graycastle it was not like this, basically the next day it would end to snow, also the sun would seem to be different .

"It is exactly like this, the longest time I experienced the Months of the Demon was two years ago, that lasted nearly four months, many people starved."

"Why, shouldn't be the grain reserves in Longsong stronghold be large enough to support the town?" Roland asked.

Brian's face got a little angry, "They had enough. But Reynolds the municipal administrator who is responsible for managing such things declared that the amount of ore and minerals mined was only enough to buy food for three months, for the fourth month we had to deliver a new shipment of ore. But the Months of the Demons had not ended, we couldn't leave the fortress."

"So that was what happened ... I got it."

They were simply alienating the fool people. If Longsong stronghold treats these people who were living on the frontier with this kind of warmth like a spring wind, the frontiersmen would most likely want to stay and not leave, but at the moment it seems that the group of people behind Longsong stronghold were not the good natured sort. Roland beckoned the last person forward to answer, while putting the name of the administrator into his heart.

The third man looked courageous and strong, with a height of over 6 feet making Roland feel great pressure. Fortunately, he came forward on his knees.

“You said you killed the beast?”

“Yes sir,” his voice was low and hoarse, “a wild boar species and a wolf species.”

“Species?” Roland repeated, “what do you mean?”

“This is the name of the demonic beast, your highness. The more fierce the variation of the animals was before, the more difficult it would be to deal with variation after. And they will emphasize the advantages of the body. The wild boar, its back fur would become extremely tough, even within a range of 50 yards it would be difficult to hurt it with a crossbow. The wolf species becomes more cunning, the running speed becomes amazing, to kill it, you need to set up the trap in advance.”

“Stronger would become stronger and faster even faster,” Roland nodded as he heard this, “But they are still animals.”

“They are, but they are not the most terrible kind of enemy,” the hunter said until here and then he had to swallow his saliva, before he was able to talk further, “The worst ones are the mixed species.”

“They are devils incarnate, only hell is able to create such a horrible monster. I have seen a hybrid. It had not only beast like strong limbs, but on his back was even a pair of huge wings, allowing it to fly short distances. And it always knew where I was, no matter how much I tried to hide, it could always detect me. It was not hunting its prey, your highness, it was just teasing the prey.” The hunter Liehu lifted his clothes, showing a large scar extending from the abdomen to his chest as he said, “I lost my consciousness and fell into the Chishui River, I was lucky to survive.”

“Such a monster exists,” Roland felt that the world became more and more like a fantasy; a strong wall can block all ordinary kinds of demonic beasts, but if they could fly what should he do? “Mixed species should be very rare, right?”