

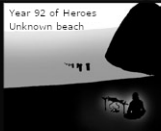
# Hunter

——《Tales of Tarsylia》14

吴淼作品

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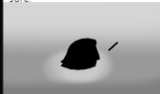
Year 92 of Heroes  
Unknown beach



I'm nearly done grilling,  
Clyde. Where's your fish?



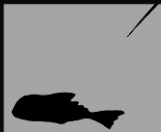
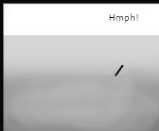
Eat if you're hungry! I'm going  
to catch this tigerfish today for  
sure!



I told you, child, you still  
haven't gotten the trick.



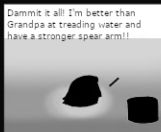
Hmph!



Hyah!



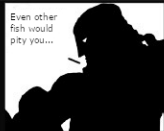
Dammit it all! I'm better than  
Grandpa at treading water and  
have a stronger spear arm!!



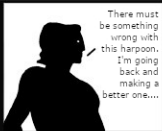
And my movements are faster  
and stronger than yours  
in the water!



Even other fish would pity you...



There must be something wrong with this harpoon. I'm going back and making a better one....



How did I end up with such a stupid grandson?



Give me your harpoon!



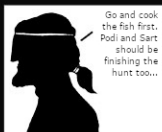
Watch how the master does it.



How? Your movements were so much slower than mine!



Go and cook the fish first. Podi and Sart should be finishing the hunt too...



Yes, grandpa.



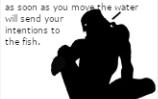
Successful hunters always keep two factors in mind: range and timing.



If hunting was just a matter of strength, then you'd end up as prey!



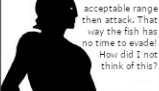
Your fishing techniques work in shallow water. But in the ocean, as soon as you move the water will send your intentions to the fish.



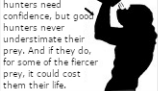
And the water resistance will drastically slow you down, so the fish has plenty of time to dodge.



So you move your harpoon slowly towards the fish until its within an acceptable range then attack. That way the fish has no time to evade! How did I not think of this?



Because you overvalue your strength. Good hunters need confidence, but good hunters never underestimate their prey. And if they do, for some of the fiercer prey, it could cost them their life.



The line between predator and prey has always been blurry...



I get it, grandpa, I will learn.



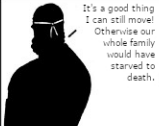
Oh! I hear Selt's footsteps!



They look frustrated. Hah, they're also coming back empty handed!



It's a good thing I can still move! Otherwise our whole family would have starved to death.



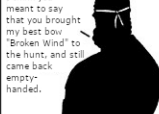
Grandpa...



The hunt's over...



I think you meant to say that you brought my best bow "Broken Wind" to the hunt, and still came back empty-handed.



I do feel ashamed. Even Kuba that old dog caught a wild rabbit...

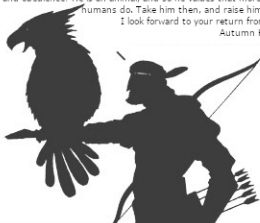




Do you still remember what I said 3 months ago, when you begged me to let you use Broken Wind?


"Selt, from today on, Broken Wind is your hunting falcon now. He'll recognize your bloodline, my grandson, and be loyal, obedient, and become your greatest weapon! But you must treat me well, care for him. Only by investing your own emotions can you truly get his loyalty and obedience! He is an animal, and so he values that more than humans do. Take him then, and raise him well.

I look forward to your return from the Autumn Hunt!



I remember. You said:

Sorry...grandpa...




Did you think that because I had already trained a falcon that he would just quietly obey you? If so, how are you any different from those aristocratic losers

I....I already...



Wait, grandpa. These 3 months Selt hasn't goofed off at all. He's spent the whole time with the falcon! He cleaned his feathers, fed him...

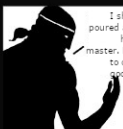


I saw all that with my own eyes. He really did love Broken Wind. Three meals a day; he would carefully prepare his food just as you described! So...

Broken Wind was very obedient....but...during the hunt...



You said...three meals a day? I know what happened now. Stop crying, dummy!



I shouldn't have doubted you...sorry. I'm sure you poured all your love into Broken Wind, and I also believe he loves you way more than he loved me, his old master. But did you ever consider what you wanted him to do? Be your friend? Or your tool? A good hunter must understand this. You're still young, and I didn't think of this. It was my fault.



Grandpa, what are you saying?  
What tool...



Did you know? I  
only fed him  
once a day, and  
only six days of  
the week. I  
would starve  
him for four  
days before the  
autumn hunt!



Because I wanted  
the hunger to  
keep him fierce!  
That way, during  
the hunt, he  
would be  
desperate to  
track down prey,  
and serve as a  
true hunting bird!



A bird is a friend  
second!



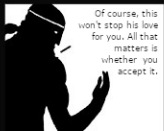
But wouldn't he hate us then?  
That's the opposite of what you  
said before...



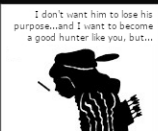
I can't answer  
that. All you  
need to know  
how is that if he  
is satiated and  
full every day,  
then he'll only  
lose his ability to  
hunt prey!



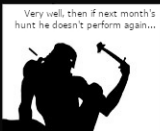
Of course, this  
won't stop his love  
for you. All that  
matters is  
whether you  
accept it.



I don't want him to lose his  
purpose...and I want to become  
a good hunter like you, but...



Very well, then if next month's  
hunt he doesn't perform again...



Then I'll cook  
him into roast  
duck and feed  
it to you! You  
have one  
month to  
prepare!



I...I...



I won't disappoint you again,  
grandpa!



Alright. Eat the  
fish while it's hot.  
Podi looks like he's  
playing with some  
stray again...that  
rascal.

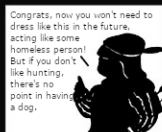
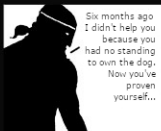
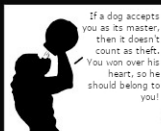
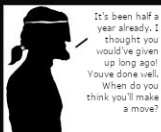
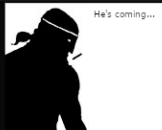


It's all your fault. He  
clearly loves that  
dog, but you won't  
give him any  
money, let anybody  
help him, or declare  
his parentage. He  
has no choice but  
to do that!



He never liked to hunt anyway.  
Let him do what he  
wants.





But I don't want to do that anymore.



I said before. He's been taken in by your spirit and accepted you. You need to be his master. Go and bring him back.



I...don't want to become his master. I like Kulo, but that family also treats him very well...



Kulo is very happy when he's with them. He's also happy when I go and find him to play...but I...



I like things as they are. What does it matter who he belongs to?



If I take him away, that family will definitely be hurt, and Kulo probably will feel sad too.



You've put in so much effort. Wouldn't you regret that?



A bit before, but not anymore.



Your brother will catch another fish for you. We can't have good hunters starve.



I hear and obey, grandpa. I won't fail this time!



Grandpa taught you another skill? I want to learn! I want to learn!



Be patient, you're still young...

I really am getting old. This winter is so cold...



Year 92 of Heroes passed in this way...



Imperial capital  
Heart of Aida

Hall of the  
Pope



Two princes nad the Dukeof  
Moken have begun to introduce  
their daughters to the emperors.



They believe Clyde will become  
the next emperur...



These three are all devoted  
believer. We can't interfere with  
the imperial marriage.



We're trying to say that others  
have already moved to support  
the future emperor.



Clyde is the eldest. He obviously  
is next in succession.



Belmont has ruled for 58 years,  
and has never done anything  
that is common sense!



We've all suffered plenty because  
of that. So I don't think Clyde will  
be the heir!



According to intelligence reports,  
a few businessmen are buying  
Selt's tutors....



Even the Sentry Merchants  
across the ocean is getting  
involved, while we sit and watch!



We need to be extremely cautiou  
during this period. Selt may not  
be the oldest, but he is as  
qualified as Clyde!



The old man likes hunting, and  
dotes on Selt. We all see this  
clearly...



That's because Selt resembles  
the late Prince Ikaneng!



That's right, he killed his own son  
Ikaneng. It's likely he's at least  
motivated by a sense of guilt...



Did you forget it was us who  
encouraged Ikaneng to take  
power, and got him killed?





Maybe everytime he sees Selt's face, he is reminded of that ugly succession business.



Are you blaming us for this? In all these years, what have you ever done?



If all the archbishops had worked together back then, we could have easily overthrown the tyrant!



After Belmont Siwen Phaertes killed his brother, our church suffered great humiliation. Never before in Jesper's history had an unbaptized emperor take power! He opposed our church's military strategy, and refused to endorse any naval operations. He also re-organized the military, and formed an iron guard completely out of the church's control! In those circumstance, we had no choice but to get Prince Ikaneng on our side. Who would have thought the tyrant was that stone-hearted...

It's been fifty years now, and our church's reputation is slipping day by day. If we don't want to divide the empire, we can only see who outlives the other. None of his three grandsons have been baptized, and he refuses to let them learn the church's teachings. All any member of that family knows is hunting. Those three are the empire's future. If we can't get them in our grasp, the empire will never be able to regain the ground that was lost. As archbishops, can we watch as the empire slowly degrades into a hunter's den? Belmont is already 73 years old. The wheel of history is turning again. It's time to end it all! We need to start planning for the empire's future...



He may not be young anymore, but he's still tough and cold. Beware your work doesn't backfire!



We propose supporting Podi as heir. No one favors him, so he will be looking for support, and easy to manipulate...



But he doesn't like to hunt, so Belmont wouldn't favor him either. Clyde still seems to be the best choice...



Our top priority is to take action. Let's pick an acceptable candidate, and then...



And then what? Spend all our efforts on drawing him in? Aren't you ashamed of your words?



Borat! Watch your tone! We're talking about the future of the empire....



This is a church, and we are God's servants. God took power from humans, but has never denied us our rights! We'd be as opportunistic as those deceitful businessmen, as depraved as the nobles who will sacrifice the entire empire for a bit of power, if we go down this path! Isn't this tyrant someone we helped create? We didn't baptize him, or care about him, and let him grow up in the shadows! How can someone who's never received a god's love respect that god? If we're talking about the good of the empire, then unity is better than dissent. Repairing internally is more important than waging wars overseas, hunting....is at least better than endlessly hosting dances and imperial feasts! Those three children are all descendents of heaven, and all need god's care and teaching! Your plans will only tear apart the bonds of the imperial family! So stop these shameful ideas! This is an insult to God!



Then, Archbishop Borat, what noble measures do you have to deal with the situation before us?



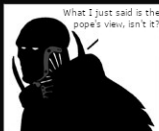
Treat all three brothers the same, help them, openly introduce them to God's blessing... instead of sneaking around like mice!



Who do you think you are? You think because you have some military power, you can speak as you please here? The church's strategy is up to the pope, you don't have a say here!



What I just said is the pope's view, isn't it?



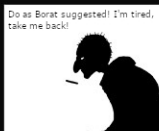
You overstep!



Stop, Archbishop Nadiferla!



Do as Borat suggested! I'm tired, take me back!



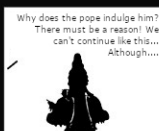
You need to rest, leave the rest to me...



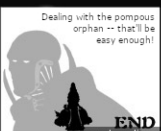
Sometimes I can't help but ask myself, who is more ruthless, the tyrant or Borat?



Why does the pope indulge him? There must be a reason! We can't continue like this... Although....



Dealing with the pompous orphan -- that'll be easy enough!



END

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