

Great Master 116

Chapter 116 The Color Black, An Ominous Sign!

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Counterfeit Cheques!

Thinking of Jenkins from yesterday, Arthur almost subconsciously thought of this answer—a somewhat famous painter, why would he be kidnapped?

Counterfeit money, counterfeit cheques, forged paintings.

These are the three most direct types.

Among them, the most valuable are the forged paintings.

But Malz had brought out a cheque.

In Arthur's mind, he had already pictured Jenkins being held captive somewhere near the sea for the past year, relentlessly forging cheques day and night.

"Counterfeit cheques?"

"Knew I couldn't hide it from you!"

"Was it 'Anna' who told you?"

Malz laughed.

Arthur took a sip of hot milk and shrugged.

Actually, such an answer wasn't difficult to guess. Anyone with a bit of insight and analytical skill could have guessed it, yet many people in the world around him tended to overlook it—because the world they lived in was quite 'simple,' and most had not received a real education, spending their entire lives trapped within their small confines.

They lacked the ability to stay calm and lacked the necessary insight.

Of course, in an era bombarded with information, when everyone could level up to a detective, they would still end up confined in new little boxes—because of arrogance and prejudice!

They would make assumptions, overestimate certain criminal methods, and criticize the professionalism of experts, thus forgetting that most of the time, advances in criminal methods are a result of technological progress, not human progress.

Humans have always been mere tool users.

For example, many perplexing mysteries end up being solved by—

Checking how many numbers the water meter has ticked over.

Inspecting the water tank on the rooftop.

Often, it's that simple.

Therefore, Arthur never overestimated any case or harbored any arrogance or prejudice. He chose to approach each case in the simplest and most direct manner, combined with the 'experience' he gained by once standing on the shoulders of giants—if there were any oversights, he would use a 'Spirit Medium' to 'communicate' with the deceased, making the culprit confess everything in terror.

As for evidence?

He was just a small 'Spirit Medium,' not a real police officer, and certainly not a famous detective.

Moreover, in this world and era, police officers were better at improvising criminals on the spot than solving cases themselves. The Sheriff's interrogation techniques always helped those 'murderers' remember everything, more effective than the 'memory restoration technique' in secret arts, and could be called a 'great memory recovery technique.'

However, all of the above applies only to ordinary cases and does not involve any mystery.

If there was mystery involved, Arthur would directly seek help from the Countess—the fact that Mystic Side Persons did not hesitate to resort to murder was enough to show that both parties involved were not simple, and the intertwined complications were not something a small 'Spirit Medium' like him could handle.

The master of South Los, the Grand Judge, was the main authority for such cases.

Going with the flow sometimes worked wonders.

After finishing his milk and placing the cup on the table, Arthur looked again at the cheque.

It was very realistic, at least he couldn't spot any issues.

The paper of the cheque was the same, and some anti-counterfeit marks didn't reveal anything to him either.

After all, Arthur was not a professional.

"This cheque was found at the 'Silver Horse Venue'—this morning, the manager of the 'Silver Horse Venue' went to the police station to report it. It was discovered by the venue's owner's friend, a true professional."

Malz explained.

"Silver Horse Venue?"

Arthur had never heard of this name, nor was it in his predecessor's memory.

"It's an underground horse betting venue in the Old Town, owned by Freeman who used to be a gang member but reformed and made his fortune, a very wealthy fellow. He owns a villa on White Bird Street in Shire District, along with servants and guards. But he's known to be stingy—which is why he chose to file the report in Shire District.

The police in Old Town just take kickbacks and wouldn't help him get his money back."

Malz added, then shared his own thoughts.

"Choosing to consume counterfeit cheques, even exchanging cheques for gold notes—these guys must have made enough money this year. Now they are likely in Inner Bay, or have already set sail.

Otherwise, Jenkins, the painter, would not have been released."

After Malz finished speaking, Arthur's expression became serious.

"What's wrong?"

"Would you give up a hen that lays golden eggs? Even if the hen went mad, lost its memory, wouldn't it be safer to just kill it?

The more these guys earn, the less they can afford to let anything go wrong with that hen—they don't want to lose what they've already gained!"

Arthur questioned Malz in response.

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Greed is the true nature of man, the most common trait.

To stop in time is the rarest.

"Are you saying that Jenkins is an accomplice of these people?

The abduction could be a self-staged act?"

Malz quickly came to realize this.

"An accomplice is for certain, but not necessarily self-staged; he might have joined later—otherwise, you can go ask Mr. Jenkins yourself?

I'm now curious as to how much money these guys have actually made!"

As soon as Arthur finished speaking, Malz turned and left.

Malz was also curious about how much money these guys had made.

If it was enough, perhaps they'd have enough for their 'boat tickets'.

The Sheriff of Shire District, walking briskly, reached the door and realized Arthur hadn't followed; the sheriff turned back with an inquisitive look.

Arthur pointed nonchalantly to the bruises on his face.

Even with a 1.8 Physique, such bruise marks wouldn't heal in just two days.

The police chief immediately slapped his forehead.

"Wait for my message!"

After speaking, the police chief quickened his pace.

Arthur glanced at this morning's XP rewards, which were the same as yesterday's, at 5 points.

One can imagine that in a few more days, it would drop to 4 points.

Or even by tomorrow, it'd be 4 points.

Afterwards, it will decrease even more.

'People who grow tired of the old and fond of the new truly chill the world.'

Arthur, with his hands folded beneath his thighs, picked up Pendragon, who was wandering nearby, lifted him over his head, and after a slight shake, whispered softly, "Thankfully, cats bring warmth to the world."

Even more fortunate is that the 'Painter' Jenkins will once again attract attention.

Allowing him to continue earning XP.

The forthcoming Rituals and secret techniques all require a large amount of XP.

This kind of attention is exactly what Arthur currently needs.

And what about gaining XP in other ways?

Food, Arthur doesn't mind.

However, combat, exploration, tasks, and the like, Arthur prefers to keep a reserved attitude.

The difficulty in taking down a Mystic Side Person is too high—it's just like that Mystic Side Person previously killed on Pine Street who didn't yield any XP notification.

What does this indicate?

The chances are high the other party isn't dead.

Instead, they have 'revived' in some way that he isn't aware of.

It's like that toad; unless you directly block the other party, these Mystic Side People are tough to kill unless they're greenhorns; otherwise, they are all prepared with all sorts of trump cards.

And exploration?

Exploring ordinary places certainly yields no XP; it has to be those relics, where the dangers within far exceed fighting with Mystic Side People!

As for tasks?

If possible, he absolutely doesn't want to accept any tasks in the turbulent South Los.

Based on his predictions about Old Lion and Mother Tigress, the risk factor of such tasks is higher than the former two combined!

After all, he's just a weak, simple, and kind Spirit Medium who can only rely on publishing ads for attention and a hard-won reputation to get by.

Tasks and such should be shelved for now.

Carrying Pendragon, Arthur quietly waited. Discover exclusive tales on empire

About an hour later, Malz returned.

The Police Chief just entered the door and said at a very fast pace.

"Jenkins is missing!"

Then, the look on the Police Chief's face grew strange, and he said in a lower voice—

"And..."

"His wife is dead!"