

## ABNORMALITY IN TYPE-MOON: MADNESS OF ANIMEVERSE

Chapter 31: Chapter 31: The Call to Arms



A special barrier covered the skies of Fuyuki City.

That barrier had been erected ten years ago, right after the end of the Fourth Holy Grail War.

It only took one person and a single wave of their hand to create this massive barrier.

In fact, the current Fuyuki City was rebuilt entirely within the original confines of that barrier.

The barrier's function was to repel spirits.

All spirit-based phenomena, including ghosts, cursed spirits, and even Heroic Spirits, were blocked from entering. This protection kept all such dangers outside the city's borders.

As a result, not a single spiritual disaster had occurred in the newly rebuilt Fuyuki City over the years.

Ghosts and cursed spirits had never been seen here. The most frequent threats Fuyuki faced were attacks from demonic beasts, occasionally joined by the sporadic appearance of flesh-eating demons.

Among those demons, there were rumors of an elite group known as the Twelve Moons, whose power was so overwhelming that ordinary magi stood no chance. Wherever they appeared, tragedy followed.

However, the main concentration of these flesh-eating demons was near Kanzaki City, and the Twelve Moons rarely set foot in Fuyuki.

Thus, the greatest threat to Fuyuki City remained the siege of demonic beasts.

Thanks to the large number of magi stationed in the city, these beasts caused minimal damage. Even beasts classified as Phantasmal Species had only appeared a handful of times.

With that, Fuyuki was considered one of the safest of the four base cities in Japan, second only to Misaki City.

Misaki City was dubbed the safest because a terrifying witch lived there.

Rumor had it that a certain demon king, now hiding somewhere in Kanzaki City, had once dared to set foot in Misaki, only to flee in terror like a mouse before a cat, disappearing without a trace the very same day.

Since then, that demon king hadn't dared to approach Misaki City again.

Though Kanzaki City was home to a troublesome Mystic Eye user, they were much easier to deal with compared to the witch—who seemed to have walked straight out of a twisted fairy tale. As long as one kept a low profile, the Mystic Eye user could be evaded.

But if that demon king were to enter Misaki City, no matter how deep he tried to hide, even if he buried himself underground, the witch would dig him up and beat him senseless.

Back to the main topic.

Fuyuki's spirit-repelling barrier had been personally established by Zelretch, the Wizard Marshal, ten years ago after the destruction of Old Fuyuki.

Because of this barrier, not only ghosts and cursed spirits but even the corrupted Servants were kept outside.

When the corrupted Servants returned to Japan after aiding the Dark Grail in conquering the world, they made a beeline for Fuyuki. It was obvious what they sought—the Greater Holy Grail.

But they were blocked by the spirit-repelling barrier.

Frustrated, they were forced to wander the outskirts of Japan.

Now, as the Fifth Holy Grail War loomed, the corrupted Servants had begun converging on Fuyuki from all corners of the country, resulting in the current situation.

Their target was clear—the Greater Holy Grail.

But as long as the spirit-repelling barrier stood, the city could rest easy. Everyone continued feasting and drinking without a care in the world, confident that nothing could go wrong.

The Magi Association's old fossils thought the same.

By the end of the night, their subordinates had used familiars to investigate and confirmed that the enemies outside the city were indeed the corrupted Servants—five out of the six, to be precise.

Yet, the old fossils remained unshaken.

"So what? Servants are still just spirits, aren't they?"

As long as they were spirits, there was no way they could breach the spirit-repelling barrier around Fuyuki.

"The barrier has been breached!"

"Ridiculous!"

"Impossible! Absolutely impossible!"

"The barrier was crafted by the Wizard Marshal himself! There's no way it could be damaged!"

When their subordinates rushed in to report the breach, the old fossils shouted in disbelief.

Each of them wore expressions of utter denial.

A breach in the barrier set by Zelretch himself? Such a thing couldn't possibly happen!

It must be some kind of mass hallucination spell!

How else could they be having such a nightmare?

"The city hall has issued a call to arms!"

At that moment, another magus arrived, holding a document in his hand.

"Rin Tohsaka, the mayor of Fuyuki City, is summoning all Masters who have summoned Servants to city hall for an emergency meeting to deal with the corrupted Servants outside the city!"

"Damn that girl! She dared to bypass us and call for a gathering of Masters on her own!"

Their rage boiled over.

They had long viewed the Greater Holy Grail as their rightful prize.

The Masters and Servants selected by the Grail should have been under the jurisdiction of the Magi Association.

However, due to the Grail's curse, no one could touch it directly anymore.

Anyone who did would be consumed by its curse, and that curse could never be eradicated. It would flare up endlessly, subjecting its victim to both mental and physical torment.

Not even the senior magi of the Association could endure such torment for long.

Thus, exploiting the Grail's own system—using the Masters and Servants it selected—had become the only way for the Association's noble families to secure their own interests.

Whether it was expanding their family's power or pursuing the magic of the Age of Gods, they could achieve all of this by controlling the Masters and Servants.

But Rin Tohsaka had beaten them to the punch!

"What's the situation now? How long has the call to arms been out?"

"It's been half a day already. With all the magi's familiars in play, I'm sure word has spread by now."

"Damn it! Why didn't you report this sooner?!"

"I didn't think you'd be so oblivious..."

The subordinate magus muttered under his breath.

These old fossils cared for nothing but their petty power struggles, constantly immersed in their magical research, dreaming of one day reaching the Root.

In this day and age, and they're still stuck bickering among themselves!

"Keep a close watch on everything happening at city hall!"

"Yes!"

"And what about Bazett? She's the only Master the Association has in this war. We can't let her side with the city hall!"

"Uh... She was actually the first one to head there..."

"Are you kidding me?!"

...

Fuyuki City Hall, located in the center of the city near Fuyuki Bridge.

Ever since the call to arms had gone out, familiars from all directions had been gathering, perching on rooftops and corners, watching city hall's every move.

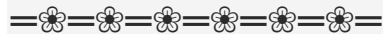
Some belonged to the Magi Association's families, while others were sent by freelance magi.

But regardless of their allegiance, all eyes were on the developments of the Holy Grail War.

Under the watchful gaze of countless familiars, a striking woman in a deep crimson suit arrived at city hall—Bazett Fraga McRemitz.

Her face was pale, as if she had just recovered from a serious illness, but her commanding presence completely concealed this fragility. Her aura remained as sharp and formidable as ever, an iron will housed in a body of steel.

Her mere presence demanded admiration.



## Chapter 32: Chapter 32: The Gathering of Masters



"So, it's at City Hall instead of the Magi Association, huh? Tch, those magi are really losing their touch as they age."

The second person to arrive was a young girl with snow-white hair.

She looked barely past her early teens, her pure white hair cascading naturally down her back, while her blood-red eyes sparkled with an innocent, childlike glow.

Wrapped in a deep purple woolen coat, her petite figure gave off the impression of a delicate, lonely sprite dancing in the snow.

The magi watching her immediately recognized her.

She was an artificial human—created by the Einzbern family.

The technology used by the Einzbern family to craft homunculi had long since spread, ever since they were sanctioned for creating the Holy Grail War. Nowadays, it was fairly widespread.

Not everyone could do it, of course, but anyone with the right means could get their hands on such knowledge.

The third person to arrive also had white hair and red eyes.

But this time, it was a boy—he appeared to be around sixteen or seventeen, with a more mature look than the girl. He wore glasses, and a soft smile constantly played at the corners of his lips, giving him the appearance of someone easy to talk to.

"Is that him?"

"The lucky kid favored by that person?"

"Wait, he's a Master too? Him?"

The familiars exchanged looks, while a few familiar faces whispered among themselves, unable to hide their envy and discontent toward the boy.

Naturally, the white-haired, red-eyed boy was Roy.

Roy walked into the hall, displaying the Command Seals on his hand. Instantly, a servant came forward to greet him, guiding him to the second-floor reception room.

Inside the room, a few people were already waiting.

Among them were Bazett, the androgynous beauty dressed in a sharp suit, and the snow-like homunculus girl.

Also present was another figure—the elegant young lady with twin-tails, who had been the one to issue the call to arms in the first place. She had been waiting in the reception room from the very start.

As soon as Roy entered the room, he became the center of attention.

Bazett's gaze was the first to land on him.

And it was by far the sharpest.

Her eyes were like a tiger ready to pounce, radiating a powerful pressure. She scrutinized Roy up and down, and the more she looked, the more dangerous her expression became.

In contrast, the homunculus girl, who resembled a sprite in the snow, immediately brightened when she saw him, her face lighting up with obvious delight.

She hopped off the couch, completely ignoring the other two, and skipped over to Roy.

"I'm really surprised! I didn't expect to see one of our family's creations here, and one so perfectly crafted! Which house do you belong to?"

Her hands were clasped behind her back, her eyes sparkling with affection.

Her excitement made her look like a cat that had just found a new toy to play with.

Roy merely smiled without saying a word.

Clap! Clap!

The sound of applause broke the moment.



Rin Tohsaka clapped her hands before resting them on her hips, a look of exasperation on her face.

"Bazett, Illyasviel, both of you are overreacting."

"Eh? I was just happy!" Illyasviel von Einzbern, the white-haired homunculus girl, pouted, shooting Rin an annoyed look.

"Now's not the time. This is a meeting. Whatever you want to talk about, there'll be plenty of time after."

"You're so stubborn, Rin."

Though Illyasviel pouted in displeasure, she grudgingly shuffled back to her couch.

"Bazett, are you going to keep glaring at him?"

With Illya settled, Rin turned her attention to Bazett.

Bazett's gaze was still locked on Roy as if she were staring at her archenemy. Her eyes, like a hawk's, tracked his every move, as if she was ready to strike at any moment.

Rin sighed internally. Bazett was far more troublesome than Illyasviel.

"...My apologies. Perhaps I'm just being overly sensitive."

Only after Rin spoke did Bazett's imposing aura gradually recede.

"His build reminds me of the person who trespassed into the Great Hollow that night and summoned a Servant. So, I might have been a bit... out of line."

Even as she spoke, her sharp eyes never left Roy's face, watching his every expression like a hawk circling its prey.

His build is similar?

Rin raised an eyebrow slightly.

Was that really the case?

From Bazett's words, it sounded like she suspected Roy of being the one who had trespassed into the Great Hollow that night.

Rin fell into thought.

It was true that the culprit responsible for breaking into the Great Hollow still hadn't been caught.

While it was possible that Zouken Matou had been involved, that was just a guess... and it had been Roy who made that suggestion in the first place.

More importantly, after that night, Roy had Command Seals on his hand. And they had appeared unusually early.

Wait a second.

The more Rin thought about it, the more suspicious Roy seemed.

She had never suspected him before—out of gratitude for his help, she had instinctively ruled him out. But now that Bazett mentioned it, Rin's expression became slightly more serious.

"We can be sure that the person who broke into the Great Hollow has become a Master. I've even seen their Servant. So, Lord Roy, why don't you summon your Servant for us now? Of course, to be fair, I'll summon mine as well. That way, no one is at a disadvantage."

Bazett, her expression cold and unreadable, proposed her plan, her words as blunt as her combat skills.

"As long as it's not the Servant I saw, the misunderstanding will be cleared up!"

Wow. Well done, Bazett.

For someone with a muscle-brained head, she sure came up with a sharp plan!

Could someone have coached her?

Rin fell into deeper thought, staying silent for the moment.

Seeing that Rin had nothing to say, Roy cleared his throat.

"Perhaps my build does resemble the trespasser's. But since when did the Greater Grail belong solely to the Magi Association? Wasn't it created by the Three Founding Families?"

Rin's expression flickered slightly.

"Back then, maybe it was acceptable. But now, two of the Three Families have already summoned their Servants. And yet, the Magi Association still wants to claim the Greater Grail for themselves? Does that mean they no longer respect the Three Families and their Servants?"

Bazett's face instantly changed.

This guy... he's trying to drive a wedge between us!

It wouldn't be such a big deal if it was just a simple provocation.

But the critical issue was that of the four Masters present, two were from the Three Families!

And his words clearly leaned in their favor!

"The Greater Grail belongs to the Three Families. That fact will never change."

Suddenly, Illyasviel, who had been swinging her legs in boredom, chimed in.

Her face beamed with innocence, as if she were completely oblivious to the tension in the room.

"The Magi Association's ways have long been known to everyone."

Rin nonchalantly tossed her thick twin-tails over her shoulder, a sly smile curling on her lips.

"I don't see what the big deal is. Sneaking into the Greater Grail and summoning a Servant a few days earlier than usual isn't much of a crime, is it? It's just preparing a little ahead of time. It's not like he used his Servant to assassinate another Master. In fact, his actions seem rather reasonable."

"Exactly! I summoned my Servant two months in advance! So what if someone else did it a few days early? What's the big deal?"

Illyasviel cheerfully echoed Rin's words, her cute face showing absolutely no concern.

In the eyes of the Magi Association, any unauthorized access to the Greater Grail was unforgivable.

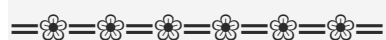
After all, they had claimed the Grail as their own—even if it was a one-sided declaration.

The reality, however, was that they had no control over the Greater Grail at all.

To the Grail, the Association was nothing more than a loud bystander, with far less relevance than the Three Families.

For that reason, the magi of the Association were so desperate to assert their authority over the Grail.

Because without doing so, they wouldn't even have a seat at the table when it came time to fight over it.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Hahaha, you've been completely overpowered, Master!"

"Caster, are you gloating?"

"Pretty much, hahaha!"

A hearty laugh echoed in her mind, and Caster didn't even hesitate to admit it.

Bazett felt a deep sense of frustration, but there was nothing she could do.

Among them, she was the only one affiliated with the Mage's Association.

With both Rin Tohsaka and Illyasviel clearly siding with Roy, Bazett was left isolated, unable to force Roy into summoning his Servant.

"Let it go this time, Master. That man's not someone you can easily outwit with your clumsy words. Next time, we'll find another opportunity. I'll help you."

"...I don't have much choice."

Bazett was reluctant, but there was no other option.

She gave up on trying to press further and closed her eyes, as if ignoring it would ease her frustration.

Seeing Bazett finally calm down, Rin Tohsaka shrugged with a wry smile, shaking her head.

But deep down, she was quite pleased.

Given Bazett's position as a Master representing the Mage's Association, she should have outright refused to attend the city hall's summons.

Yet here she was, showing up openly. It just showed how simple-minded she was compared to those scheming old magi, who could turn every word into a trap.

Bazett coming to the city hall's meeting must have enraged those old fogeys.

In Rin's eyes, a Bazett that could frustrate those vultures was downright adorable.

"Isn't there anyone else?"

After waiting in the reception room for a bit longer, and seeing that a fifth person had yet to arrive, Roy couldn't help but ask.

Rin stepped out of the room and asked the attendant at the door a couple of questions.

"...It looks like that's everyone."

A moment later, she returned, shaking her head.

"It seems only the four of us have responded to the summons. The other three Masters clearly don't care about Fuyuki City's survival."

Rin's face was full of displeasure.

She had already made the purpose of the summoning crystal clear—to deal with the blackened Servants gathering outside Fuyuki City, a force that threatened the city's survival. There was no personal gain involved.

On top of that, everyone could sign self-binding agreements to ensure they wouldn't act out of self-interest during the operation.

And yet, they still didn't show up. Mages really were selfish creatures, always putting their own interests first.

"Oh my, honestly, I couldn't care less about the survival of Fuyuki City either."

Illyasviel spoke with a mischievous smile. "It's just that Grandfather was worried the Greater Grail might fall into the hands of the blackened Servants, so he sent me to check things out."

"Well, you're still better than those three who didn't show up at all."

Rin wasn't particularly concerned.

Roy, meanwhile, was lost in thought.

Four Masters had gathered here, and he himself had two Servants, which meant there were five Servants hidden in the shadows.

The remaining Masters, at most, would have two Servants between them.

But those two Masters lurking in the shadows were still unknown variables. He'd have to come up with a way to lure them out.

"Since no one else is coming, let's get down to business."

Rin clapped her hands twice.

"Come in!"

With a creak, the wooden door opened.

"Finally, you've kept me waiting, Rin."

A man dressed as a priest walked into the room.

He appeared to be in his forties, with slightly graying black hair that curled slightly. His features were sharp, almost chiseled, and he had a tall, sturdy frame that exuded the air of a seasoned warrior, his breath steady and controlled.

"Kotomine, Father."

At the sound of his voice, Bazett opened her eyes and nodded in greeting.

"You know each other?"

Rin raised an eyebrow.

"We've met once."

Bazett nodded briefly, then fell silent again.

Roy watched the two with interest.

Bazett was only about twenty-five now, meaning she would've been around fifteen when the Great Catastrophe began ten years ago, probably still in her homeland.

The world had changed so much, yet she had somehow crossed paths with Kotomine Kirei. What a coincidence.

Would she lose her arm this time, too?

"Kirei, you explain."

Rin gestured to Kotomine, then sat back on the sofa.

"You've gotten lazy, Rin."

A strange, low chuckle spread across Kotomine's face.

Rin glared at him, muttering something about "reasonable rest" and "preparing for the upcoming battle," though it was unclear what she meant.

Kotomine ignored her.

"Fine. As the sole apparent survivor of the last Holy Grail War, I suppose it's fitting for me to explain."

"First, regarding the five blackened Servants gathered outside Fuyuki City. In fact, the Mage's Association has already identified most of them. I'll share what we know."

"Blackened Assassin: His true name is Hassan of the Hundred Faces, one of the many Old Men of the Mountain. He was the nineteenth leader of the



Assassin sect. While he suffered from dissociative identity disorder during life, becoming a Servant freed him from the limits of his physical body, allowing each personality to manifest as a separate clone. Individually, they're weak, perhaps not even worth mentioning, but as long as one personality remains, he cannot truly die. Dealing with him will be tricky."

"Blackened Caster: His true name is Gilles de Rais, a French marshal during the Hundred Years' War. You're all probably familiar with the legend of Bluebeard. Whether blackened or not, his mental state is questionable, so I doubt there's much difference for him. He can summon a large number of oceanic monsters, and the one that nearly breached the city walls was likely his doing."

"Blackened Lancer: He is Diarmuid Ua Duibhne, the first knight of the Fianna in Celtic mythology. Known for his unwavering knightly honor, I can't help but wonder what he's like now that he's fallen. I'm curious whether he still clings to his knightly ideals."

"Blackened Berserker: His identity remains unknown. He's the only one among the five whose true name we haven't uncovered. It's likely he possesses a Noble Phantasm that conceals his identity."

"And finally, the most dangerous of them all—Blackened Saber. Her name is known throughout the world: the undefeated king of Britain, the knight among knights, Artoria Pendragon. She is, without a doubt, the most powerful of the five blackened Servants. If you plan to challenge her, don't do it alone. The destruction of Fuyuki City would be a real problem for me."

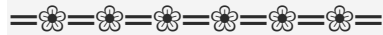
Everyone listened attentively as Kotomine Kirei shared the information.

Only Roy seemed distracted, lost in his own thoughts.

Five blackened Servants, all matching the Servants from the Fourth Holy Grail War, with the exceptions of Archer Gilgamesh and Rider Iskandar.

As for the unidentified Blackened Berserker, it was likely Lancelot. His Noble Phantasm did allow him to hide his identity, after all. In the Fourth War, his true identity wasn't revealed until his final duel with the spiky-haired Saber.

Aside from the late Matou Kariya, no one knew Berserker's true identity back then either.



## Chapter 34: Chapter 34: Battle Against the Blackened Servants



"These five Blackened Servants are currently staying at specific points outside Fuyuki City, most likely waiting for the anti-spirit barrier to fail. In fact, the barrier has been deteriorating for some unknown reason. If nothing is done, once the barrier collapses entirely, the Blackened Servants will invade the city, and at that point, we'll have no chance of resisting."

"All five Blackened Servants are staying together? How are we supposed to fight them?"

"No, you misunderstood. They're not gathered in one place. They're stationed separately, each in their own area. They seem to be fighting independently. The mages in the city have sent numerous familiars to scout, but while all of them were destroyed, the Servants themselves haven't shown any signs of moving. This, of course, presents an opportunity for you."

"I see, so we should concentrate our forces and take them down one by one?"

"Exactly."

Roy understood their plan now.

The five Blackened Servants were positioned at five different locations outside Fuyuki City, waiting for the anti-spirit barrier to fail before they'd make their move to seize the Holy Grail. However, their decision to act independently provided an opening.

The strategy was simple: gather their own Servants, then gang up on the Blackened ones, taking them down one by one.

After that, it would be time for the Masters to fight each other in the Fifth Holy Grail War.

"This is the intelligence on their locations."

A servant wheeled in a mobile blackboard with a map of New Fuyuki City pinned to it. Five spots around the outskirts were marked, each corresponding to the location of one of the Blackened Servants.

All the necessary information on each Blackened Servant was laid out clearly.

"The Master who successfully kills a Blackened Servant will be rewarded with an additional Command Seal."

Rin nodded slightly at Kotomine Kirei.

Kotomine let out a low hum, then raised his arm and rolled up his sleeve.

Before them, etched on his well-muscled arm, were more than twenty red Command Seals, forming a complex pattern.

Roy squinted slightly.

What? Did you kill your father or something to get all of those?

"Well then, I'll leave the rest to you, Rin."

With a polite bow, Kotomine Kirei turned to the group.

"I wish you all the best of luck. Truly, I do."

With that, a mysterious smile spread across his face, and he left the room.

Yeah, right, you're totally cursing us behind our backs.

What a scumbag.

"Anyway, that's the situation," Rin stood up and addressed the group.

"Our first priority is to gather as much strength as possible and deal with the Blackened Servants. We don't need to discuss the remaining three teams.

Does anyone have any objections to this plan?"

"This is so boring."

"Huh?"

"I said, it's boring!"

Illyasviel pouted, her face full of disinterest.

She stood up, patting off imaginary dust from her skirt.

Then, with a bright smile, she walked over to Roy.

"What's your name? I'm Illyasviel von Einzbern!"

Her sparkling eyes never left Roy, completely ignoring Rin.

"Roy."

"Roy, got it, I'll remember that!"

Illyasviel repeated his name to herself, happily waving her hand.

"I live in a castle outside the city, you can come find me anytime. I'll open the barrier for you. Well, I'm off now!"

"Wait a second, Illyasviel, I have something I want to ask you."

Roy suddenly called out to her.

"What is it?"

Illyasviel, just about to leave, turned back curiously.

"Do you know a man named Kiritsugu Emiya?"

"Kiritsugu Emiya?"

Illyasviel tilted her head in confusion.

"Who's that? I've never heard of him."

"Never mind, sorry to waste your time."

"It's no waste! Roy, you can waste as much of my time as you like!"

Illyasviel cheerfully waved her hand again and headed for the door.

"See you later!"

"Hey, Illyasviel!"

"Ugh, you're so annoying, Rin."

Illyasviel stopped, turning to glare at Rin with disdain.

"Didn't I already tell you? I couldn't care less about the fate of Fuyuki City. Those Blackened Servants are only after the Holy Grail, right? So I'll just wait until the anti-spirit barrier fails, then I'll fight. After all, my Berserker is invincible!"

Without waiting for a response, Illyasviel marched out, completely ignoring everyone.

"That brat!"

Rin clenched her teeth in frustration.

"And you, Bazett?"

"I fully agree with the plan to take down the Blackened Servants first."

Bazett nodded her agreement. "We must eliminate any threats to Fuyuki City's safety. The city hall—or rather, Mayor Tohsaka's—decision is absolutely correct."

"So that means...?"

"However, I refuse to work with you two."

Before Rin could get too excited, Bazett cut in, her tone sharp.

"To be honest, I can't be sure if the one who trespassed into the Great Hollow that night is one of you. I have no proof, so I won't jump to conclusions. But I won't risk working with people I can't trust. I'm sure you understand."

Rin had no comeback.

If she were in Bazett's position, she also wouldn't be able to work with someone who might stab her in the back at any moment.

Bazett's reasoning was sound, and Rin couldn't argue against it.

"Of course, my goal is the same as yours. I'll be dealing with the Blackened Servants as well. I'll start with Blackened Lancer. After that, we can communicate through familiars, both to update on the battle and to decide on the next target. Agreed?"

"That's reasonable. Let's do it."

Rin sighed and nodded, accepting Bazett's plan.

Bazett left soon after.

Suddenly, the reception room was quiet, with only Roy and Rin remaining.

"Ugh! I can't believe it! Bazett I can tolerate, but that brat completely underestimated me!"

Rin grumbled, holding her head while her twin-tails whipped about in frustration.

As a member of the Three Families, she couldn't let this insult slide!

Roy smiled but said nothing, letting her vent for a while.

To be fair, among the Three Families, the Matou family was done for, and the Tohsaka family only had Rin left. Sakura, living in Misaki City, was no longer part of the Tohsaka lineage. The Einzbern family, however, still thrived, mainly due to their reliance on homunculi.

It was hard not to be populous when your entire family was made up of artificial beings.

"Careful, you're about to ruin your elegant image."

"I know, I know!"

Rin huffed, collapsing onto the sofa with a pout.

"So, was it really you who snuck into the Great Hollow that night?"

"Hahaha!"

Roy laughed, avoiding the question.

Although he said nothing, his smile gave everything away.

"You really are something."

Rin couldn't help but feel exasperated.

She didn't blame Roy for keeping his secrets—he clearly had his own plans. Besides, she wasn't in any position to scold him about it.

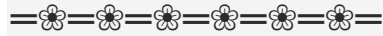
"The Great Hollow has multiple layers of complex barriers, all from different systems around the world. The concentration of curses near the Greater Grail is through the roof. How did you manage to break in, summon a Servant, defeat Bazett, and slip out without a trace—all in one night?"

Roy merely smiled, offering no explanation.

It was clear he wasn't going to share any details.

"Fine, whatever. Let's split up for now. We'll regroup tonight to hunt down the Blackened Servants together. How does that sound?"

"No problem."



Chapter 35: Chapter 35: How Could Okita Soji Be a Girl?



By evening, Roy returned home.

Kasumigaoka Utaha and Aizaka had already prepared dinner—authentic Chinese cuisine, Roy's favorite. After several days of hands-on guidance from Roy, the two girls had managed to replicate about sixty percent of the original taste.

"Oh right, Saber, come join us for dinner."

As Roy sat down at the table, he suddenly remembered Miss Okita and called her out.

A flash of golden light appeared beside the table.

In the shocked gazes of the two maids, the golden particles gathered into the figure of a girl dressed in a haori, her long blonde hair tied back. She looked about fifteen or sixteen, with a katana at her waist. Her appearance was both delicate and striking, combining grace with a hint of warrior spirit.

"Master, Servants don't need to eat, you know!"

"Then stop staring at the food like that."



"Hehe!"

"Enough with the cuteness—sit down and eat."

"Yes, sir!"

Miss Okita saluted smartly before sitting down, eyes gleaming with anticipation.

"This is delicious! So good! Ah, back when I was alive, I was bedridden for so many years, and food this rich was out of my reach. It's truly a blessing to be able to eat a full meal again!"

Her hearty appetite was both amusing and heartwarming.

But her words carried a weight that made people feel a pang of sympathy.

"So this is a Servant? A hero from history?" Kasumigaoka Utaha watched Okita Sōji with great interest.

"A fifteen-year-old swordswoman? Was there someone like this in Japan's history?" Aizaka frowned, thoughtfully resting her chin on her hand, trying to figure out who this young girl really was.

Considering she had been bedridden during her lifetime, who could fit this description? "Utaha."

"Yes, Lord Roy?"

Hearing Roy's voice, Kasumigaoka Utaha immediately straightened up in her seat.

She expected some kind of instruction, but Roy's next words took her by complete surprise.

"I'll be participating in the Holy Grail War soon. The outcome is uncertain, and if I die, I want you to follow Touko. She might not be the most reliable, but at the very least, she'll make sure you live safely for the rest of your life."

"Lord Roy?"

Kasumigaoka Utaha was completely caught off guard.

"Don't dwell on it too much—just a possibility."

Roy took a bite of mapo tofu and mixed it with his rice.

"It's better to have a plan now rather than wait until it's too late. I'll fight with everything I have to survive, of course, but battles like these are unpredictable, and no one can guarantee the outcome."

Roy's tone was calm, even when discussing the possibility of his own death. There wasn't a hint of fear or hesitation on his face.

It was as if he had already foreseen his own end, or perhaps, he was simply accustomed to the idea of death, prepared for the possibility of dying in this Holy Grail War.

He was utterly composed.

"Isn't there a way to avoid participating?" Utaha asked, unable to suppress the question.

"There isn't."

Roy refused without even a second thought.

"I've been waiting here for three years, all for this moment. There's no backing out now."

His words were more resolute than Utaha had imagined.

So resolute, in fact, that it bordered on stubbornness.

No one would be able to change his mind, no matter what they said.

Utaha could sense this clearly.

"If you can't return to your own world and I die, then consider this place your new home," Roy added with a sudden smile.

A smile like warm sunshine breaking through the winter chill, sweeping away the heavy atmosphere at the table.

"A person's life is a journey of constantly finding new homes. If you feel lost, start by adapting here."

"Don't worry! We'll protect Master!" Miss Okita chimed in with a bright smile, seizing the moment.

"I, Okita Sōji, will absolutely protect Master. If anyone wants to harm him, they'll have to get through me first!"

Utaha fell silent.

With her current position, she knew there was nothing she could say that would change Roy's mind.

So, the only thing she could do was watch over the household in his absence.

And...

"Lord Roy, I pray for your safe return."

"Thank you for your kind words."

After dinner, Roy went to take a bath.

Meanwhile, Aizaka and Kasumigaoka Utaha tidied up the dishes.

After some time had passed.

Aizaka suddenly slammed her hand down on the countertop.

Kasumigaoka Utaha stared at her in shock as Aizaka shouted angrily,

"How could Okita Sōji possibly be a girl?!"

Kasumigaoka Utaha thought about it for a moment.

Then realization dawned.

And she, too, was shocked.

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By the time Roy stepped out of the bath, night had completely fallen.

"Lord Roy."

Aizaka was waiting for him outside the bathroom door, as if she had been waiting for some time.

"Whoa, you scared me!"

Roy jumped, giving her a bewildered look.

Aizaka, with skills like these, did your lady Rin know how stealthy you were?

"My apologies."

"No problem. What's up?"

"I wanted to ask if Lady Rin will be participating in the Holy Grail War as well?"

Aizaka's eyes were filled with deep concern.

The Aozaki family had Roy and those two extraordinary sisters. To be blunt, even if Roy were to die, with his final instructions, the Aozaki sisters would take care of Kasumigaoka Utaha, and she would still live comfortably.

But Aizaka's situation was different.

The Tohsaka family had only Rin left.

If Rin were to die in the Holy Grail War, what would become of Aizaka, a mere refugee?

Though she felt guilty, Aizaka's first priority was her own survival.

Thinking about the fate of someone like Aki Tomoya, Aizaka couldn't help but shiver.

She was well aware of her own beauty. Without Rin as her shield, she would almost certainly become a target for magi.

Even with her skills, there would be no escaping their clutches. Finding another kind magus like Roy or Rin? That wasn't something she could count on.

"Yes, Rin will participate."

Roy nodded.

"Tohsaka and I have formed an alliance, and during this Holy Grail War, we'll be acting together. She'll be coming here soon, so if you have anything to say, you can speak to her then."

"I understand. Thank you very much."

Aizaka nodded, retreating quietly.

"By the way, where's Touko?"

Roy looked around. He hadn't seen Touko anywhere since dinner.

"Lady Touko has already left."

"What?!"

Roy was shocked.

He hadn't even changed out of his bathrobe yet as he dashed toward his bedroom.

He frantically rummaged through his things, his expression turning dark.

"Lord Roy, is something wrong?"

Aizaka, following him to the door, asked nervously, seeing his grim face.

Could an enemy already be upon them?

Instead, she saw Roy holding up an empty cloth bag.

"My savings!"

"My savings are gone again! Half a year's worth, and she stole it again!"

"Aizaka, we're going to have to tighten our belts for the next few days!"

"...Huh?"

Aizaka stood there in stunned silence for a long moment, before finally making a sound of disbelief.

The wealthy Aizaka couldn't comprehend.

Why did a magus of Roy's stature have to worry about money?

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Chapter 36: Chapter 36: The Twisted Lancer



After finishing his bath, Roy changed into comfortable clothes and donned a long black trench coat. He kept the rune-inscribed papers close to his body, fully prepared as he headed to the front yard, where he was supposed to meet up with Tohsaka Rin. Since Aizaka was staying at his place, they had agreed to meet at the Aozaki residence before heading outside the city to hunt down the corrupted Servants.

But then...

"Master!"

Suddenly, Okita Sōji materialized beside Roy, her expression deadly serious.

"There's a Servant approaching!"

"I can feel it."

"Could it be Lady Tohsaka's Servant?"

"Unlikely."

Roy shook his head, his gaze sharp.

"The magical energy is twisted and filled with resentment. That doesn't seem like the kind of Servant Tohsaka Rin would summon. Saber, go outside the estate and prepare for battle!"

"Understood!"

Okita Sōji disappeared in a flash.

Roy started walking toward the front gate.

The summoning had just been issued earlier today, so it wasn't surprising that his identity as a Master was now public knowledge. It was likely that all the magi in Fuyuki City already knew he was one of the Masters in this Holy Grail War.

But who would come for him at this particular moment? And for what reason? Was it Bazett?

Did she come to confirm if he was the one who had broken into the large cavern that day?

No, while Bazett wasn't exactly a saint, she was a straightforward person, and her Servant wouldn't be filled with such intense resentment.

This overwhelming malice didn't feel like a regular Heroic Spirit—it felt more like an Anti-Hero.

As these thoughts raced through his mind, Roy reached the front of the estate.

Okita Sōji stood vigil on the road, poised for battle.

Opposite her, a dark figure slowly approached from down the street.

The moment Roy stepped outside, that figure, as if sensing his presence, turned its gaze directly toward him.

For an instant, their eyes locked.

In that brief moment, both of their expressions changed.

"Ha! Hahaha! Hahahahahahahahaha—!"

Suddenly, the figure burst into hysterical laughter.

His voice was hoarse and ragged, filled with both rage and sorrow.

"It's you! I knew it was you! At the city hall, I thought my eyes were playing tricks on me, but no—you're here, after all—you traitor!"

The figure was wrapped head to toe in filthy bandages, like they hadn't been changed in years. His body was clad in tattered armor, and his voice was as hollow and ancient as the whisper of a skeleton in a grave.

The moment she saw him, Okita Sōji's eyes widened slightly.

She knew this man!

No, she didn't really know him.

She had seen him twice before—in the dreams of her Master.

That's right.

The way this man was dressed was identical to the old man who had confronted her Master in those dreams. No—it was him!

But in those dreams, she had seen her Master kill this man.



Her Master had killed him—and after that, had slaughtered every last one of the thirty-plus people on that mountain, regardless of whether they were men, women, or children, before finally leaving.

She had seen that scene clearly with her own eyes! Yet, somehow, this old man was still alive.

Was he a ghost?

No, he was clearly human. Even though he was wrapped in a strong aura of resentment, the breath and warmth of flesh and blood were unmistakable.

Could it be that he had faked his death and deceived her Master back then?

And now, had he come for revenge?

"So, you're still alive, you old bastard."

Roy's voice sounded from behind her, cold as ice.

Okita glanced back at him.

At some point, Roy had taken off his glasses.

And there, on his face, was a chilling, savage smile that sent shivers down her spine.

Up until now, her Master had always struck her as a bit odd, but overall, he seemed like a decent person.

But this smile—this expression was something she had never seen from him before. It was the kind of smile one might associate with a demon's cruelty.

The image of her Master in Okita Sōji's heart was completely shattered.

"Ah, I see now."

"I've always just been a heartless executioner. How could I expect a Master who summoned me based on compatibility to be a normal person?"

Okita thought silently to herself.

She remembered when she was first summoned in the large cavern underground, walking through that cursed mist. Okita Sōji had felt her very soul tremble.

But her Master had remained calm, as if the curse didn't faze him at all.

At that moment, she had made her assessment.

Either a genius or a madman.

And now, it was clear.

Roy was indeed a madman.

A madman who was simply very good at hiding it.

"Saber."

"Yes!"

"Kill him. Tear him apart, piece by piece."

"Understood!"

Without hesitation, Okita Sōji took a step forward, her blade aimed directly at the old man in the ragged armor standing dozens of steps away.

Who her Master truly was didn't matter to her.

Their bond was formed by compatibility, and they had promised to trust each other completely.

As long as that trust held, Okita Sōji would follow her Master's orders without question!

The girl's movements were swift, like a leopard on the hunt. In the blink of an eye, she had crossed the asphalt road and reached the old man, her blade flashing in a downward arc aimed at his legs.

The old man didn't react, as though frozen in fear.

The blade gleamed in the dim light, closing in on him in an instant.

But Okita's expression suddenly shifted. She twisted her foot, veering sharply to the side and leaping away from the old man.

Crack!

The ground beneath her erupted as if a volcano had burst open, asphalt cracking and stones scattering in all directions.

A wall of searing flames shot up from the ground, forming a barrier in front of the old man.

Okita landed a distance away, her gaze sharp.

Had she recklessly pressed forward, the old man might not have survived, but she would have been engulfed by the flames and burned to death.

And these flames weren't ordinary.

They were flames filled with resentment and curses.

Once touched by even a spark, escape would be nearly impossible.

"A Servant?"

Okita's expression grew more serious.

There was no mistaking it—these cursed flames belonged to the Servant she had sensed earlier.

Was that old man the Master of this Servant? Could he be one of the two remaining Masters who hadn't yet revealed themselves? "Come forth, Lancer!"

The old man's hunched figure raised his right hand.

Three bright red Command Spells, glowing like flames, were clearly visible.

With his command, the air around them fell into silence for a brief moment before a Servant's form materialized in front of them.

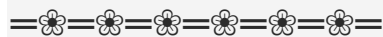
It was a twisted figure, shrouded in endless resentment, with black flames flickering around her like a living curse.

Through the flames, her silent face became visible.

She appeared to be around seventeen or eighteen years old, with short silver hair falling just to her shoulders, and eyes of dark gold that glimmered with cold indifference.

Her black nun's habit was armored, with fur-lined chains wrapped around her body. Between her black knee-high socks and the hem of her skirt, there was a faint glimpse of skin—an absolute zone of purity blurred by the cursed flames that swirled around her.

Seeing this figure, there was no way Roy wouldn't recognize her.



Chapter 37: Chapter 37: Jeanne d'Arc Alter



[🎧 Shoutout to Rverdu for joining patreon. Thank you very much.□]

"You're Lancer?"

Roy's eyes darkened as he gazed at the Lancer shrouded in malice.

There was no mistaking it.

That stance, those features—there was no doubt about it. This was Jeanne d'Arc Alter.

It was indeed possible for Jeanne Alter to have the attributes necessary for the Lancer class.

But the more Roy observed, the more he felt something was off about this Jeanne Alter.

Jeanne Alter was an extraordinarily unique Servant.

She was a being from a distorted timeline, a figure lost to history. In the restored timeline, no one remembered her, and no one could summon her. As such, there was no established "bond" connecting her to the present world. She was like a fleeting shadow, a lonely soul confined to another world.

In theory, aside from Ritsuka Fujimaru, no one should have been able to summon her.

Moreover...

There was something off about the atmosphere surrounding her.

This Jeanne Alter indeed radiated a powerful malice. Based solely on that malice, she could easily be classified as an Anti-Hero, her heart brimming with hatred, anger, and a deep-seated fury that could consume the entire world.

Typically, everyone knew Jeanne Alter as someone full of resentment. She laughed maniacally, reveled in sarcasm, and often wore exaggerated expressions. Every sentence she spoke seemed to conceal a sharp barb, as if the world owed her something.

But this Jeanne Alter didn't display the usual animosity.

Instead, her expression was unnervingly calm.

Hatred, rage, all those intense emotions—none of them were visible on her face.

Considering these two points, Roy concluded there was something unusual about this Jeanne Alter.

It felt less like she was Jeanne Alter herself and more like someone wearing her skin.

"Master?"

Okita Sōji glanced at him, seeking guidance.

"No problem. Attack!"

Roy's lips curled into a malicious grin.

Whether or not she was the real Jeanne Alter didn't matter. Kill her either way!

"Understood!"

Okita obeyed, brandishing her sword as she charged toward Lancer.

Lancer's expression tensed as she extended her arms. Two pitch-black lances materialized in her hands, crossing in front of her like a shield.

"Dual-wielding long weapons?"

Okita's wariness increased.

Wielding two weapons allowed for faster attacks compared to using one, but the trade-off was a significant decrease in power.

Only someone truly confident in their strength would dare to dual-wield.

Especially with long lances, which required immense strength to handle effectively.

This Lancer was no ordinary opponent!

With a resounding clang, their weapons clashed for the first time.

The moment their blades met, Okita's brow furrowed deeply.

She started with a probing attack, stepping forward with calculated precision, her blade targeting every opening in Lancer's defense.

Yet, despite Okita's relentless strikes, Lancer skillfully deflected them with her lances.

What was strange, however, was that Lancer made no effort to counterattack. She continued to defend, retreating and dodging Okita's onslaught.

Okita was a Servant known for her speed. Her sword moved with incredible swiftness, each strike following the next like raindrops in a storm.

Once an opponent fell behind in her rhythm, she had the confidence to push them into a corner where they wouldn't have the chance to retaliate.

That is, unless they were proficient with a long weapon like a lance.

With one quick step back, Lancer could create enough distance to force Okita into the range where her sword couldn't reach but the lance could. At that point, Okita would have to divide her attention, constantly wary of the lance's reach, preventing her from overwhelming her opponent.

From the feel of it, Lancer's strength wasn't inferior to hers, even while dual-wielding.

With such strength, it would have been easy for Lancer to create distance and gain the upper hand.

"What's this Lancer up to? Why isn't she trying to counterattack? Is this some sort of trap?"

A warning bell rang in Okita's mind.

From the start, Lancer had been on the defensive, showing no signs of wanting to strike back. It was as if she had no intention of fighting at all.

Even when Okita's blade came dangerously close, Lancer simply dodged in panic, making no effort to retaliate. If Lancer was indeed trying to lure her into a trap, then her acting was impeccable.

Okita was confused.

Did this Lancer even want to fight?

At that moment...

Buzz!

A series of runes materialized in the air.

Roy moved his fingers as if drawing, the runes coalescing into a stream of fire. It roared forward like a rocket, hurtling toward the old man in armor.

"Master!"

Lancer's expression shifted.

She took a direct hit from Okita's sword, her arms shaking violently as the impact nearly caused her to drop her lances.

Using the momentum, she quickly retreated, positioning herself between the armored old man and the incoming fire. With a sweep of her hand, black flames born from malice surged forth, instantly obliterating Roy's rune-infused flames.

Seeing this, Okita hurriedly moved back to defend Roy, fearing Lancer might seize the chance to attack him.

But surprisingly, after dispersing the flames, the black fire vanished without a trace.

There was no attempt to strike Roy at all.

Okita, observing this, was momentarily taken aback.



"What are you doing, Lancer?!"

The armored old man bellowed, sensing that something was wrong.

"Hurry up and kill him! Or are you planning to betray me as well?!"

Lancer lowered her gaze, remaining silent.

Across from them, Roy narrowed his eyes.

Something was definitely off about this Lancer.

"Master, for some reason, it seems like Lancer doesn't want to fight."

At that moment, Okita shared her suspicions with Roy through their mental link.

"But I can't be certain."

"Let's test it then."

A wicked smile spread across Roy's face.

He extended his hand, the blood-red hue in his eyes vanishing, replaced by a brilliant light as numerous runes coiled around, gleaming like precious gems.

As his Mystic Eyes glimmered, Roy swiftly inscribed a rune.

Under the influence of his eyes, the rune seemed to come alive, expanding rapidly before splitting into two, then four, then eight...

In a single breath, the runes multiplied into over two hundred.

The mass of runes formed a large, half-man-sized sphere that hurtled toward Lancer and her Master. As it flew, the runes began to glow with intense heat, as though they were about to explode at any moment.

Lancer's face tightened as she glanced around.

The street was lined with houses on both sides.

Did Roy really not care about the lives of innocent people?

Biting her lip, Lancer let out a barely audible sigh.

It was both a sigh of regret and a bitter laugh.

In the next moment, she charged toward the incoming sphere, plunging both lances into the ground. The earth beneath her feet cracked, and rivers of hellfire erupted, shattering the asphalt as molten flames surged toward the rune sphere.

Simultaneously, dozens of spears shot up from the ground like spikes, catching the fiery rune sphere and hurling it high into the sky.

Boom!

The rune sphere detonated, its explosion lighting up the night sky like a massive fireball. The surrounding area was illuminated as though it were daytime, and a wave of searing heat washed over them, reminiscent of the peak of summer.

Okita could only stare in astonishment at the enormous fireball in the sky, momentarily too shocked to speak.

"That was incredible..."

Was my Master really this powerful? Wait...

If he's this strong, then where does that leave me, a Servant who wasn't all that strong to begin with?

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Chapter 38: Chapter 38: Why Are You So Concerned About My Master?



"An explosion like that in the middle of the road would have leveled all the nearby houses!"

Lancer looked around, relieved to see that the homes lining the street hadn't been caught in the blast.

Such a massive explosion couldn't possibly have gone unnoticed by the nearby residents. The sound of commotion could be heard from the houses on either side of the road, but no one dared to step outside for a look.

The people of Fuyuki City had long learned an unspoken rule: when something unusual happens, don't go out to watch.

Otherwise, you might become the spectacle.

"Oh? You sure are kindhearted!"

Roy's voice came from the other side.

"For someone who's supposed to be a vengeful spirit, you sure care about the lives of ordinary people. It's almost like you're shouting, 'I'm not Jeanne Alter,' isn't that right? Or should I say, 'someone who's not Jeanne Alter'?"

"No, actually, this concern is more fitting for the original Jeanne d'Arc, wouldn't you say? So... could you be the real Jeanne under the guise of Alter?"

Lancer turned her head, her eyes locking onto Roy. His Mystic Eyes were trained on her, glinting with playful amusement.

Lancer remained silent.

She had no idea how Roy had immediately seen through her identity as a Servant, nor how he even knew about her Alter form.

But clearly, her true nature was exposed.

Even the side hidden beneath the Alter facade had been revealed.

Lancer—Saint Jeanne d'Arc—had no words to counter.

"Earlier, when I tested you, what would've happened if you hadn't blocked the attack? Do you understand?"

Jeanne gave Roy a reproachful look. The hellish flames flickering on her body made her gaze blurry and indistinct, but her tone hinted at her unsettled emotions.

"And what if I do? So what?"

Roy clicked his tongue in annoyance, his interest quickly fading.

He had expected something more substantial from her.

What a bore.

Classic Saint Jeanne.

Jeanne bit her lip slightly.

She had hoped Roy had a way to control the runes to prevent harm to the innocent, but his nonchalant response dashed any such hopes.

"Why..."

Why had he become this kind of person?

"Lancer,"

the armored old man's emotionless voice rang out.

"...Master?"

"I command you, with a Command Seal—kill that traitor!"

The old man raised his hand, eyes gleaming with malice. A scarlet flame-like symbol ignited on the back of his hand, transforming into pure magical energy and binding chains that wrapped around Jeanne.

"What—?"

Jeanne was shocked.

She hadn't expected her Master to use a Command Seal at this moment.

Before she could finish speaking, the magic of the Command Seal had already locked onto her, forcing her body to move. Without her control, she brandished her twin spears and charged at Roy.

"Get out of the way!"

In a panic, Jeanne shouted a warning to Roy.

"...This is one weird Master-Servant pair."

Okita Souji's expression was complicated.

Was this Lancer really an enemy Servant?

She was the Servant of that armored old man who clearly wanted nothing more than to kill Roy.

Yet, not only did she lack any real fighting spirit, but after being controlled by a Command Seal, she was still anxiously warning Roy.

Why do you care so much about my Master?

Annoyed by the thought, Okita dashed forward without hesitation, engaging Lancer head-on.

Now that Jeanne was forced to attack by the power of the Command Seal, Okita's earlier unease dissipated. She focused entirely on the fight.

"As expected, her strength and speed are formidable—she's a tough opponent. But she's not strong enough to break through my defense and reach my Master!"

Through their brief exchange, Okita thought to herself.

Ever since she had been summoned, Okita had felt oddly powerful, with her stats boosted across the board. Plus, her haori, a Noble Phantasm that

enhanced her abilities, left her in a state where she felt like she could take on two of her normal self.

As the famed genius swordsman of the Shinsengumi, her presence in Japan granted her even greater strength. She was confident she could fight toe-to-toe with top-tier Servants!

Even with the Command Seal's reinforcement, Lancer's swordsmanship wasn't superior enough to break through Okita's guard.

Okita held firm.

Roy stood behind her, safely shielded by her impeccable defense.

Lancer attempted several times to break through and strike him down, but each time Okita skillfully blocked her advance, leaving Lancer no chance to succeed.

Roy glanced at the armored old man in the distance.

Unfortunately, the road was a narrow, one-way street.

With Okita and Jeanne locked in combat directly in front of him, he couldn't make a move on the old man. Even if he found an opening, Jeanne would undoubtedly intercept him.

And just then—

"Archer!"

Suddenly, a scarlet light streaked through the air from afar.

On closer inspection, it was an arrow wrapped in surging magical energy, tearing through the wind with a piercing howl.

Its target: Lancer.

Sensing the oncoming danger, Jeanne quickly disengaged from Okita and retreated.

Okita didn't pursue, instead returning to stand guard in front of Roy.

The arrow shot past, striking the asphalt and exploding into a crater a foot deep. The impact was as powerful as a supersonic missile.

Even a Servant, hit directly, would have been gravely injured, if not killed.

The arrow disintegrated into glowing particles in the crater.

"Magus over there—did you register your entry into this city?"

A refined voice cut through the air.

A young woman with twin ponytails, walking with perfect poise, approached Roy, a flawless smile gracing her face.

"Fuyuki City is in a critical state right now. If a foreign magus like you has become a Master, I won't force you to join us in protecting the city. But attacking those who are protecting it—now that, really gets on my nerves."

Rin Tohsaka had arrived.

And she instantly grasped the situation.

The armored old man was one of the remaining Masters, but clearly, he wasn't a native of Fuyuki.

Fuyuki City had over two hundred magi, and while Rin didn't have every face memorized, someone as distinctive as the old man would have stood out. She was certain he was from out of town.

She could understand if an outsider didn't answer the City Hall's summons to help protect Fuyuki City—after all, magi weren't known for their morality. Expecting them to help out of goodwill was about as realistic as hoping for a goddess to descend from the heavens.

But to not help, and instead attack someone who was protecting the city? That was infuriating.

"Leave immediately, or we'll have no choice but to eliminate you first!"

Rin's voice carried authority as she declared her ultimatum.

Behind her stood a tall, broad-shouldered figure in a red coat—her nameless Archer. His gaze was steady, yet tinged with a complex emotion as he looked at the battlefield.

Nothing here resembled the Fuyuki City he once knew.

Only he could understand the complicated turmoil that churned within him.

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Chapter 39: Chapter 39: His Name



[👉 Shoutout to [\\_Gezerus\\_](#) for joining patreon. Thank you very much.☐]

"Master, I think we should retreat for now."

Jeanne glanced at the two opposing Master-Servant pairs in front of her. A faint look of relief passed over her face as she spoke to her Master.

"If it's two against one, I won't be able to win."

What's more, the other side had an Archer—a ranged combatant.

Fighting a swordsman with strength on par with her own while also having to guard against a powerful archer was far too dangerous, even more so than battling two melee opponents at once.

"Are you kidding me? I've finally found the traitor who massacred my entire clan, and now you want me to run?!"



The armored old man glared at Jeanne. His hatred burned so intensely that he wanted nothing more than to tear Roy apart right here and now.

There was no way he'd retreat.

Jeanne sighed softly, her expression resembling a mother trying to reason with a stubborn child.

"If you die here, your wish will never be fulfilled. Does that not concern you?"

"Guh!"

The old man stiffened.

In his eyes, revenge and the fulfillment of his wish clashed fiercely, twisting his face into a mask of rage and frustration.

"If we continue fighting, I can hold them off for a while, but you won't survive their counterattacks. That Archer is no joke."

"Enough! We're retreating!"

The old man snapped, cutting off Jeanne mid-sentence.

"Understood, Master."

Jeanne breathed a sigh of relief.

She really didn't want this armored man and Roy to kill each other.

Both of them were victims of fate, products of tragic circumstances. Their lives had already been marred by sorrow. It would be best if they never crossed paths again.

Yet fate had brought them together in the Holy Grail War, of all places, after so many years.

"Roy..."

Jeanne cast a long glance at the white-haired, red-eyed boy in the distance.

Her eyes flickered with a deep, unresolved guilt.

"I'm sorry."

With that, she lifted the armored old man effortlessly with one arm and retreated swiftly into the distance.

"Master!"

Okita Souji's eyes locked onto the retreating figures.

If they pursued now, there might be a chance to stop them!

Yet, she hadn't received any command to act.

Confused, she turned back to Roy.

Roy stared at the direction where Jeanne and her Master had fled, his expression one of baffled disbelief, as if something had hit him unexpectedly. He seemed to be murmuring something under his breath.

"Don't chase them."

Rin Tohsaka's voice interrupted, stopping both Servants.

"They're heading towards the city center. If we fight there, the casualties will be enormous."

Suddenly, Roy's head snapped around, his gaze as cold as ice as he glared at Rin.

The blood-red hue of his eyes sent a chill through the air.

Archer, standing in his red coat, tensed, silently stepping forward to place himself between Roy and Rin.

Okita Souji's eyes gleamed, and without a word, she positioned herself protectively in front of Roy.

For a moment, the atmosphere crackled with tension, as if a single wrong move would set off an explosion.

"Archer, step back."

"...Rin?"

"It's fine, just trust me."

Archer's face twisted with reluctance.

He could see the malice burning clearly in Roy's eyes, and he felt uneasy about letting Rin confront him without protection.

But under Rin's increasingly insistent gaze, Archer had no choice but to retreat a few steps, leaving Rin exposed while still keeping close enough to act if needed.

Roy's cold eyes watched their little performance with detached indifference.

"He entered the city illegally and attacked a Master who was defending it. The city itself rejects him," Rin said calmly, meeting Roy's gaze head-on. "I'll gather a team to track him down immediately. I'll even help you deal with him. But for now, please, put your glasses back on, alright?"

Her voice was gentle, like a mother coaxing a stubborn child.

Okita Souji's eyes widened slightly in surprise.

She was surprisingly adept at this, wasn't she?

It seemed like this wasn't the first time she'd had to calm him down.

Roy's gaze was sharp and cold as a blade, staring at Rin as if trying to burn a hole through her.

After a long, tense moment, he slowly raised his hand and put on his glasses.

"You make a good point."

Roy's expression shifted as if flipping a switch, and the ominous aura surrounding him disappeared in an instant, replaced by a mild smile.

"We shouldn't lose sight of the bigger picture. The real threat lies with the corrupted Servants outside the city. If we don't take them out soon, Fuyuki City will be in grave danger."

The charged tension in the air dissipated.

Rin visibly relaxed, letting out a breath she didn't realize she'd been holding.

"I'm glad you see it that way."

Even though she'd faced Roy in this state before, his overwhelming killing intent was always unnerving.

Every time they stood face to face like this, her heart pounded with anxiety.

One wrong move, and she was sure Roy would burn her to ashes on the spot.

"By the way, your Servant's identity has been exposed."

Rin's smile returned as she pointed toward Okita Souji.

Then, she gestured upward toward the sky.

"Chances are, Bazett will be coming after you soon."

Roy glanced skyward.

Even though it was nighttime, the Servant battle had been far too conspicuous, attracting a host of familiars that now circled above them. No doubt, Okita's appearance had already been spread among the magi of Fuyuki City.

At the very latest, Bazett would come knocking by tomorrow or the day after.

"I was ready for this the moment I summoned Saber."

Roy shrugged nonchalantly.

Bazett was indeed a troublesome opponent.

But if he could defeat her once, he could do it again.

Even the Mage's Association held no threat to him. With his Mystic Eyes of the Reverse Moon, capable of controlling all forms of sorcery, the mages of the Association—even the top-tier ones—were like children to him.

He had never taken the Mage's Association seriously.

Besides.

Now that the identities of Saber, Archer, Lancer, Rider, and Berserker were clear, he had a solid grasp of who they were.

As for Berserker, based on the Einzbern family's methods and Illya's behavior, it was almost certain that he was the same Greek hero, the infamous "tree log," who was endlessly hyped only to suffer humiliating defeats time and again.

Which meant only Assassin and Caster remained unknown.

Given Bazett's personality and the relic she likely used, Roy already had a strong suspicion about which Heroic Spirit she had summoned and what class they belonged to.

The only true mystery was Assassin—both the Master and the Servant were still hidden in the shadows.

But from another perspective...

Of the seven Masters, Roy held two of the spots. Rin, Illya, Bazett, and the armored old man filled four more. The last slot, then, was obvious.

The Matou family.

Among the three founding families, only the Matou family had yet to make a move.

If Zouken Matou was still alive, then he was surely a Master by now.

If he was truly dead, the Greater Grail might have chosen someone else in the Matou family—perhaps Matou Sakura, or another branch member. One way or another, this final position undoubtedly belonged to the Matou family.

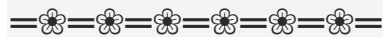
"I'll start mobilizing a team to track down that Lancer's Master. Do you know his name? Any information would help—the more detailed, the better."

Rin planned to contact her secretary at City Hall through her familiars and coordinate the search. With several magi working together, they could strip that old man down to his very core in no time.

"I know."

Roy's expression darkened as he nodded.

"His name is Chiyouemon. He's a magus who's lived for nearly four hundred years."



#### Chapter 40: Chapter 40: Torment



The night sky hung heavy, as dark as ink.

In front of the Aozaki residence, Rin Tohsaka was deep in conversation with Aizawa Ai, most likely going over the potential outcomes of the situation.

"Lord Roy, were you just in a battle with a Servant?"

Kasuya no Shiori approached the front gate.

The asphalt road outside was shattered for dozens of meters, and the pungent smell of scorched earth from the flames still lingered in the air.

The scene before her eyes was so far removed from the everyday normalcy she was used to that it left Kasuya no Shiori feeling suffocated.

"Yes," Roy nodded.

Kasuya no Shiori didn't know what to say.

She had long since learned about the concept of Servants.

But witnessing their sheer destructive power for the first time—the kind of force capable of obliterating anything with ease—was a different matter. The devastation they could wreak made her worry for Roy's safety.

And more than that...

Could the barrier around the Aozaki household really hold?

Would it withstand an attack from a Servant?

She was honestly terrified!

"Roy, maybe we should send the two of them to the City Hall?"

Rin Tohsaka had finished her conversation with Aizawa Ai and walked over with a concerned look on her face.

"While the Aozaki family's barrier is top-notch, if a Servant were to attack directly, it might not hold up, right?"

Kasuya no Shiori's anxiety only grew.

Even Aizawa Ai, standing next to her, felt a chill run down her spine.

If that was the case, maybe heading to City Hall was a better option!

"No need," Roy responded flatly.

"The Aozaki residence's barrier is currently the strongest defense in the city, far stronger than City Hall's. Even if Fuyuki City were to be destroyed, nothing would happen here."

Kasuya no Shiori and Aizawa Ai were both stunned into silence.

Fuyuki City could be razed to the ground, and the Aozaki household would remain unharmed?

That level of security sounded almost too good to be true... but could they really trust it?

"You're speaking with an unusual amount of confidence. You do realize City Hall's barrier is built on a leyline, right? What makes you think this place is better?"

Rin Tohsaka shot Roy a suspicious glance.

She knew Roy had his secrets, so she didn't press the matter. She simply mentioned it and moved on, not expecting an actual answer.

Naturally, Roy had no intention of explaining further.

"Rider?"

"No problem. Trust me."

Rider's voice resonated calmly within Roy's mind.

"The barrier of this mansion has been strengthened by me. While it appears to be Nordic rune magic on the surface, internally, it's infused with Chinese immortal arts, or what Westerners call 'conceptual magic.' It's fundamentally different from Western magecraft. Any Western magus who comes here will be completely blind to its workings. Their only option would be to brute force their way in. And if they do, I'll immediately use Earth Escape to teleport back and deal with the situation. They'll be safe."



With Taigong Wang's assurance, there was no need for Roy to worry about their safety.

"You two can relax."

Rin Tohsaka turned to Kasuya no Shiori and Aizawa Ai with a soothing smile.

"Roy doesn't make empty promises. If he says the Aozaki residence is the safest place in Fuyuki, then you can bet it's true. Just stay indoors, and don't give the enemy any chances to find a weak spot."

"Understood."

Reassured by the two, Kasuya no Shiori and Aizawa Ai finally began to relax, deciding to stay put in the house. After all, they had no real connection to the ongoing events. With enough food stocked up, they could easily stay inside for ten days or more if needed.

After giving the two women some final instructions and ensuring everything was in place, Roy and Rin Tohsaka set out towards the outskirts of the city.

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Outside Fuyuki City

"Have you decided on the first target?"

"Yes, out of the five corrupted Servants, Bazett has already chosen the corrupted Lancer. So we need to pick one of the remaining four."

Rin responded as they walked, "Among the four remaining corrupted Servants, the one that poses the greatest threat to Fuyuki City is the corrupted Caster, who can summon hordes of sea monsters. He'll be our initial target."

That makes sense.

A logical choice, considering Rin's priority as mayor of Fuyuki was the safety of the city and its people.

"By the way, Rin, do you know your Servant's true name?"

"...That's a pretty sudden question," Rin said, stopping in her tracks and giving him a curious look.

"What's this all of a sudden? Are you planning to secretly gather intel and come up with a counter-strategy against my Archer?"

"We've known each other for a few years now, so let me make one thing clear: I have my own reasons for needing to win this Holy Grail War. Even if it's you, I won't hold back. Information that could lead to victory—well, I won't be sharing that."

"Oh?"

Roy's interest was piqued.

"You've never mentioned this before. What's your reason for needing to win? What's your wish?"

"It's not exactly a secret."

Rin thought for a moment, her expression darkening.

"As you know, the root cause of why the world is in its current state is the Greater Grail. The Greater Grail, which the Three Founding Families, including mine, created, was used to make a wish that ultimately destroyed the world."

"For the people of this world, the Three Founding Families are a curse. We owe the world far too much. From a young age, I carried that burden. My greatest wish is to restore the world to how it was."

"But the Greater Grail can't grant wishes in its current state, right? So, I'm hoping to restore it to its original function, then use it to bring the world back to the way it was. That's my true wish."

"And if that's not possible, then I'll destroy the Greater Grail. Preventing another disaster like the one from ten years ago is my backup plan."

Since childhood, Rin had felt a heavy guilt, knowing her family was responsible for the suffering of the world and the death of over six billion people.

If not for the Three Founding Families, the world wouldn't have crumbled, and billions wouldn't have perished.

That immense guilt weighed on her constantly, shaping who she had become.

This was why she placed such value on the lives of the twenty thousand people still living in Fuyuki.

No matter what, she was determined to eliminate the corrupted Servants threatening the city, and she would never stand idly by while battles between Servants endangered the citizens.

"I never knew this was what you truly felt."

Roy nodded in agreement.

This was the real Rin Tohsaka.

Despite being too young at the time to understand what was happening, and despite the fact that the true culprit was the idiot who made the apocalyptic wish, Rin still carried this enormous guilt.

This was the kind of person she was.

It's no wonder she captivated so many people in the fandom.

Naturally, in his past life, Roy had been among them.

"But if I had to guess, you don't actually know Archer's true name, do you?"

"...Whoa, how did you figure that out? Are you some kind of clairvoyant, or did you sneak a peek at the script?"

Rin looked at him in disbelief.

"Haha, don't worry about the details!"

Roy adjusted his glasses with a chuckle.

"But I do know his true name. Should I summon him now? There are a few things I'd like to ask him anyway. I might as well tell you who he is while I'm at it. What do you say?"

