

## Ad Infinitum 851

Chapter 851: Magical

“You have results?” Jiang Baimian momentarily doubted her ears. “Results on the sniper’s whereabouts?”

Ever since she had the biological cochlear implant transplant, such things rarely happened.

Gitis retracted her smile and raised her eyebrows slightly. “You don’t believe me?”

“I do!” Shang Jianyao said sincerely from the bottom of his heart.

Long Yuehong and Bai Chen didn’t say a word and buried their suspicions deep down. It has only been half a day, but Gitis has already learned of the sniper’s whereabouts? It doesn’t make sense!

Even if they abandoned all their inhibitions and did their best, they still had to rely on luck to find the sniper in a few hours. Furthermore, it was most likely not something that could be completed in a day or two.

Gitis took out another piece of paper, picked up a fountain pen, lowered her head, and began scribbling on the back.

Jiang Baimian observed for a few seconds and determined that she wasn’t writing but drawing.

At some point in time, Shang Jianyao had already leaned over, stretched his neck, and sized it up. “What a nice drawing! Did you learn to draw before?”

Perhaps not expecting that this was what the other party was paying attention to, Gitis replied sullenly after a while, “No.”

“Then, you’re very talented!” Shang Jianyao said sincerely. “You have to learn when you have the opportunity. Don’t waste your talent.”

At this moment, Jiang Baimian and the others also surrounded the front desk and saw Gitis sketching a person.

The honest Geneva retorted Shang Jianyao, “No matter how well you can draw, it’s meaningless. You can’t feed yourself with it.”

Gitis couldn’t help but look up, her gaze moving back and forth between Geneva and Shang Jianyao a few times. She seemed to have never seen a smart bot argue with their owner over such trivial matters.

“Old Ge, have you forgotten? First City’s nobles enjoy music artists and painting artists,” Shang Jianyao argued.

Geneva corrected himself. “I mean that it’s meaningless in the White Knights. The general belief here advocates simplicity.”

“Look at Aester’s house. How is it simple?” Shang Jianyao scoffed.

The conversation topic between the two deviated until Gitis finished sketching the portrait.

Jiang Baimian reached out to take it and saw a man in a knee-length coat.

He carried a rectangular wooden box diagonally across his back. His hair was very short, and his nose was a little deformed but not too exaggerated.

Overall, this man didn’t exhibit any memorable characteristics at a glance. It was very difficult to outline his exact appearance if one wanted to describe him with words.

“His hair is brown, and his eyes are slightly yellow,” Gitis added.

“Is that the sniper?” Long Yuehong asked in disbelief.

Gitis nodded and spread her right palm. “Two Grand Knight gold coins. When you find and confirm the information, make payment for the remaining eight.”

“You made a mistake,” Shang Jianyao corrected. “We still have ten Knight silver coins deposited with you. It needs to be deducted.”

Gitis was momentarily speechless, and she looked a little dazed.

Although Jiang Baimian still found this matter rather magical, she still took out the only two Grand Knight gold coins she had and handed them to her. She then asked, “Can you determine which direction the sniper went?”

Gitis got the portrait back. She lowered her head again and began drawing.

A simple map soon appeared before the Old Task Force’s eyes.

“It’s probably such a route. He ended up circling into the block where Mor lives.” Gitis stopped moving her fountain pen.

She acts as if she had seen the sniper’s escape with her own eyes...?Jiang Baimian suddenly had this feeling.

She couldn’t help but wonder if Gitis or one of her important informants could read memories on a large scale. Otherwise, how could she accomplish such a feat?

Of course, there was definitely more than one ability that could achieve such an effect—Memory Reading.

Coupled with the fact that Gitis was at work today and couldn’t head out to determine matters, it was more likely for her collaborators to find the sniper’s whereabouts. After all, abilities were limited by distance. The Fire & Iron Hotel was about a kilometer away from the United Mining Association. Even Shang Jianyao—who had explored the Mind Corridor’s depths—couldn’t sit here and influence the humans there, much less others.

That was unless Gitis was a powerhouse of the New World or had a Kalendaria’s divine grace.

“He actually circled back to the block where Mor lives? We actually didn’t encounter him!” Shang Jianyao immediately sighed.

Jiang Baimian looked at Gitis and asked solemnly, “Any other clues?”

Gitis seemed to have entered her world again. She trembled and returned to her senses. “No, but I believe the information I provide is definitely worth ten Grand Knight gold coins.”

“If it’s true.” Jiang Baimian nodded.

After bidding the mysterious and powerful intelligence peddler farewell, the five Old Task Force members held the portrait of the figure, left the lobby, and got into the jeep.

After the car started, Long Yuehong—who was in the backseat—looked back at the Fire & Iron Hotel and couldn’t hide his surprise. “Where did she get the information? It’s like most of Gesterbourg’s residents are her informants...”

Bai Chen—who was beside him—pursed her lips and said, “Her ability to obtain information is indeed the strongest I’ve seen.”

“What if most of Gesterbourg’s residents are really her informants? For example, she has Heavenly Eyes. She has been monitoring all kinds of things in Gesterbourg through the eyes of a large number of people and has grasped a lot of information in real time. Yes, that’s definitely the case. It’s precisely because she has been watching the surveillance formed by hundreds or thousands of ‘screens’ that she often gets distracted and likes to be in a daze!” Shang Jianyao first had an idea before becoming more and more confident. “Everything works out!”

If not for the fact that he was driving, he would’ve applauded himself.

If not for his public decency, he would definitely clap with the horn instead.

The honest Genova reminded him, “There’s also a limit to Heavenly Eyes. The straight-line distance between the Fire & Iron Hotel and the United Mining Association is 973 meters. Gitis has never left her post today.”

“That means her informant has Heavenly Eyes. No...” Shang Jianyao stroked his chin and fell into deep thought.

It was impossible for the informant to cause Gitis to be distracted from time to time.

Jiang Baimian cleared her throat and said, “Now isn’t the time to discuss this. Let’s focus on the sniper.”

“He should indeed live near Mor’s house. He can observe him from afar during the day and snipe once any problem crops up. What’s the solution at night? Get Mor to sleep on the windowsill?” Bai Chen recalled and said, “We checked the bedroom back then and didn’t discover a bed by the window.”

Long Yuehong considered it from his perspective. “Also, if the sniper were alone and monitored Mor day and night, he definitely would’ve broken down long ago, be it physically or mentally. It’s impossible for him to last until now. I suspect that at least two or more Eighth Research Institute personnel were involved in this, perhaps even more. They then took turns monitoring him.”

“Not bad. Everyone’s analysis makes sense,” Jiang Baimian praised sincerely. “Even if we didn’t get any information from Gitis, we would’ve slowly focused our investigation on Mor’s apartment and the surrounding buildings in a day or two.”

“What a loss! We lost ten Grand Knight gold coins!” Shang Jianyao felt the pinch.

Jiang Baimian shook her head. “If it can shorten our investigation time and directly produce the sniper’s portrait, those ten Grand Knight gold coins are worth it! Yes, you have to be careful when asking around Mor’s house. There might be Eighth Research Institute spies everywhere. Hey, you can directly ‘make friends’ with them when the time comes and ask them after making friends.”

“Alright!” Shang Jianyao was already burning with impatience.

Long Yuehong exhaled and asked, “Why did the Eighth Research Institute make the matter so complicated? Why send two to three people to monitor Mor instead of erasing his memories?”

“Maybe it’s not easy to find such a useful tool like Mor. It’s also very troublesome to ‘recruit’ him again every time. Uh, frequently having his memories deleted might leave behind some aftereffects that seriously affect his intelligence or thinking abilities,” Jiang Baimian guessed. “Besides, normally speaking, it shouldn’t be possible to go beyond Aester during an investigation. Who knew that this person could still confirm the client’s identity in a certain way even though his memories had been deleted?”

“To be honest, the Eighth Research Institute has also set up a firewall around Mor. They’re really, really careful. Maybe they are worried that the information will be leaked through other means?”

As they conversed, the Old Task Force’s jeep arrived at the block where Mor lived amidst the after-work crowd.

Shang Jianyao and Jiang Baimian alighted from the car. They held the portrait and chose the shops around the target apartment to carry out their questioning.

Under Thought Implantation, nobody suspected them. Nobody felt that they needed to be vigilant about this matter, so they seriously answered their questions.

After asking around three places, a middle-aged woman—who ran a provision shop—pointed at the apartment where Mor lived and said, “Yes, he lives opposite us. He comes to buy tissues every once in a while.”

#### Chapter 852: Friendly Exchange

Upon hearing the provision shop owner’s answer, Jiang Baimian and Shang Jianyao perked up. The red light in Genova’s eye sockets flickered twice.

“Do you know which floor and room he lives in?” Jiang Baimian asked.

The boss—who had her thoughts implanted—didn’t wonder why the Old Task Force was asking about such details. She shook her head and said, “He’s not the talkative sort, and he’s like a ghost. If it weren’t for the fact that he often comes to buy things, I might not remember such a person. I only know that he enters that stack, but I’m not sure which floor or room he enters.”

As she spoke, the provision shop owner stretched out her right hand and pointed at an entrance to the apartment opposite—it was the corridor leading to Mor’s house!

The sniper lived in the same apartment stack as Mor! This matched Bai Chen’s idea of making it easier to monitor at night.

Jiang Baimian and Shang Jianyao looked at each other and didn’t ask any further. They left the provision shop and walked to the target.

They were in no rush to enter and search. Instead, they stayed outside and looked up at the lights that had lit up because of the darkness.

“16 human consciousnesses on the first floor,” Shang Jianyao suddenly said.

“16 blobs of human bioelectric signals.” Jiang Baimian didn’t turn her head and continued staring ahead.

This meant that there were a total of 16 people on the first floor. Nobody hid their consciousness.

“17 human consciousnesses on the second floor,” Shang Jianyao continued.

Jiang Baimian nodded. “The number of bioelectric signals matches.”

Just like that, the two of them quickly compared the data to confirm the situation.

Before long, Jiang Baimian and Shang Jianyao confirmed that all humans in this stack didn’t hide their consciousness. In other words, Shang Jianyao could exert influence on these 100 people at the same time without missing anyone.

The next second, Shang Jianyao took out a blue and white loudspeaker from his tactical backpack and shouted at the stack, “Residents, we are employees of the Power Safety Council. We are here to check this apartment’s circuits today. Please open the door in a timely fashion upon hearing us knock and cooperate...”

After saying that, Jiang Baimian believed that nobody in the unit would suspect the Old Task Force’s investigation. The sniper and his companion were the same.

She then turned her head and said to Geneva, “Old Ge, prepare the anesthetic rounds.”

The Old Task Force’s goal this time was to capture the target alive!

“Alright.” Geneva quickly adjusted his weapons.

Shang Jianyao then led the way into the apartment, with Jiang Baimian following closely behind.

They knocked on one door after another and checked the circuits as if they were genuinely carrying out inspections. At the same time, they observed if the people in the room looked the same as the portrait that Gitis had given them.

The Old Task Force then arrived at the top floor. They first knocked on the room facing the stairs—which was also next door to Mor's house.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Shang Jianyao slammed the wooden door and shouted, "We're here to check the power meter, circuits, and wires!"

After seven to eight seconds, the door opened.

The person who opened the door was a man in his late twenties. He had light-yellow hair and dark eye bags under his blue eyes. He wore gorgeous clothes and had the bearing of an artist.

This was clearly different from the sniper in the sketch.

"Why are you suddenly checking on the power circuits so late at night?" the long-haired man asked in confusion.

"Most people have to work during the day, so we can't gain entry." Shang Jianyao passed the man and walked into the room as though it was only right.

According to his and Jiang Baimian's senses, two people lived here. They needed to confirm the other person in the room.

At a glance, Shang Jianyao and Jiang Baimian didn't see anyone. They only realized that two rough, protruding roots and a stack of yellow tissue were on the coffee table.

The corresponding human consciousness had disappeared at some point in time.



According to the bioelectric signals, Jiang Baimian's gaze swept across the sofa on the side of the coffee table.

That person is there, but we can't see him...?With a thought, she turned her body and secretly gestured at Geneva, who had entered.

Although Geneva failed to gather the corresponding visual signals, he still trusted Big White fully. He suddenly raised his right arm and fired an anesthetic bullet at the spot Jiang Baimian had indicated.

With a bang, a figure appeared on the sofa.

This figure wore a black knee-length coat. His brown hair was combed very short, and his yellow eyes showed clear signs of stupefaction. His high nose bridge was a little deformed, and there was a rectangular black wooden box beside his right hand.

He was the sniper in the portrait!

At this moment, an anesthetic bullet was embedded between his chest and abdomen, and his body reflexively jerked up.

His companion—the long-haired man with the rich bearing of an artist—reacted.

At this moment, the two of them revealed depressed expressions one after another and actually gave up resisting.

The long-haired man sighed and said, "The decades lived have been like a dream. There's nothing to say at this point."

He sat on a chair not far away and assumed a surrendering posture.

Shang Jianyao's Literary Hipster!

After missing the best period to put up a resistance, the sniper's eyes gradually glazed over. He quickly entered an anesthetized state and collapsed on the sofa.

"Old Ge." Jiang Baimian signaled for Geneva to guard the door and prevent anyone from approaching.

Shang Jianyao smiled at the long-haired man. "Don't worry. We just want to inquire about something; we won't do anything to you. As long as you cooperate fully, I can guarantee that I won't harm your lives. We have always been trustworthy in this regard."

The long-haired man's eyes glazed over for a moment. "Sounds sincere."

He was trustworthy.

"You weren't implanted with the idea of suicide if certain questions are asked, right?" Shang Jianyao 'cautiously' confirmed.

The long-haired man shook his head. "No, besides, we probably can't commit suicide in such a situation."

"It's good that you know." Shang Jianyao smiled.

"How may I address you?" Jiang Baimian began questioning. She didn't plan on delaying matters that involved the Eighth Research Institute, afraid that an accident would happen again.

The long-haired man felt respected. "My name is Murray."

He then pointed at his unconscious companion. "His name is Benito."

Before Jiang Baimian could ask further, Shang Jianyao spoke first. "Why do you buy tissues every few days?"

He exaggerated the provision shop owner's words.

The corners of Murray's mouth twitched as he pointed at Benito. "He needs it."

"Why?" Shang Jianyao had a curious expression.

Murray clearly didn't want to answer this question, but he still cooperated. "The price he paid is that his sexual fetishes are different from ordinary people. He likes to hump trees."

Sexual fetishes? From the Double Sun domain... It's no wonder we couldn't see him just now...? Jiang Baimian came to a realization.

Part of the Double Sun domain's abilities involved vision control. This also explained why Benito could leave the United Mining Association without leaving any witnesses.

Shang Jianyao tersely acknowledged his words and pointed at the two tree roots on the coffee table. "I thought you were a sculptor; so it's actually for him!"

Murray shrugged. "My hobby is reading. Actually, I can understand why he has such fetishes. On the one hand, it's because of the price he paid. On the other hand, it's also because of some experiences from his childhood and adolescence. You should know that many boys like to climb trees. That's how he gave his first time away."

Jiang Baimian felt that the conversation was getting off-topic and quickly steered it back on track. "Are you from the Eighth Research Institute?"

"Yes," Murray admitted frankly.

"Your ability is to flip through and erase memories?" Shang Jianyao had a curious expression.

"No." Murray shook his head. "The one who can erase memories on a large scale will only come to Gesterbourg when it involves transactions of massive amounts of supplies. Usually, such trivial matters won't arouse suspicion, and there's no need to leave the subsequent matters to outsiders. There's no risk of exposing our identities."

"These trivial matters were completed through Mor?" Jiang Baimian asked.

Murray nodded slightly. “In Gesterbourg, there are very few people like him who can do many things without attracting attention.”

Jiang Baimian thought for a few seconds and directly asked, “Where’s the Eighth Research Institute’s headquarters?”

“I don’t know.” Murray laughed. “People who are sent outfield don’t know the exact location. When we need to return to headquarters, we will schedule a meeting place and time in advance. Then, someone will come to pick us up. On the way, our eyes are blindfolded, and our ears are blocked.”

Jiang Baimian wasn’t disappointed by Murray’s answer because the Eighth Research Institute’s commissioner had already given the Old Task Force such details. Therefore, she believed that the Eighth Research Institute definitely had strict rules regarding such matters.

She calmly asked, “Then, when are you returning to headquarters?”

Murray fell silent for a while before whispering, “Mor is dead. It won’t be long before we are summoned back.”

Chapter 853: President

Upon hearing that Murray and Benito were about to return to the Eighth Research Institute with their mission completed, Shang Jianyao grinned and revealed his pearly teeth as he praised, “That’s pretty good.”

This meant that the Old Task Force had a chance to tail and investigate.

Jiang Baimian didn’t comment and asked, “When did you join the Eighth Research Institute?”

The long-haired artist, Murray, yawned and said, “I’ve been in the research institute since I was born...”

According to his description, the Eighth Research Institute’s current personnel composition was divided into three categories. The first was the survivors of the Old World’s destruction who married each other and left behind descendants. Back then, the Eighth Research Institute hadn’t suffered much damage, nor did many people contract the Heartless disease—it was very similar to

the situation in Ceningmis. The second was the batches of fresh blood that the Eighth Research Institute's commissioners brought back from the Ashlands over the years. The third was the children born by the 'natives' and these fresh blood.

Murray came under the third category, and Benito was in the second category.

The Eighth Research Institute's children would undergo tests when they were young and memorize all kinds of prices and their corresponding domains. When they were 17 or 18 years old, they would end off with an Awakening as their graduation exam.

Those who could successfully Awaken would undergo further studies. They would then be assigned different jobs according to the price they paid and the abilities they obtained. Some were in charge of internal affairs, some were commissioners, and some became reviewers or researchers.

Those who couldn't Awaken could only do odd jobs, participate in all kinds of production lines, be research assistants, farm in the hot spring valley, or take on a lower-ranking administrative position. As for cleaning the research institute, that was left to ordinary robots.

In the Eighth Research Institute's system, such people were considered ordinary employees. They could at most be promoted to Research Assistant unless they had outstanding scientific talent.

Similarly, they had to rely on their qualifications or make considerable contributions to have a chance of being provided genetic enhancement serums.

Awakened were 'graduate students' who were one level higher than ordinary employees in the beginning and enjoyed all kinds of benefits. When they completed their studies and completed the many missions assigned to them, they would be promoted to lecturers.

Murray and Benito were at this level.

Normally speaking, if they could stay in Gesterbourg for another year or two without committing any mistakes, they could be promoted to Research Assistant when the rookies took over.

They currently had no hope of being promoted to Researcher. The non-negotiable condition was that they had to enter the Mind Corridor.

If the Researchers had made great contributions and had yet to explore the Mind Corridor's depths, the Eighth Research Institute often gave them a more honorary title—Associate Professor.

All Awakened who had explored the Mind Corridor's depths were Professors, but not every Professor was a member of the Professors' Association. Only those who had obtained the recommendations of at least half of the quartet—Vice President, Charlie, Professor Li, and Doctor—could enter the ranks of Eighth Research Institute's core team.

The employees in the research institute liked to call the members of the association 'tenured professors.'

Jiang Baimian muttered softly after hearing that, "In the Old World, researchers and professors are often equivalent. It's the same for research assistants and associate professors."

Murray had the carefree bearing of an artist. "An advancement system that can carve out the different levels is needed after all."

"Then, you can use tenured professors, level one, level two, and level three professors," Shang Jianyao said sincerely. "You guys read too little and play too few games. If it were me, it would be like this: Foundation Establishment Professor, Half-step Perfected Professor, Perfected Professor, Connate Professor..."

"Stop!" Jiang Baimian quickly stopped him from speaking when she saw that he was making Murray's head spin. She then turned her head and asked Murray, "Is the person who can erase memories on a large scale an Associate Professor or a Professor?"

"Professor, but he's not a member of the Professors' Association. He's working hard toward that goal." Murray didn't hide the truth.

Explored the Mind Corridor's depths...?Jiang Baimian asked further, "What's his name?"

"He's Ashlandic, and the Red River name is Chris, but he prefers us to call him Professor Qin," Murray replied. "As for what he looks like and what price he paid, do you think we will remember?"

"I understand." Shang Jianyao revealed a sympathetic expression. He then curiously asked, "Why is there only a Vice President and no President?"

“As far as I can remember, there has never been a President.” Murray shook his head. “Back then, a few surviving Old World employees were still alive. They always avoided the topic and didn’t even tell their children.”

The Eighth Research Institute’s President seems to involve a secret. Furthermore, there’s a high chance that he didn’t die when the Old World was destroyed. Otherwise, those old employees wouldn’t have avoided the corresponding question 20 to 30 years ago...

?Jiang Baimian made a certain guess.

It was very normal for the Eighth Research Institute’s President to die when the Old World was destroyed. It wasn’t worth fussing over, and there was nothing to hide unless his name itself had some kind of magic or contained a secret. Only then would the old employees keep their mouths shut.

“Can you see the stars usually?” Jiang Baimian changed the topic.

If they could, she and Geneva could use various natural references to directly determine the Eighth Research Institute’s location.

Murray shook his head, indicating that it was strictly forbidden.

After asking about the matter for a while and roughly understanding the composition of the Professors’ Association and many details of the Eighth Research Institute, Jiang Baimian signaled Shang Jianyao with her eyes.

Shang Jianyao walked up according to the plan and communicated with Murray in a questioning and conversational manner.

After his patient guidance, Murray deeply realized that this was a trustworthy team. The reason they were investigating the Eighth Research Institute was that it had produced a traitor who wanted to subvert the Professors’ Association and rule over everything.

In order to help this team resolve the Eighth Research Institute’s internal problems and not alert the enemy, Murray needed to secretly contact them before returning to the Eighth Research Institute and give them the agreed time and place to meet the ‘escorts.’

“Looking forward to working with you.” At the end of the conversation, Shang Jianyao smiled and stretched out his right palm.

Murray smiled back and shook his hand. “Looking forward to working with you.”

At this moment, Benito finally woke up.

Shang Jianyao immediately said to Murray, “Wait outside. We want to confirm if he’s on the traitor’s side.”

This was a ‘reasonable’ request, and Murray readily agreed.

Shang Jianyao did the same to Benito. Not only did he obtain his trust, but he also asked the same questions he had posed Murray.

Their answers matched.

Jiang Baimian then called Murray back and said to him, “There’s no problem with Benito either. You have to cooperate sincerely in the future.”

Murray and Benito shook hands.

“This is our contact information.” Jiang Baimian tore off a piece of paper and handed it to Murray.

Shang Jianyao asked, “How much money do you still have?”

“Seven to eight Grand Knight gold coins,” replied Benito.

“That little?” Shang Jianyao had a look of disappointment. “As commissioners of the Eighth Research Institute, you guys are actually that poor?”



Murray immediately felt a little ashamed. “Seven to eight Grand Knight gold coins is enough to last us more than half a year. Besides, we get our money from Mor. His house is now under the custody of Gesterbourg’s sheriff.”

Shang Jianyao sighed. “Seven to eight it is. Look, we’ve fulfilled our promise and didn’t harm your lives. You should also give some compensation for this. For example, six Grand Knight gold coins.”

Jiang Baimian didn’t stop him because she couldn’t tell Sheriff Yergai their whereabouts in exchange for the bounty since she wanted to use them as bait to capture the Eighth Research Institute’s ‘escorts.’

Without the five Grand Knight gold coin bounty, the Old Task Force didn’t know how to face Gitis for the time being.

They couldn’t really use the nuclear bomb or Geneva as collateral, right?

Upon thinking that it made sense, Murray and Benito took out gold coins from their bags, gathered six, and handed them to Shang Jianyao.

The rest should be enough for them to live until they were recalled to the Eighth Research Institute.

“Not bad.” As Shang Jianyao handed the Grand Knight gold coins to Jiang Baimian, he praised Murray and Benito. “You uphold the spirit of fair transactions.”

Jiang Baimian put away the gold coins and thought for a moment. “It’s best if you disguise yourselves and move elsewhere. There should be a backup safe house, right?”

“Mor has two, but they aren’t in this block,” replied Benito.

“That’s good.” Jiang Baimian heaved a sigh of relief. “Do it as soon as possible.”

She planned on using Benito’s portrait and information that the sniper had been active in the vicinity tomorrow or the day after tomorrow to fleece some—no, redeem some bounty from Sheriff Yergai.

This was worth a Grand Knight gold coin!

After bidding Murray and Benito farewell, Jiang Baimian and Shang Jianyao continued visiting Geneva to check the stack's circuits, hoping to convince the sheriffs or other Ruin Hunters that came after them that they hadn't found anything.

After about ten minutes, they ended the job, returned to the jeep, and shared the situation with Bai Chen and Long Yuehong.

Long Yuehong frowned and said, "Therefore, the next plan is to wait for Murray and Benito to be summoned back before following them to the meeting place and capturing the Eighth Research Institute employees in charge of escorting the commissioners to obtain the Eighth Research Institute's exact location?"

Wasn't this a little too simple?

#### Chapter 854: Shortcut

In the backseat, Jiang Baimian laughed. "It definitely won't be that simple. If we can find the Eighth Research Institute's exact location just by capturing a commissioner and brainwashing them so as to fish out the internal employees in charge of escorting them, they would've long been ganged up on by many large factions.

"I suspect that when the commissioners arrive at the agreed meeting place, there will be a secret review before the employees in charge of escorting the returnees rendezvous with them. They will then use a method similar to the flipping of memories to determine if there are any problems with the returnees.

"Or perhaps, the Eighth Research Institute constantly monitors the rendezvous point and the surrounding area with the satellites that it still has. Once it discovers that something is amiss, it will immediately fire missiles to destroy both parties.

"In short, we have to formulate a series of plans for different situations to see if we can think of a way to bypass those restrictions."

This wasn't something that could be completed in a short period of time. Even Jiang Baimian herself didn't have any clues.

In particular, Professor Qin from the Eighth Research Institute could clearly erase the corresponding memories on a large scale, and he had explored the Mind Corridor's depths. The range of his abilities couldn't be small. If he really hid in the dark and secretly examined Murray and Benito's experiences from a distance, it was very difficult for the Old Task Force to discover him. The premise of being able to erase the corresponding memories on a large scale undoubtedly meant that he could read them.

More importantly, Professor Qin might not hide in the area around the rendezvous point. He could completely 'ambush' Murray and Benito's return route in advance, making it impossible to guard against them.

Long Yuehong didn't say anything else, and Shang Jianyao fell into deep thought.

When they returned to the Fire & Iron Hotel, Spant had already replaced Gitis and began his night shift. However, the intelligence peddler—Gitis—didn't leave. She sat on an old sofa on one side of the hall and stared at the door with unfocused eyes.

It was unknown what she was thinking, but it was only when Shang Jianyao crept in front of her that she suddenly woke up.

She slowly stood up and asked, "How was it? Was the information accurate?"

Shang Jianyao didn't answer the question and revealed a look of enlightenment. "Were you waiting for us to return? Were you afraid that we'd renege on our debt?"

Upon seeing Spant look over curiously, Gitis lowered her voice and said, "Eight Grand Knight gold coins isn't a small sum. Many workers take two to three years to save up that sum only by not eating, drinking, or raising children."

Jiang Baimian immediately took two steps forward, took out the six Grand Knight gold coins, and handed them to Gitis. "We're still short of two coins. I'll give them to you in three days."

As the Old Task Force had already paid most of the money, Gitis didn't harp on the matter. She put away the gold coins and nodded. "You guys are very efficient; you completed the verification so quickly. Caught anyone?"

"No." Jiang Baimian shook her head sincerely.

They really didn't catch them. They only had a friendly exchange with Murray and Benito.

Shang Jianyao had a shocked expression as he looked at Gitis. "As the best intelligence peddler in Gesterbourg, shouldn't you know if we captured the target before we returned? So there are times when you don't know either!"

Gitis fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "Remember to pay up the rest in three days."

Shang Jianyao was speechless.

Gitis ignored them and walked out of the Fire & Iron Hotel as if she were sleepwalking, disappearing from the street lamps' illumination.

"What kind of information did you buy that actually costs that many gold coins?" Although Spant didn't hear the Old Task Force and Gitis's conversation clearly, he was a little surprised and curious when he saw them give his colleague several Grand Knight gold coins.

Jiang Baimian laughed and walked over. "We'll tell you for two Grand Knight gold coins."

"..." Spant weighed his wallet and gave up on his unnecessary curiosity.

Shang Jianyao approached and asked in concern, "Does she lack money?"

"I'm not sure." Spant shook his head. "I only know that her parents have been sick. She often buys some drugs and biological agents."

"I see." Shang Jianyao nodded.

After chatting for a while, the Old Task Force returned upstairs and entered their room.

They didn't immediately discuss how to use Murray and Benito to lock onto the Eighth Research Institute's exact location. Instead, they discussed what was on their plate next.

Long Yuehong glanced at Shang Jianyao and said, “Murray and Benito might be recalled at any moment. We might not have the time to go to Ceningmis.”

This way, the search for Shang Jianyao’s father’s whereabouts had to be postponed.

“Maybe the Eighth Research Institute has already moved its headquarters to Ceningmis,” Shang Jianyao said casually. “I have no objections to which comes first on these two matters.”

Jiang Baimian nodded slightly and said, “We definitely have to make the corresponding adjustments to the plan depending on the exact situation. There’s no rush to change it now. Maybe the Eighth Research Institute doesn’t plan on summoning Murray and Benito back. Instead, they will send Professor Qin over and get them to help find another intermediary like Mor?”

This was completely possible, and the Old Task Force had a chance of capturing a Professor-level figure from the Eighth Research Institute in Gesterbourg.

There was a chance that such a high-ranking member knew the Eighth Research Institute’s exact location! Of course, he wasn’t a member of the Professors’ Association yet, so Jiang Baimian couldn’t guarantee that he knew.

Bai Chen pursed her lips and suggested, “In the next few days, we can continue visiting the remaining people on Gitis’s list while waiting for Murray and Benito to send us the news. We can try our best to obtain more information regarding Hey’s father.”

They still had three people that they had yet to visit.

Jiang Baimian deliberated for a moment and said, “In three days, we have to consider secretly monitoring or even protecting Murray and Benito if they don’t receive any useful reply from the Eighth Research Institute. This is because the Eighth Research Institute might have to carry out a review first and only contact them after confirming that there are no problems with them.

“Of the remaining three people on Gitis’s list, Smith hasn’t returned to Gesterbourg. We also have sufficient ‘friendship’ with him, so we don’t have to worry about a failed visit when the time comes. As for the local Knights’ vice-commander—Eman—and the Hunter’s Guild’s president, Frances, I plan on buying the corresponding answers from Gitis directly.”

“Huh?” Long Yuehong didn’t expect his team leader to choose to ‘slack off.’

Jiang Baimian smiled and said, “We have confirmed her intelligence-gathering abilities, and everyone knows that. Since we can obtain an important target’s honest answer from her by spending a Grand Knight gold coin, why should we waste time and take the risk to visit Eman and Frances? It won’t be too late to make an attempt when the answers we receive aren’t satisfactory or are doubtful.”

As Long Yuehong felt that this made sense, he also felt that it was too much of a shortcut. It would make the team lose their subjectivity. Over time, they would become lazy and lax in their thinking.

However, it’s not like you can encounter intelligence peddlers like Gitis just because you want to or like they’re everywhere...?After some thought struggles, Long Yuehong chose to accept this plan.

This was indeed the most convenient and time-conserving method.

Bai Chen pointed out the biggest problem. “That will cost two Grand Knight gold coins, and we still owe Gitis two.”

The Old Task Force had no money.

The suite fell silent for a moment.

Jiang Baimian said after a while, “After Murray and Benito confirm that they have moved to a safe house, we’ll pass the information that Gitis gave to the sheriff named Yergai as if we found it out on our own. This can at least be exchanged for a Grand Knight gold coin. Then, we’ll take the opportunity to get some information and see if we can find clues pertaining to the Subhuti figurine and obtain some bounty.”

“What information?” Shang Jianyao asked curiously.

Jiang Baimian chuckled. “You’ll know when the time comes.”

...

The next morning, the five Old Task Force members got into the jeep and went straight to Gesterbourg's Public Security Department after receiving a telegram from Murray and Benito through Geneva.

This was located in the ancient castle, between the outer walls and the tower that acted as the main building.

Shang Jianyao and the others soon met Yergai.

The sheriff—who had already changed into a dark-blue uniform—sized up the Old Task Force. “Progress already?”

“Yes.” Jiang Baimian took out the portrait. “We managed to get the sniper's appearance from questioning.”

It was indeed done by questioning.

Yergai took the portrait and examined it carefully.

“The sniper last appeared in the block where Mor's house is. He's suspected to be living in the same apartment as Mor.” Jiang Baimian took the opportunity to brief him on their experiences. “We found several witnesses in that area. We also pretended to be members of the Power Safety Council and went to check them one by one, but we didn't find the target. Yes, there were a few rooms that were empty. Nobody opened the door.”

Yergai nodded slightly. “I'll immediately organize people to investigate. If your information is valid, you will receive a Grand Knight gold coin as payment.”

Jiang Baimian didn't question him and said, “Mr. Sheriff, we also want to photocopy some information from you.”

“What information?” Yergai asked warily.

Jiang Baimian revealed a harmless smile. “We just need to know about all the public security disputes, criminal cases, mental hospital admission records, and deaths in Gesterbourg in the past

two months. If some of them have relatively high confidentiality levels, we just need to know that it happened.”

#### Chapter 855: Connection

“That won’t do.” Yergai instinctively wanted to refuse.

Jiang Baimian wasn’t discouraged and explained with a smile, “Mr. Sheriff, we don’t need to know the secrets. We just hope to have a rough grasp of the abnormalities in Gesterbourg in the past two months to search for clues regarding the Subhuti figurine.”

“The mission regarding the Subhuti figurine?” Yergai asked in surprise. He seemed to recall that he was facing a genuine Ruin Hunter team.

Jiang Baimian nodded. “The progress of this mission is almost at a standstill. We can only find another entry point and see if we can discover any clues.”

“What has this got to do with the public security disputes, criminal cases, deaths, and hospital admission records in the past two months?” Yergai’s memory was rather good. He basically repeated Jiang Baimian’s request, but the order was reversed.

That’s right, that’s right...?Long Yuehong echoed this person’s words inwardly. He had the same question.

“It’s a secret,” Jiang Baimian replied with a smile. “Mr. Sheriff, the clues we just provided should be worth more than one Grand Knight gold coin. It’s not too much to ask for additional information since we’ve already received the payment, right? Besides, that information shouldn’t have any confidentiality requirements.”

She emphasized ‘already received payment.’

Jiang Baimian—who was familiar with the Old World’s various information and knew how to socialize—knew that bribery had to be done in a particular way. Being too blatant would only backfire at times.



Yergai was clearly stunned for a moment as if he suspected that the other party had slipped up. He quickly understood and said with an unchanged expression, “Your request is indeed reasonable. I’ll apply for the corresponding information now, but you have to bear the cost of photocopying.”

“No problem!” Jiang Baimian smiled sweetly.

After Yergai left the reception room, Long Yuehong lowered his voice and said, “Team Leader, aren’t you afraid that he will refuse? The White Knights advocate simplicity, so they will definitely avoid accepting bribes.”

“If he rejects us, we can treat it as if I had used the wrong attitude. This way, everyone can still get along well.” Jiang Baimian smiled. “However, I determined that the probability of him rejecting us was very low. On the one hand, he’s only an ordinary sheriff. His rank is equivalent to a Squire. On the other hand, he’s almost 40 years old. Unless he makes a great contribution, there’s no hope of him becoming an official Knight in his life and letting his child become a Squire. In such a situation, it’s very easy to think of a way to save up money for his family. Besides, we only want him to make an exception. The corresponding matters don’t violate any rules.”

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Knights of the White Knights were rather precious. They involved real positions in power and were capable of providing a head start for their descendants. They wouldn’t conciliatorily knight a Squire just because he was old enough.

Therefore, they were completely different from Pangu Biology in this regard. Unlike the latter, an employee could always receive at least two promotions if they worked diligently. When they retired, they might even be promoted and enjoy better treatment.

Shang Jianyao had a look of disappointment. “What about their chivalry?”

Jiang Baimian shook her head. “Ignoring the Old World’s destruction, it’s been almost 50 years since the Chaotic Era. In a place where hierarchy is solidified, where mobility is poor, and where hierarchy is emphasized, only a small number of the lower-ranking Squires and even the middle-ranking Knights will strictly adhere to chivalry when there’s no hope of promotion. In certain eras, we can preach to everyone about chivalry, and in any era, we can do so to only a few people. However, preaching to everyone in any era is objectively impossible. This world’s first nature is ultimately materialism. In fact, giving more benefits is often more useful than shouting slogans.”

She used a famous sentence from the Old World.

“Not necessarily.” Shang Jianyao disagreed.

Just as Long Yuehong thought that Shang Jianyao wanted to say that his lofty spirit would never be quenched and never be vanquished, Shang Jianyao pointed at himself and said, “With Awakened, are you sure that the world’s first nature is really materialism?”

Jiang Baimian—who wasn’t a physical scientist—was momentarily at a loss for words.

At this moment, Bai Chen repeated Yergai’s question. “What does that information have to do with the Subhuti figurine?”

Jiang Baimian retracted her gaze and smiled. “Didn’t we previously guess and preliminarily confirm that the ascetic monk came to Gesterbourg to seek refuge with the Subhuti figurine? We can’t determine if he was killed or if he died naturally for the time being. We can only choose one and dig deeper. If he really died from an illness and walked to the steel-refining furnace to die, what would he do with the Subhuti figurine?”

“Destroy, hide, or hand it to a trustworthy person,” Bai Chen replied after some deliberation.

Zen Master Redemption Shang Jianyao raised another possibility. “Maybe he would randomly place it somewhere, like beside the corpse for the fated to obtain.”

“That’s all possible.” Jiang Baimian nodded slightly. “There’s no need to mention destroying it; everyone will never be able to find it. Whether it’s hidden or obtained by someone in Gesterbourg, since the Subhuti figurine is so important, it might produce some abnormalities from time to time.

“Also, if the Subhuti figurine really lands in the hands of someone in Gesterbourg after three years, can he really do it without anyone noticing? After the corresponding mission was issued, will anyone go to him and attempt to extort him before being silenced?”

Long Yuehong came to a realization. “It’s no wonder you want to check Gesterbourg’s public security disputes, criminal cases, mental hospital admission records, and deaths in the past two months...”

This might contain the method that the figurine owner used to deal with the ones in the know.

“What if the silencing job was completed two to three years ago?” Shang Jianyao smiled coldly. “I don’t think many murderers have procrastination problems in this regard.”

Jiang Baimian exhaled and said, “Therefore, this is only a preliminary screening. If there’s no result, we’ll ask for information in the last three years. It will be very difficult for Mr. Sheriff to get that much in one go.”

Clap! Clap! Clap!?

Shang Jianyao clapped and ended the topic.

Long Yuehong sighed. “There’s so much information that needs to be examined one by one to determine if there’s anything wrong. It’s quite a lot of work.”

“The loss of the Subhuti figurine was three years ago. I’m afraid we won’t be able to find any clues if we don’t dig deep. Even a good intelligence peddler like Gitis can’t give us valuable information, right?” Jiang Baimian recalled and said, “Sometimes, the most useful solution is the clumsy method. Back in First City, didn’t we only find the real Father by flipping through the trash? Besides, we still have Old Ge. He can do large-scale data analysis directly.”

“That’s true.” Long Yuehong and Bai Chen nodded at the same time.

Jiang Baimian suddenly frowned.

“What’s wrong?” Shang Jianyao asked curiously.

Jiang Baimian thoughtfully asked, “Did I just say that a good intelligence peddler like Gitis couldn’t find any useful clues?”

“Something like that,” Shang Jianyao confirmed.

Jiang Baimian looked around and said, “Did Hey previously guess that Gitis or one of her informants had Heavenly Eyes?”

“Yes, yes, yes!” Shang Jianyao admitted happily.

Bai Chen pursed her lips and suggested, “Team Leader, are you saying that the Subhuti figurine landed in the hands of Gitis or someone from her team?”

“Is that why she can monitor the situation in Gesterbourg in real-time and obtain first-hand information? Is that why she often gets distracted and likes to be in a daze as if she lives in her own world? Is that why she deliberately avoids the matter regarding the Subhuti figurine and doesn’t give valuable clues?” Long Yuehong increasingly felt that there was a certain possibility. “If the Subhuti figurine involves power at the Kalendaria level, it’s rather normal for Gitis to see something from a kilometer or two away from the hotel’s front desk.”

Jiang Baimian nodded slightly and said, “If it really involves power at the Kalendarium level, it’s reasonable for them not to use up all the figurine’s power after three years. Next, we have to confirm when Gitis started daydreaming.”

Their current guess was considered a bold hypothesis. It was based on Gitis’s extraordinary performance and her ordinary performance regarding the Subhuti figurine. However, there were too many reasons that could explain it away.

They needed to verify it carefully.

The Old Task Force was in no rush to leave. When Yergai returned, Geneva finished scanning the corresponding information.

The photocopying fees were naturally saved.

...

The receptionist at the Fire & Iron Hotel was another employee today; he didn’t know Gitis as well as Spant. The Old Task Force asked a few questions but didn’t receive any valuable answers.

Left with no choice, the Old Task Force chose Old Henley for lunch again and found the brown-haired waiter from before.

After confirming their orders, Jiang Baimian casually asked, “Will Gitis come again this afternoon?”

“I’m not sure.” The brown-haired waiter shook his head. “She doesn’t seem to be on break today. She still has to work at night.”

“Then, where does she live? We want to get more information,” Jiang Baimian said.

The brown-haired waiter became vigilant. “Just find her at the Fire & Iron Hotel tonight.”

Jiang Baimian tersely acknowledged his words and asked, “She’s really well-informed. It’s difficult to imagine that she’s only been an intelligence peddler for a few years. Uh, did she start being an intelligence peddler a few years ago?”

“It began when she became a receptionist at the Fire & Iron Hotel,” said the brown-haired waiter as he recalled. “It’s been almost three years.”

Three years...?The Old Task Force members’ eyes lit up.

Chapter 856: “Probe”

After lunch and returning to the hotel, Long Yuehong sighed with emotion. “From the looks of it, the Subhuti figurine might really have ended up in Gitis’s hands. If we submit this clue to the Hunter’s Guild, I wonder how much of the bounty we can exchange for...”

“Wait.” The honest Genava interrupted Long Yuehong. “We worked hard to earn the bounty to pay off the money we owe Gitis. At the same time, we bought Eman and Frances’s answers from her. Now, the way to earn the bounty is to sell Gitis’s secret to the Hunter’s Guild. Isn’t there some logical error in this matter?”

“Indeed.” Shang Jianyao agreed deeply. “We can’t betray Gitis to pay her.”

Bai Chen helped Long Yuehong say, “In the Old World’s entertainment, there are many such matters, but their goal was to renege on their debt.”

“That’s not our style!” Shang Jianyao said righteously.

Jiang Baimian nodded. “It’s mainly because Gitis is relatively friendly to us and keeps her promise during the transactions...”

“She even allowed us to pay later!” Shang Jianyao added.

“In short, I can’t bear to betray Gitis’s secret.” Jiang Baimian rolled her eyes at Shang Jianyao. “Besides, we can’t be completely sure at the moment.”

Long Yuehong thought so too and suggested, “Why don’t we directly find Gitis and communicate with her about this? If the Subhuti figurine has truly landed in her hands, we can promise not to divulge this secret on the spot. The condition is that the debt will be written off while we have the two pieces of information thrown in.”

This was a win-win situation.

“Wait.” Shang Jianyao mimicked Genava. “Isn’t your solution simply to find Gitis and tell her that we know her secret? If she doesn’t waive our debt and gives us information, we’ll hand that secret to the Hunter’s Guild?”

Long Yuehong was rendered speechless.

Shang Jianyao only changed his words slightly and adjusted the sequence before tearing apart the apparent warmth and revealing its true essence: Extortion!

“I-I didn’t mean that...” Long Yuehong wanted to express that he really had no intention of extorting Gitis, but he couldn’t find the right words to explain himself.

It couldn’t be said that it was to facilitate a win-win situation, right? Although he did think so.

Jiang Baimian thought for a few seconds and said, “Gitis is on night duty tonight. We’ll find her when the time comes to purchase the information. Then, Hey can directly ‘make friends’ with her to confirm if the Subhuti figurine is in her hands.

“If we make a mistake in our judgment, we’ll find other clues. If we guess correctly, we’ll get the entire picture before making a decision. Yes, if Gitis doesn’t mention it herself, we definitely can’t say that we’re exchanging our secrecy for money.”

“Alright!” Shang Jianyao agreed without hesitation.

In the evening, Gitis—whose honey-colored hair was casually tied up—entered the Fire & Iron Hotel and completed the handover with her colleague.

The Old Task Force didn’t go to her immediately and instead leisurely went out to fill their stomachs. They waited until it was late at night and when there were no people coming and going in the lobby before walking to the front desk.

Gitis wiped away her dazed expression. “What’s the matter?”

Jiang Baimian smiled. “I want to get more information from you.”

“You still owe me two Grand Knight gold coins,” Gitis reminded them.

She wasn’t distracted at all.

Shang Jianyao immediately replied, “Didn’t we agree on three days? It’s only been a day. Besides, we’ve already cooperated twice and have shown a trustworthy side to each other. In a sense, we’re equivalent to friends...”

As long as Shang Jianyao was given a chance to speak and as long as there was indeed something to communicate about, he could complete Thought Implantation without leaving any traces, making it impossible to guard against him.

Gitis didn’t seem to expect the Old Task Force to attack her suddenly. Her eyes glazed over for a moment. “Indeed. What information do you want this time?”

Jiang Baimian tried her best to make her smile friendly and gentle. “We want to know if the Subhuti figurine is with you.”

Gitis’s pupils dilated as if a basin of ice water had been poured over her head. She looked like she was about to escape the effects of Thought Implantation.

At this moment, Shang Jianyao—who was already prepared—shouted, “We mean no harm!”

Coupled with the Thought Implantation effects from before, Gitis relaxed. She then blurted out, “How do you know?”

Jiang Baimian didn’t answer immediately and consoled her with a smile. “There’s no need to be nervous. If we really wanted to harm you with this matter, Ruin Hunters would be the ones looking for you now.”

Without giving Gitis a chance to speak, Jiang Baimian continued, “Our team has relatively rich experience. We’ve seen the abilities of the Subhuti domain like Heavenly Eyes, Destiny Connection, and Mind Connection. We also know what the Subhuti figurine might involve.

“When you showed your abilities and gave us information without any scruples, you should’ve known that we would suspect you sooner or later. Now, our suspicions have been confirmed.”

A look of enlightenment gradually appeared on Gitis’s face.

Jiang Baimian curiously asked, “Do you think it’s impossible for us to know the abilities brought about by the Subhuti figurine and make the corresponding connections, or is there a reason that compels you to do so?”

This was her greatest confusion. Gitis acted as if she didn’t know much about Awakened.

This time, Gitis didn’t daydream again. She fell silent for a few seconds before saying, “On the one hand, I did underestimate you. On the other hand, I have to make the best use of my time to earn money.”



“Why the hurry?” Shang Jianyao asked curiously.

Gitis’s eyes lost focus. After a few seconds, she replied, “In the past six months, I’ve begun to sense the figurine’s power weakening. It might lose all its magical powers in another year or two or even shorter.”

“That’s normal,” Jiang Baimian and Shang Jianyao said in unison.

It was abnormal to be able to use it frequently for nearly three years!

Gitis continued, “I have to save up enough money for my parents’ treatment and the money to buy the latest genetic drugs before the figurine loses all its power and deal with the aftermath...”

That’s why she’s a little anxious to exchange her abilities for money...?Jiang Baimian nodded and said, “Is the negative effect of the figurine making you daydream often?”

“No, it’s because I also control several people at the same time. I have to ensure that they don’t show any abnormalities in their daily lives. Furthermore, I also use Heavenly Eyes to gather real-time information on different places in Gesterbourg from time to time.” Gitis ‘sensed’ that the Old Task Force really didn’t have any ill intentions and replied in relatively great detail.

“Synchronized control...” The experienced Shang Jianyao asked excitedly, “Divine Mirror Connection and Destiny Connection?”

Divine Mirror Connection could allow one’s consciousness to split into many, but it wouldn’t create an independent consciousness. Destiny Connection could see the past of all living beings and use one’s consciousness to forcefully occupy a human’s body. It was equivalent to possession or parasitism.

A combination of the two meant that they could control multiple humans at the same time.

DiMarco was an example.

Gitis was stunned for a moment before she smiled bitterly. “You sure know these abilities well.”

Jiang Baimian didn't continue the topic for the time being and asked, "How did you obtain that Subhuti figurine?"

Gitis's eyes showed confusion for a few seconds before she said, "The monk hadn't been in good health since he came to Gesterbourg. Once, he came to my house to solicit food. I found him very pitiful and gave him some leftovers. I also asked where he usually stayed and occasionally sent him some food and clothes. However, my family's situation wasn't too good to begin with, so I rarely did so.

"What I didn't expect was that he actually came to my house one night. He thanked me for my hospitality and wanted to give me the figurine. Back then, I didn't know that the figurine was so magical and felt that it was nothing, so I took it.

"The moment I received the figurine, I immediately fell into a strange state and knew what power it hid. The monk disappeared, and the next day, he was discovered dead in the factory area..." As Gitis spoke, she bent down and picked up the canvas backpack by her feet.

This was the one she usually carried.

Gitis then took out a wooden figurine from her backpack.

It was brown and about 50 centimeters tall. It simultaneously had a benevolent expression and a bitter expression, identical to the Hunter's Guild's mission description.

Jiang Baimian asked in surprise, "You can use its power without directly coming into contact with the figurine?"

The figurine was actually in her backpack!

Jiang Baimian thought that it was hidden in the cabinet at the front desk for Gitis's convenience. She would open the cabinet slightly and touch its surface when she needed it.

"Yes, after I touch it with my hands first, I can borrow its abilities as long as it's within a certain range. I will also be affected by it." Gitis didn't specify how large the range was.

Shang Jianyao praised sincerely, "Magical!"

## Chapter 857: Other Identities

Long Yuehong inexplicably felt a sense of déjà vu when he heard Jiang Baimian, Shang Jianyao, and Gitis's conversation.

Gitis's experience was really like a replica of some protagonists in Old World entertainment. As she had good intentions and kindness, she obtained the gift of an inconspicuous figure before his death. From then on, she transcended the ordinary and trod her own path.

Jiang Baimian looked at the Subhuti figurine and retracted her surprise. "Put it back. It won't be good if anyone sees it."

Gitis sized them up deeply and increasingly believed that the Old Task Force had no ill intentions.

After she placed the Subhuti figurine back into her backpack and placed it by her feet, Shang Jianyao asked, "Then?"

"What then?" Gitis suspected that she had missed some of the conversation because she was distracted controlling the other bodies.

But at this late hour, her other bodies had basically gone to bed. She no longer needed to do any 'maintenance.'

Shang Jianyao had an expression that looked as though the 'story was unfinished.' "What happened after the monk died?"

Gitis combed her honey-colored hair and recalled. "Back then, my parents were sick and couldn't work anymore. Although my family had some savings, it definitely couldn't last long. Furthermore, they were on long-term medication.

"I knew that I could no longer rely on my family to save money and buy old genetic enhancement drugs to enhance myself. Without the genetic enhancement, it would be very difficult for me to join the army as a woman. I could rely on my contribution to become a Squire step by step or even advance to a Knight.

“During that period of time, I found everything much gloomier. The figurine’s magical properties gave me hope.”

“The sky in Gesterbourg is dark to begin with,” Shang Jianyao pointed out.

Jiang Baimian glared at him and asked Gitis, “Why did you choose to be an intelligence peddler?”

Gitis smiled, but she no longer diverted her attention to maintain the other bodies’ activity. This time, she didn’t give off a mysterious feeling. “It’s too expensive to buy genetic enhancement drugs from formal channels. Back then, I considered going to the underground black market to take a look—this required information.

“Through this matter, I got to know Mor and realized that being an intelligence peddler was lucrative. Furthermore, it’s very suitable for the abilities attached to the figurine. Mor also said that he’s old and that his energy can’t keep up. He will slowly enter retirement in the future.”

“Then, why are you a part-time receptionist?” Jiang Baimian didn’t understand.

Shang Jianyao helped explain, “Life requires a normal job. Being a worker, waitress, or Ruin Hunter isn’t suitable for Gitis. She often has to space out and can’t focus.”

“Yes,” Gitis admitted frankly. “Although the salary as a hotel receptionist is relatively low, I’ll be free most of the time. Besides, didn’t you notice? This is the center of Gesterbourg. It’s about the same distance to the settlement’s southeast and northwest border, making it easier for me to ‘monitor.’”

“I really didn’t notice that.” Jiang Baimian nodded slightly. Then, she suddenly changed the question. “Which other bodies are you controlling?”

Gitis smiled. “Seven or eight. You’ve seen one identity, Aester.”

“Aester?” Long Yuehong blurted out in surprise. “The United Mining Association’s director is actually another identity of Gitis?”

Jiang Baimian recalled the conversation with Aester and realized that apart from being too easily exhausted and being a little pensive, there was nothing that reminded her of Gitis.

“Good acting!” Shang Jianyao praised.

“This identity has been used for almost two years. There had to be many problems in the beginning. Even people close to Aester now can’t discover that Aester’s soul has changed.” Gitis wasn’t proud.

Shang Jianyao suddenly straightened his face and asked seriously, “You killed Aester?”

“No.” Gitis shook her head. “His body collapsed a few years ago, so he definitely wouldn’t be able to live to this day under normal circumstances. However, I took a fancy to his identity, status, resources, and dying state. I specially found an opportunity to meet his dying self and asked him if he wanted to make a deal. The transaction’s content was that I would complete a request of his. He would then lend me his body when it couldn’t be further maintained.

“He agreed, hoping that I could help him fulfill a wish—to retrieve the remains or relics of his mistress and two children from Ceningmis. I know how dangerous Ceningmis is, so I could only tell him that I’d try my best and that I couldn’t guarantee anything. He still agreed to the deal.”

Jiang Baimian nodded. “Since Aester has become your other identity, why are you worried about money?”

Would a large merchant—who had many private mines, a certain amount of rare metals, and hard liquor channels—lack the money to buy new genetic enhancement drugs?

“It belongs to Aester’s family. I’m only helping Aester safeguard it now and can’t use it,” Gitis replied rather seriously. “If I’m willing to violate my creed, there are too many ways to change my life and treat my parents with the help of the figurine.”

Creed... You aren’t a knight yet...?Long Yuehong muttered inwardly.

Clap! Clap! Clap!?

Shang Jianyao clapped and praised sincerely, “How law-abiding.”

Jiang Baimian wasn't stingy with her smile. "Were the other bodies also traded with those on their deathbeds?"

"Two aren't. One coveted the money I earned by selling information and wanted to kill my entire family and plunder everything." I directly shattered his consciousness and occupied his body." The corners of Gitis's mouth curled up slightly. "The other is the Eman you know—the vice commander of Gesterbourg's Courage Knights and Grand Knight Havel's assistant."

"What did he do?" Shang Jianyao didn't hide his curiosity.

Gitis looked at the lights on the street outside. "On the one hand, killing Eman was Frances's last wish."

"Frances? The local Hunter's Guild's president, Frances?" Jiang Baimian asked with a complicated expression.

Bai Chen and the others had rather interesting expressions.

"Yes." Gitis chuckled. "Frances is my other identity."

Good heavens, three of the five people on the list are you... It's no wonder you dared to take on the deep inquiry mission and receive a Grand Knight gold coin each. Isn't this using Destiny Connection to flip through memories?

?Long Yuehong didn't expect the truth.

Shang Jianyao was 'shocked.' "Smith is you too?"

"No, Smith is someone who's relatively easy to obtain information from, and so is Mor. Yes, as long as you pay him enough." Gitis shook her head in denial. "Just seven to eight bodies leave me in a daze. I feel like I can split up at any moment, so I really don't dare to add any more."

She didn't mention how many bodies she controlled and even left some leeway.

Shang Jianyao thought for a moment and said, "You have to learn how to reconcile yourselves."

Gitis looked confused, unable to understand what this meant.

“Why did Frances kill Eman?” Jiang Baimian steered the topic back on track.

Gitis paused before saying, “Eman is a strict person. He will also mete out excessive punishment to the people around him despite them making small mistakes.

“Frances’s son originally followed him as a knight, but he accidentally made a mistake and angered Eman. Normally speaking, that mistake would only result in ten lashes, but Eman doubled it and did it himself.

“Frances’s son was seriously injured because of this, and he later contracted other diseases due to bad luck before finally losing his life.” Gitis paused and said, “I agreed to Frances’s request for another reason: After obtaining so much information, I learned that many people in the factory contracted diseases, were injured, were overly exhausted, and even died. It’s not that there’s no way to resolve it, but a large number of people above are unwilling to resolve it, believing that this will reduce the benefits they obtain.

“Eman is the representative of this group of people. Heh heh, he will even showcase his chivalry from time to time and donate to the hospital or charity—how touching.

“When I found an opportunity to shatter his consciousness and occupy his body, his breakdown, pain, and weakness were no different from ordinary people and low-ranking knights he looked down on.”

“What about now? Has the factory’s situation changed?” Shang Jianyao was concerned about this matter.

“There have been certain changes under Eman’s hard work,” Gitis replied.

Shang Jianyao was very gratified. “He’s a real knight now.”

Undead Knight...? Long Yuehong couldn’t help but criticize inwardly.

Jiang Baimian thought for a moment and asked Gitis, “What disease did your parents contract?”

“My father has a serious lung disease, and this has something to do with the factory’s environment. My mother broke down from exhaustion.” Gitis revealed a sad expression. “I’ve been buying the corresponding drugs and biological agents for them, but I can barely maintain their health. They haven’t deteriorated, but they haven’t improved much.”

Unfortunately, the biological agents we carry with us are either used to stall time for the dying or treat all kinds of external wounds and infectious diseases. They aren’t suitable... Yes, there’s a nutritional biological agent that can be used for physical collapse. Although this targets the recovery of the serious injuries Little Red experienced back then, it can also improve the physical condition of people suffering from exhaustion...?Jiang Baimian nodded thoughtfully.

“We have a biological agent that should be useful to your mother. I want to use two to exchange for Eman and Frances’s answers and three Grand Knight gold coins.”

Two coins were for the money they still owed Gitis, and one was used to replenish their food reserves.

#### Chapter 858: Dreams

Gitis’s grayish-blue eyes widened as she said in a slightly strange tone, “You indeed have no ill intentions. I thought you would request me to wipe away your debt and give you information on the condition of secrecy.”

Long Yuehong laughed awkwardly upon hearing that.

“We aren’t such people,” Shang Jianyao said sincerely.

He was indeed sincere.

Jiang Baimian nodded slightly and said, “You have your principles, and so do we.”

Gitis nodded. “No wonder the prophecy I obtained said that there were no dangers in the next three days. Although you know my secret, it didn’t bring me any danger.”



That figurine also has prophetic abilities? If we had any ill intentions, wouldn't we have been discovered in advance? Shang Jianyao's Thought Implantation can't catch her off-guard...? Long Yuehong was surprised and wistful.

Sometimes, noble morals might not be the epitaph of those who were noble.

Shang Jianyao had a serious expression. "Clairvoyance? You've already shown Heavenly Eyes, Divine Mirror Connection, and Destiny Connection. How many powers does that figurine have?"

Normally speaking, an item only contained one of the creator's abilities. The corresponding aura could last about ten uses.

"Plenty," Gitis replied vaguely.

Plenty... Not only does that Subhuti figurine have at least four abilities, but it has also lasted three years despite Gitis's repeated usage. It's estimated that it can last another one to two years... I refuse to believe that this has nothing to do with a Kalendaria! From the characteristics of its strength, the aura hidden in the figurine does come from Subhuti...? Jiang Baimian really wanted to borrow the Subhuti figurine from Gitis to study it for a period of time, but the current situation was still relatively sensitive. In order not to agitate the other party and cause the effects of Thought Implantation to collapse, she held back and planned on making this request after establishing sufficient trust with Gitis.

"Unbelievable!" Shang Jianyao didn't hide his feelings.

"I know how abnormal this is. Frances was an Awakened when he was alive, and Aester had come into contact with many similar people. They have sufficient general knowledge in their memories." Gitis indicated that she wasn't a noob who knew nothing.

It was true that she didn't know anything when she first obtained the Subhuti figurine. But after three years, even a pig would become a real freak with the support of these powerful abilities.

At the mention of Aester, Jiang Baimian thoughtfully said, "You actually remembered to fulfill Aester's wish—you are indeed a person of your creed. However, why did you make the request for us to leave Gesterbourg as soon as possible and not want us to interfere in other matters?"

Gitis combed her honey-colored hair again and awkwardly said, “When I used Clairvoyance, my intuition told me that you have mysterious origins and that you would trigger something in Gesterbourg. I was worried that this would expose the secret of me having the figurine, so I told you everything I could tell you and sold all the information I could sell to you. I hoped you could end your mission here quickly and leave early.”

“You have a close understanding of Little Red’s destiny and fate.” Shang Jianyao clapped with a serious expression.

She clearly has a sufficient understanding of our team’s characteristics... The clairvoyance brought about by the Subhuti figurine is still very effective...?Long Yuehong didn’t retort Shang Jianyao in front of outsiders and only muttered inwardly.

“I didn’t expect the prophecy to come true in such a way. My secret was indeed exposed, but it didn’t bring me any danger. The event you triggered was Mor.” Gitis sighed with emotion.

She sighed and said, “When I met you as Aester, I knew that your abilities were special and that I had to be highly vigilant. But as Gitis, I felt that I had nothing to do with you, so I was careless.”

What do you mean ‘as Gitis’... Lady, you will be a mini-Shang Jianyao if you continue like this...? Jiang Baimian decided to ask about the negative effects Gitis suffered and warn her.

Before that, she tried her best to get the topic back on track. “What are your thoughts on the deal I just raised?”

“I have no objections as long as your biological agents can indeed help my mother improve her physical condition.” Gitis nodded without hesitation. “I can tell you Eman and Frances’s answers now.”

“Aren’t you afraid that the biological agents we provide won’t be effective?” Shang Jianyao was in no rush to ask.

Gitis frankly replied, “In such a situation, I will agree to your request even if you don’t provide anything and only promise me to uphold my secret. Yet, you are actually willing to exchange them with a special biological agent. Therefore, I don’t think you will lie about this.”

“I thought you used Mind Reading.” Shang Jianyao heaved a sigh of relief.

Gitis fell silent for a moment before saying, “There’s no Mind Reading.”

“It’s incomplete!” Shang Jianyao expressed his disappointment.

Gitis ignored him and looked at Jiang Baimian. “I’ll give you the information now. I’ll pay you the Grand Knight gold coin after I confirm that the biological agent is effective.”

“Deal!” Jiang Baimian laughed.

Gitis recalled and said, “After you asked me about that matter, I flipped through Eman, Frances, and Aester’s memories and found the relevant content. Overall, that Ashlandic team came to Gesterbourg and got someone to ask about Ceningmis because they heard that it didn’t suffer any damage when the Old World was destroyed, nor did many people contract the Heartless disease. They felt that there were some problems and that there might be some secrets.”

Jiang Baimian and the others nodded slightly. This was also their guess.

Gitis continued, “As far as Eman and Frances knew, the Kalendaria’s Son had indeed shown abnormally great strength. He could even project scenes of the New World onto the Ashlands.

“He claimed to control the door that leads to the New World and usually lives in the penthouse of a luxurious apartment left behind by the Old World.

“That Ashlandic team planned on visiting Ceningmis.”

Upon hearing ‘New World’s projection,’ Jiang Baimian’s heart palpitated as she asked, “What characteristics does the power displayed by the Kalendaria’s Son have?”

From the looks of it, the Kalendaria’s Son was indeed closely related to the New World. One could infer which Kalendaria he was related to from the domain of his abilities.

“Apart from the Ceningmis Council members, nobody knows the exact situation,” Gitis said unhurriedly. “Eman’s father was once affected by the Kalendaria’s Son and passed through an LCD television.”

Electromagnetic Interference? This is considered standard in the Mind Corridor's depths, much less a New World powerhouse...?Jiang Baimian asked, "Where was the Kalendaria's Son back then?"

"In Ceningmis." Gitis was very certain.

200 to 300 kilometers apart...?Jiang Baimian tersely acknowledged it. "Is there anything else?"

"No." Gitis shook her head. "I'll get Sandro to give you a map from before Ceningmis was destroyed tomorrow. At the same time, I'll label the luxurious apartment where the Kalendaria's Son lived, as well as the residence of Aester's mistress and child."

"Alright." Jiang Baimian nodded slightly. She speculated that the luxurious apartment was the source of all of Ceningmis's problems.

"Is there anything else?" Gitis looked at the area illuminated by the street lamps at the door.

Discussing the Subhuti figurine in an open environment made her a little uneasy. She didn't want to continue for too long.

"No." Jiang Baimian was already satisfied.

At this moment, Shang Jianyao asked, "What are your dreams? What do you plan on doing after the figurine's power is used up?"

Gitis's expression changed as confusion and determination appeared on her face at the same time. "I have to save up enough money to buy suitable new genetic enhancement drugs and enhance myself before the figurine's power runs out. In addition, I also have to buy the corresponding drugs and biological agents to treat my parents. Yes, I have to at least stabilize their situation.

"It won't be long before I Awaken. When the time comes, I'll combine my enhanced body and join the army to become a Squire..."

"Wait," Shang Jianyao interrupted. "Aren't you an Awakened yet? Then, how do you use the figurine?"

“Ordinary people can also use that figurine,” Gitis replied truthfully. “After using it for a long time, I feel like I’m getting closer and closer to Awakening.”

“Amazing!” Shang Jianyao praised as he looked at Long Yuehong and Bai Chen as if he were saying that they still had hope.

Without waiting for Jiang Baimian to speak, he said to Gitis, “Then?”

“Then, I want to advance step by step to become a Red Knight, White Knight, Purple Knight, Advanced Knight, and even Grand Knight. I want to work hard to change our White Knights’ current situation so that everyone can practice humility and empathy.” Gitis became more and more determined as she spoke.

Clap! Clap! Clap!?

Shang Jianyao applauded her again.

Chapter 859: Plan

Gitis was already accustomed to Shang Jianyao’s clapping, so she gave one final addition. “I want to prove that women can become real knights and reliable protectors like men.”

“No, you don’t need to prove it.” Jiang Baimian smiled. “Don’t have such a mentality because that’s how it is, isn’t that so?”

As she raised the latter question, she looked around.

Shang Jianyao, Long Yuehong, Bai Chen, and Genova nodded in unison.

Jiang Baimian retracted her gaze and smiled. “Carrying that in mind will affect your performance and give you unnecessary pressure, preventing you from seeing things clearly. Yes, I firmly believe that you can become a real knight and that you can change the White Knights’ situation to a certain extent.”

Gitis didn’t fully understand Jiang Baimian’s words and nodded slightly. “Thank you.”

Jiang Baimian casually asked, "Did the monk mention why he came to Gesterbourg?"

"No." Gitis shook her head. "Before he gave me the figurine, I always thought he was an ordinary monk. He was no different from the monks who occasionally stayed for a period of time in the past. Therefore, I never asked him such a question."

"Was there anything abnormal about his actions?" Jiang Baimian asked.

Gitis shook her head again. "We spent very little time together and had very little contact."

"Alright." Jiang Baimian didn't ask any further.

Shang Jianyao glanced at Genava and asked Gitis in concern, "Who else saw it when the monk gave you the figurine? In the past three years, has anyone chanced upon you carrying the figurine?"

"No." Gitis smiled slightly. "If such a person existed, I would've long become a bounty."

Shang Jianyao then shrugged at Jiang Baimian, indicating that the information they had obtained from the sheriff was useless and that they had wasted a Grand Knight gold coin and Old Ge's electricity.

Jiang Baimian glared at him, indicating that investigating a matter was mainly via trial and error until they found the right direction. She then said to Gitis, "I'll give you the biological agent tomorrow morning."

"No problem." Gitis clearly trusted them.

The Old Task Force then bade Gitis farewell and returned to their suite upstairs.

After sitting down, Jiang Baimian heaved a long sigh of relief and sighed with emotion. "Our two goals in Gesterbourg can be preliminarily considered as complete."

The Old Task Force had come to Gesterbourg to investigate two matters. The first was what Shang Jianyao's father's team was here to ask and what their main goal in heading to Ceningmis was. The second was the Eighth Research Institute's situation.

Through Gitis, the Old Task Force now knew what information Shang Jianyao's father's team had obtained in Gesterbourg and who they were mainly visiting in Ceningmis. After capturing the clues that resulted from Mor, Jiang Baimian and the others controlled the two commissioners—Murray and Benito—and planned on using them as bait to find the Eighth Research Institute's exact location.

This basically achieved the Old Task Force's preset goal.

"That's right, that's right." Long Yuehong nodded in agreement. "Everything has gone relatively smoothly. The next step will depend on when the Eighth Research Institute replies to Murray and Benito's telegrams."

He glanced at Shang Jianyao and deliberated before saying, "I wonder how many days it will take. Should we take the opportunity while we still have time to go to Ceningmis and find the luxurious apartment where the Kalendaria's Son lives?"

Jiang Baimian—who knew that he meant well—smiled. "It's not like Ceningmis will run. It's fine if we go later, but the Eighth Research Institute's reply might come at any moment."

"That's right, that's right." Shang Jianyao chose to agree.

"What we need to discuss now is how to use Murray and Benito to circle around the Eighth Research Institute's heavy firewall and lock onto their exact location." Geneva let out a slightly synthetic voice.

Jiang Baimian and the others fell silent at the same time and thought seriously.

After a while, Jiang Baimian deliberated and said, "It's indeed very difficult to deal with the Eighth Research Institute's secret review and filtering by relying solely on our abilities, but what if we have Heavenly Eyes?"

Bai Chen came to a realization. "Team Leader, are you saying that we should borrow the Subhuti figurine from Gitis?"

“Yes.” Jiang Baimian nodded slightly. “The Subhuti domain’s abilities are rather useful in such matters, especially abilities like Heavenly Eyes, Heavenly Ears, and Mind Reading that can prevent the target from appearing abnormal.”

In other words, under the influence of Heavenly Eyes and Heavenly Ears—which covered such a large area—the Old Task Force had no need to control Murray and Benito. They could completely make them return to normal and ‘tail’ them from afar.

This way, they could pass the secret review and filtering.

“Will Gitis lend it to us?” Long Yuehong believed that this was the biggest problem.

“We’re already friends!” Shang Jianyao emphasized.

Jiang Baimian tersely acknowledged it. “Let’s make more contact with Gitis and enhance our trust before the Eighth Research Institute replies. We’ll then provide sufficient collateral when the time comes.”

“That nuclear bomb?” Shang Jianyao was terrified.

“Why do you keep thinking about the nuclear bomb? Are our other things worthless?” Jiang Baimian replied angrily.

After discussing this matter for a while, Bai Chen changed the topic. “Then, what should we do with Murray and Benito?”

Jiang Baimian had a plan in mind and smiled. “Find an opportunity. It’s best to get the help of one of Gitis’s identities so that Murray and Benito can discover something amiss by chance and discover the contradiction, thereby escaping Hey’s Thought Implantation. This way, their experiences will naturally pass the test.”

“Not a bad idea,” Long Yuehong praised his team leader.



“But there’s a problem,” Shang Jianyao said coldly. “After Murray and Benito report this matter to the Eighth Research Institute, the Eighth Research Institute might not be in a rush to recall them. Instead, they will secretly organize people to surround and kill us in Gesterbourg by catching us off-guard.”

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Genava applauded Shang Jianyao.

This was indeed a possibility.

“After Murray and Benito return to normal, can we hire Gitis to monitor their situation using Heavenly Ears? This way, she can grasp the Eighth Research Institute’s actions immediately,” Long Yuehong suggested.

“What if the Eighth Research Institute doesn’t allow Murray and Benito to participate in the mission to eliminate us at all? After all, they are only at the Sea of Origins,” Shang Jianyao retorted.

Jiang Baimian thought for a moment before saying, “Get Gitis to predict our future? I don’t believe that the people sent by the Eighth Research Institute can hide from the prophecy.”

In short, without Gitis’s help or the Subhuti figurine’s help, the Old Task Force really couldn’t do much to the Eighth Research Institute. After all, this was also a large, secret faction.

Jiang Baimian’s initial idea was to use the slow burn characteristics of Corny Person. They would similarly restore Murray and Benito to normal before using Corny Person to influence them. When they returned to the Eighth Research Institute or saw the escorts, they would gradually do something irrational and expose their location to the Old Task Force.

The biggest problem with this plan was that once Murray and Benito left Shang Jianyao’s range of influence, their corny behavior would be out of the Old Task Force’s control. Jiang Baimian and the others couldn’t predict how this would happen.

After discussing and formulating the corresponding plan, the Old Task Force members entered their rooms.

“Now that I have time, can I continue exploring the Mind Corridor?” Shang Jianyao asked Jiang Baimian.

Jiang Baimian tersely acknowledged it. “Sure.”

“Alright!” Shang Jianyao lay on the bed excitedly.

...

In the Mind Corridor, he arrived outside Room 205 again.

There was a high chance that it belonged to February’s Kalendaria, Dawn.

Shang Jianyao split into ten and surrounded the vermilion door.

“We have to go in after all. The Kalendarium’s interference is becoming increasingly obvious.” The rash Shang Jianyao encouraged his peers.

The calm and rational Shang Jianyao stroked his chin and said, “I think we still need to wait.”

“Wait till when?” the honest Shang Jianyao asked.

The calm and rational Shang Jianyao slowly exhaled. “After we determine the Eighth Research Institute’s location and after we finish exploring Ceningmis. When that happens, we will have no regrets even if we encounter anything in this room.”

“I’ve never seen you afraid of death in the past,” scoffed the timid Shang Jianyao.

The calm and rational Shang Jianyao smiled. “Maybe it’s because we’re getting closer and closer to the answer that we have hope and worries.”

“You make yourself look like a philosopher,” the honest Shang Jianyao said.

However, most Shang Jianyaos still agreed with the calm and rational one. They decided to lock onto the Eighth Research Institute's location and figure out their father's location before exploring Room 205.

Like the previous times, they chose the rooms they had yet to enter to explore.

...

After dawn, the Old Task Force had breakfast and returned to the hotel. They saw Gitis—who had just completed the handover—and led her to their jeep.

Jiang Baimian took out the biological agents and gave two to Gitis. "One every three days. It takes about half a day to see any effects, and the effects will reach their peak on the third day."

"Alright." Gitis took the medicine and carefully placed it in her backpack.

At this moment, Shang Jianyao frankly said like a friend, "We might have to borrow your Subhuti figurine later."

Upon seeing Gitis cast a vigilant gaze at him, he quickly added, "We will give you enough collateral that can be sold for the latest genetic enhancement drugs, certain drugs, and biological agents."

"Military exoskeletons?" Gitis frowned slightly.

Shang Jianyao was 'shocked.' "How do you know?"

He then replied to himself, "Oh right, you're also Aester."

Chapter 860: 'Waking Up'

Gitis's originally dazed eyes had now turned sharp. She looked around and suppressed her voice when she saw that there was nobody around. "What kind of compensation can you give?"

"Compensation?" Shang Jianyao had an expression that said: "Talking about money hurts relationships."

“Loaning items is a business in itself.” Gitis dazed off, controlling an unknown body. She then said, “Besides, if it weren’t you, I wouldn’t agree to this deal at all.”

A merchant had to have a merchant’s professional ethics. Intelligence peddlers were also merchants.

Jiang Baimian thought for a moment before saying, “You can choose either a biological agent that can treat your father and mother’s illness or a comprehensive genetic enhancement drug. Oh, the improvement of those genetic enhancement drugs isn’t as dramatic as the latest ones, but the benefit is to become stronger overall without any repercussions. Also, the effects are relatively ordinary at your age.”

Jiang Baimian had long thought of where to obtain these items from: Apply to the company!

The mission to find the Eighth Research Institute’s exact location was approved by Pangu Biology, and the Board of Directors wanted results. Furthermore, the Old Task Force didn’t have any selfish motives. Therefore, Jiang Baimian dared to report the matter without any scruples and raise a request.

Upon hearing her description, Gitis almost didn’t hesitate. “I’ll choose the first option. Can I treat my father and mother’s illness at the same time, or can I only treat one person?”

Compared to a comprehensive genetic enhancement drug, she preferred the ones she was familiar with. After all, she had already considered the combination. Furthermore, the restrictions on age weren’t high as long as they didn’t exceed 40 years old.

She was already mentally prepared for the problems faced in old age.

“Both can be treated,” Jiang Baimian promised. Then, she glanced at Gitis’s backpack and added with a smile, “However, this biological agent might be able to restore your mother’s body a little and stabilize her condition. Yes... No drug is omnipotent. We need to find time to meet your father and mother and give them a detailed examination. Only then can we choose the most suitable biological agent.”

The mission of a physical examination was undoubtedly handled by the virtually omnipotent Geneva.

“No problem.” Gitis nodded. “I’m actually more at ease with you saying that.”

If they claimed to be capable of treating her parents’ illnesses without an examination, Gitis would most likely suspect that she had encountered cheats.

Jiang Baimian nodded slightly. “Then, schedule a time. Also, it might take half a month to obtain the corresponding biological agents.”

If they were lucky, the personnel planted by Pangu Biology in the White Knights happened to have the corresponding supplies or were working in a biological laboratory. They could prepare the drugs themselves, and they might be able to deliver the items to the Old Task Force in less than five days. If they were unlucky and had to transfer goods from the underground building, half a month was the minimum.

Gitis understood this very well. Sometimes, she had to wait more than a week for the medicine she purchased for her parents because there might not be any ready stock in Gesterbourg. They had to be bought from the White Knights’ headquarters.

“Before receiving the payment, you need to leave the military exoskeleton as collateral with me,” Gitis emphasized.

“Alright.” Jiang Baimian planned on giving Gitis the oldest model.

Shang Jianyao smiled and stretched out his right hand to Gitis. “Deal!”

He added Thought Implantation to this sentence to prevent Gitis from going back on her word midway.

Gitis was stunned for a few seconds. After she was free from her other matters, she stretched out her right hand and shook Shang Jianyao’s hand. “Deal.”

She then said in thought, “When the time comes, I’ll still control the Subhuti figurine but will use it according to your needs.”

Her meaning was very simple: she was worried about handing such a precious and magical item to the Old Task Force and planned on providing help by participating in the corresponding matters personally.

“It will be very dangerous,” Shang Jianyao warned sincerely. “We might even have to leave Gesterbourg and venture deep into Icefield. We won’t be able to return for days.”

Gitis thought for a moment before hesitantly saying, “I have no problem within three kilometers of Gesterbourg. If you are really heading to Icefield... I can hand the figurine to you.”

Once she exceeded the range, the consciousness in her other bodies would be forcefully retracted. When the time came, the people who should’ve died long ago would die on the spot.

In order to treat her parents’ illnesses, she was willing to take the risk of losing the Subhuti figurine and the other avatars.

“It’s very dangerous even in Gesterbourg.” Shang Jianyao still disagreed, looking like a true friend who was looking out for her.

“That’s right,” Jiang Baimian echoed.

Gitis smiled mysteriously with her unfocused eyes. “It’s fine. I won’t participate personally; instead, I’ll get a certain body to help you with the figurine. In that case, it won’t affect me if anything really happens.”

Shang Jianyao praised, “Divine Mirror Connection and Destiny Connection are really useful!”

“That works too.” Jiang Baimian nodded.

After settling this matter, Gitis and the Old Task Force agreed on a time to examine her parents before turning around to leave.

At this moment, Shang Jianyao stopped her and curiously asked, “I have a question. If I only use my abilities on one consciousness while you have several split consciousnesses, will it affect the other consciousnesses and other bodies?”

Gitis smiled mysteriously again. “No, unless the consciousness’s body happens to be within the range of your abilities. If it weren’t for the fact that my other consciousnesses were asleep and resting last night, preventing me from providing feedback in time, I would’ve quickly realized that something was amiss and escaped your influence. I wouldn’t have needed to wait until this morning.”

Shang Jianyao came to a realization. “No wonder you only talked about business and not friendship!”

He looked vexed.

“If it weren’t for our friendship, I wouldn’t have listened to the details of this business at all,” Gitis retorted on the spot. She didn’t say that she wouldn’t agree because she couldn’t refuse the Old Task Force’s payment.

Jiang Baimian stopped them from harping on the problem and chuckled. “No wonder Aester knew that the client was Mor despite having his memories deleted.”

This was because the consciousness that had its memories deleted was only the one occupying Aester’s body. Furthermore, she had Destiny Connection to provide some level of resistance. Gitis—who had long synchronized her memories—and the other bodies still remembered the corresponding content.

Gitis didn’t say anything else. She left and returned home as if she were sleepwalking.

...

Gesterbourg, a block away from the periphery fortifications.

Murray and Benito stayed in the safe house and waited for their return trip.

The Eighth Research Institute was rather efficient. They had been informed two days ago that the mission was over and that they could return to headquarters. They had also agreed on a time and place to meet the escorts.

Considering that they needed sufficient supplies to enter Icefield, Murray and Benito were in no rush to leave Gesterbourg. As the former wasn't wanted, he went out every day to buy necessities and took the opportunity to report the corresponding matter to Jiang Baimian, Shang Jianyao, and the others.

"We can leave the day after tomorrow." Murray looked at the swaying tree roots in the room, threw himself onto the sofa, and switched on the old radio beside him.

Gesterbourg provided sufficient electricity, and the electricity bill was cheap. The residents were very happy to use appliances wherever they could.

The only problem was that the White Knights lacked the corresponding production lines in this regard, and they didn't make up the bulk of imports every year. The residents could only gather electrical appliances from the surrounding city ruins.

The radio was the easiest to repair and reassemble among the electrical appliances. Therefore, Gesterbourg had its own radio station.

One of Murray's daily recreations was listening to the radio.

At this moment, the radio station played a story segment. He listened with relish and guessed the subsequent developments.

After Benito released his sexual frustrations, he dispelled his Invisibility and sat beside Murray.

The story this time came from an Old World novel. It was about a careless spy going to the enemy to obtain information and becoming a joke due to his antics. However, he ultimately completed the mission due to a combination of factors.

"How comical!" Murray wiped the tears from his laughter. "He doesn't even know who the enemy is or where they are, yet he dares to gather information. If not for his good luck, he would've been captured and hanged!"

"This is only a comedic story." Benito was also in a rather good mood.



The next second, the two of them were stunned. They thought of something similar to this story: The team that said they had been invited to help eliminate the opposition in the research institute didn't even know where the research institute was! They also wanted to find the research institute's exact location through the two of them!

This was simply comical!

Murray and Benito slowly looked at each other, and horror gradually appeared on their faces.