

Great Master 211

Chapter 211 Reminder!

At Marinda's side stood the butler of the Bernice family.

At this moment, the butler appeared completely out of his element.

Not only had he failed to stop Marinda, allowing this visitor to directly enter Bernice Manor, but he had also come to the door of this secret study.

Moreover, why had the door been opened directly?

The butler was puzzled.

Bernice was also taken aback.

Mr. Bernice looked at his butler with confusion—having already planned something when he had led Arthur into the secret study, Bernice had secretly notified his personal servant to inform the butler to delay for a while.

He believed his butler could definitely do it.

But why was Marinda appearing outside the door?

Listening?

Impossible, the soundproofing here was custom made.

Not just soundproofing, but also immune to secret technique peeping.

Therefore, it was utterly impossible for anyone inside or outside to know what was happening.

Feeling the puzzled gaze of the master,

The butler lowered his head in shame.

Neither of them noticed the crow perched atop the roof, Wuni's slightly anthropomorphic gaze sweeping over Bernice, the eyes brimming with mockery.

While Bernice and his butler were puzzled, the gazes of Arthur and Marinda swiftly communicated, boiling down to two sentences—

'Fleece him hard!'

'Sure thing!'

Arthur, with a smile on his face, stepped aside, and Marinda naturally walked in.

Moreover, she naturally wrapped her arm around Arthur's arm.

This seamless act once again caught Bernice off guard.

He had just dared to make such an overbearing demand because he knew some things.

Yes, knew.

Not just heard.

But the scene before him made Mr. Bernice realize that his sources of information were probably outdated.

At the same time, he was also amazed by the charm of the young 'Spirit Medium', who could actually attract Marinda, this mad woman.

Then, some past memories surfaced in his mind.

They were rumors about Old Charlie.

'Is this the 'Kledos Family's' bloodline?' Bernice thought with deep envy, letting out a sigh.

And then, Mr. Bernice had no choice but to regain his composure.

Because, as soon as Lady of the Eternal Night took a step forward, she asked in a deep voice—

"Bernice, do you want to start a war?"

'War', such a dreadful thing, was not something a young, kind, righteous, and naive 'Spirit Medium' could be involved in.

So, he quietly took a seat to the side.

Leaving Marinda to perform.

And this was his first time seeing Marinda negotiate.

Direct yet overbearing, and filled with darkness.

And in just under ten minutes, the fates of several businesses in South Los with considerable reputations had become sealed—Bernice Trading Company's ships would encounter rough seas and arrive three days later than agreed, while Marinda's subordinates would begin flooding the market with goods identical to those on the ships the next afternoon.

By the time the merchant ships arrived, a wanted criminal would appear on those ships.

Simultaneously, a large amount of contraband would appear in the opponent's warehouse.

For this, Bernice not only needed to grant Marinda access to some of his warehouses but also needed to support her publicly.

Of course, there was also a secret shipping route.

In fact, compared to the previous trading of chips, this secret route was crucial.

Thus, the negotiation time began to extend.

In response, Arthur closed his eyes to rest.

He believed Marinda would achieve victory—from the moment Bernice took the initiative to invite Marinda to Bernice Manor, she had already been in an invincible position.

The result was no surprise.

Marinda finally got what she wanted.

And the portion that belonged to Arthur, Marinda naturally didn't forget—

"Your shares have increased to 3%!"

You own half of the warehouse usage rights obtained from the Bernice family!

And..."

The dividends from the 3% shares were roughly 30,000 gold notes a year.

Arthur was satisfied with this.

The same went for the warehouse usage rights.

If he had dealt with it himself, he estimated he would not have obtained even a third of that half; now with Marinda intervening, it had tripled.

He was satisfied with this as well.

However, that didn't stop Arthur from listening to what Marinda was about to say next.

Nor from being full of expectation.

And indeed, Marinda was a woman who never let Arthur down.

"I've found a secret technique from the 'Cat' for you!

Don't get excited yet, I can't guarantee if it is from 'Cat Hole' or 'Cat Faction'!"

Marinda said this as she tossed a document bag to him and then turned to leave.

She had too many matters to handle, she couldn't possibly stay long.

Yet, immediately, the lady stopped in her tracks—

"I also have some business to discuss with you.

I just met a pigeon breeder who was driven to ruin by the families of Jody, White, Sharp, and Bacon..."

"Where is your carriage?"

Without waiting for Arthur to finish, Marinda directly asked.

Arthur pointed to the police carriage that had been waiting by the roadside.

Rumble, rumble.

The carriage wheels crushed over the gravel road, masking the conversations inside the carriage.

When they were about to enter the city, the carriage stopped on the roadside.

In a flash, Marinda had disappeared.

Everything was settled now.

It was just left to Marinda to take action.

The young Spirit Medium, while watching the lady disappear into the distance, opened the document bag.

Inside the document bag were two items.

One was all the procedures of Miss Qiu's Security Company, which only needed him to fill in the address—after a thorough inspection, he stored it in "Atos's Box".

The other was a research report on Yumir Manor.

Yumir Manor was originally built by Fritz for his wife Yumir located in the Mount Gale Region, where the couple lived lovingly for life, yet had no children.

Thus, after their demise, a distant nephew of Yumir inherited it, but then, this nephew unfortunately met with an accident while mountain climbing.

Therefore, the nephew's descendants viewed 'Yumir Manor' as ominous and began to list it for sale.

Eventually, it was purchased by a rich merchant from South Los—under the condition that the manor's name could not be changed.

That merchant also encountered an accident two years ago.

Now, a new owner had bought 'Yumir Manor'.

But due to the curse of 'Yumir Manor', it made the new owner feel uneasy, hence they sent a letter seeking help to No. 2 Cork Street.

"A curse?"

Arthur frowned slightly.

Then, he shook his head, while he was curious, he truly couldn't leave.

Besides, he was very much looking forward to Marinda's earlier promise.

Arthur believed that Marinda would not deceive him.

So...

'Just a rough auction detail, is it still uncertain now?'

Arthur speculated about the information revealed in Marinda's recent words, his gaze then shifted to Linda Camille who was peeking in and out of the carriage behind.

He waved his hand.

Immediately, Linda rushed over.

As soon as she was in the carriage, the young girl whispered—

"Be careful with 'Yumir Manor'!"

Chapter 212 When you can communicate with your abilities, it will become...

Saliva, incessant droplets of saliva ticking on the ground.

The figure dripping with saliva walked in the darkness, hunching its body, holding a straw doll labeled with the name 'Kledos,' and mumbling nonstop—

'You are blind, you are deaf.

You cannot see, nor hear.'

Then, the figure threw the straw doll into a fire pit.

There were several other straw doll figures in the fire pit, but under the blaze, the labels could no longer be seen, yet the charred skulls revealed themselves.

...

Sitting in the carriage, Linda Camille recounted what she had witnessed to Arthur, her face filled with fear and concern.

When she spoke of the skeletons in the fire pit, Linda's figure trembled.

It took her a good ten seconds to recover under Arthur's comfort.

"Although that guy kept saying 'cannot see,' 'cannot hear,' you must be able to see and hear, Arthur—still, do you think what we saw and heard might be a trap?

Or perhaps something distorted?"

Linda Camille asked the young 'Spirit Medium.'

Clearly, the incident with Edith, the daughter of the Bernice family this morning, had taught the young girl a harsh lesson.

What is seen is not necessarily real.

Especially after experiencing a battle, the 'Kledos Family' bloodline began to grow rapidly.

"Prophecy itself is a complex thing.

No one can be certain until the last moment.

So, we can only prepare more,

even Divine Spirits can be deceived by prophecies."

Arthur leaned back in his seat, stroking Pendragon while chuckling lightly.

"Divine Spirits can be deceived?"

To deceive Divine Spirits!"

When the girl said this, the young 'Spirit Medium' clearly saw a mysterious brightness flicker in her eyes.

That brightness was filled with excitement and...

an indescribable contentment!

The young 'Spirit Medium' saw this and his lips curled up slightly.

"Don't think too much, how could an all-knowing, all-powerful being like a Divine Spirit miscalculate the moment of my death as being just before Its own?"

Speaking softly, the girl was first stunned, then it was as if she had opened the door to a new world.

"Could it really be like that?"

The girl muttered to herself.

"Of course it can be like that, after all..."

the Milky Way is a river too!"

Arthur said with a laugh, yet his mind uncontrollably returned to 'Yumir Manor'—the young 'Spirit Medium' never doubted what the girl said.

Not only because it had been verified before, but because the girl's expressions were just too easy to read, even without 'Eagle Eye' or 'Insight.'

Thus, Arthur believed Linda.

And it was this belief that made Arthur even more curious about what had happened at 'Yumir Manor.'

Could there really be someone who hated him that much?

Probably not?

He was so upright, kind, naive, reliable, young, and besides, his reputation couldn't possibly have spread to the Mount Gale Region, could it have been...

Almost instantly, a picture of an old, handsome man with silver hair and squinty eyes burst into Arthur's mind.

'No way! No way!

It couldn't be you, old man, playing tricks, could it?'

The young Spirit Medium had wondered before how such a remote employer could have written a letter inviting him.

Turns out it was because of Old Charlie!

However, Arthur was not annoyed in the slightest; instead, he was even more eager to visit 'Yumir Manor.'

To see 'my grandfather's romantic story' with his own eyes was truly one of life's joys.

But he, truly couldn't leave.

One day has passed, and that guy Haite hasn't shown a tiny bit of activity.

Suddenly, Arthur thought of something and turned his gaze towards Linda.

"Linda, have you heard of 'Haite Furniture Store'?"

The girl looked up, puzzled.

...

The police's special carriage took a round on Garden Street.

Open and aboveboard, with no concealment.

And without stopping.

Therefore, no one would pay it any mind.

Eventually, the carriage stopped outside 'Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home'—

"My powers are still not strong enough; I didn't see anything just now."

Linda looked downcast.

Arthur immediately raised his hand and patted Linda on the shoulder.

"What are you feeling down about?"

"Your Talent is good enough. Even the heirs of the Great Nobles don't have Talent as good as yours—you're just not used to it yet."

Arthur consoled his young aunt.

He certainly didn't want a trivial matter like 'Haite' to delay a Spirit Medium with boundless prospects.

No!

Perhaps it would be more accurate to say...

Prophet!

Of course, in the Pioneer Era, more people preferred to call it a seer.

But no matter what they called her, Arthur knew very well the importance of his young aunt—her joining would make his 'Shadow Count' plan even more perfect.

"Is that so?"

Linda sounded unconvinced.

After all, the things Arthur could easily 'see', she struggled greatly to see just a glimpse, and some she couldn't see at all.

This gap made the young girl feel inadequate.

"Of course, that's how it is."

Arthur comforted Linda, and seeing her still somewhat anxious expression, the young Spirit Medium couldn't help but speak up—

"You must believe in yourself!

You need to learn to communicate with your abilities!

You don't need to treat it as some sort of strange entity; just think of it as a friend who's always there by your side."

While speaking, Arthur pointed at the Hand of Void holding Atos's Box.

The Brightness of the Bluff started to flicker.

Linda blinked, seeming to understand something.

"A friend, huh?

Can I give it a name?"

The young girl almost instinctively thought about her three cats.

Arthur really wanted to correct the difference between a friend and a pet.

However, before he could say anything, the girl had already exclaimed—

"The World!

My friend's name is The World!

Having a friend is like having the world!"

"It's a friend, not a stand-in..."

Arthur emphasized, but Linda had already started sensing the presence of her friend and closed her eyes, reaching out with her hands.

At that moment, Arthur caught a glimpse of a figure from the corner of his eye and said no more—the young Spirit Medium opened the car door and walked towards a nearby alley where Marinda's coachman was waiting.

He had spotted Edwin just as they passed Haite Furniture Store.

Edwin had seen Arthur as well.

Their eyes met, and they understood each other's thoughts.

"How is it?"

"This guy is too quiet!

Something's off!"

Marinda's coachman furrowed his brows and began to tell Arthur about the day they had spent tailing this guy.

They had divided into three teams, six people constantly watching him.

And this guy?

He hadn't made a single move.

Not that he hadn't done anything at all; at least he had bandaged his wounds and ordered Food from a private chef—they had people investigate the chef, and everything about the Food and the menu was normal, nothing unusual.

"This guy is too calm, he must have some way of sending messages."

Edwin was very sure of it.

Arthur agreed; a prisoner so calm clearly had something to rely on.

Just as Arthur was about to ask further, Linda inside the carriage, having expanded her search, unwittingly touched one of the Hands of Void. Even though Arthur immediately had the Hand of Void move away, Linda had still felt that palm.

The young girl suddenly opened her eyes.

Looking out of the carriage at Arthur, she said.

"I understand! I understand!"

It has to be humanoid!

Thank you, Arthur, I need to think this over carefully now!"

Without waiting for Arthur to respond, the young girl jumped down from the carriage and rushed towards Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home—having three kittens, the young girl needed to refill the litter and cat food more often than one would expect.

Lady Amanda, holding a steaming cup of tea, greeted the girl who burst in suddenly.

Seeing that cup of hot tea, Arthur suddenly squinted—

He knew how Haite was transmitting messages now!

Chapter 213 Make the best use of everything!

To inconspicuously pass information on Garden Street, taking 'Haite Furniture Store' itself as an example, Arthur previously had two methods.

First, change the arrangement and combination of the furniture displayed at the entrance to transmit different pieces of information with various combinations.

Second, open or close the window curtains a few minutes early in the mornings and evenings.

However, such methods, though seemingly covert, actually impose certain requirements on the receiver.

They must not attract attention and must be able to move about normally.

Under normal circumstances, this would not be a problem.

But after 'Haite Furniture Store' came under surveillance, such conditions no longer existed—because the only people who fit these two criteria were local residents, newsboys, and rubbish collectors.

And these were the very people who had long been watched by Marinda's men.

Therefore, these methods were all unfeasible.

Arthur had also been pondering, aside from these people, what else there could be.

But he had no clue until now.

And when he saw Lady Amanda greeting Linda with steaming tea, he finally understood why Haite was so confident.

The signal was certainly not the tea.

It was the steam!

Or more precisely...

Smoke!

The cooking smoke from preparing meals!

Moreover, to blind those who were watching, they chose to use a private chef as a cover—according to Arthur's guess, the private chef they ordered this time must have prepared a massive amount of food, too much for one meal, to disguise the smoke produced from cooking dinner in the evening. To better cover it up, they should have ordered a private chef once after leaving the Shire District Police Station yesterday and complimented a dish as delicious, only to order a larger quantity today.

After understanding the key point, Arthur whispered to Edwin with urgency.

"Smoke!"

"Smoke?"

Marinda's coachman was startled, then quickly caught on.

The coachman first glanced in the direction of the 'Haite Furniture Store' on Garden Street, then turned around to look at the Bell Tower overlooking the entire Garden Street—Elta Square's Bell Tower.

Elta Square has almost been the center of South Los for the last ten years.

It not only connects to West Mok Avenue but is also the venue for the annual 'Harvest Festival,' 'Cold Winter Festival' and 'Spring Planting Festival,' and 'Summer Celebration Day.'

Among them, the 'Harvest Festival' and 'Cold Winter Festival' are hosted by the Countess of South Los, supplying the residents of South Los with a limited supply of alcohol and meat, with the 'Swordsmanship Competition' being held after the 'Harvest Festival' and ending before the 'Cold Winter Festival'—despite South Los having Xisis Port, the sudden drop in temperature when the 'Cold Winter Festival' begins still causes some people to choose to rest.

Of course, at this time, most people would go to the port to make a living—this is also why there are fewer people dying of starvation in South Los compared to other places.

The 'Spring Planting Festival,' however, is prepared by individual households or farmers, mostly consisting of a sumptuous meal.

'Summer Celebration Day' is a festival for the various businesses in South Los; on this day, businesses parade in floral floats, offering discounts on store merchandise to celebrate and attract customers.

Besides these four fixed festivals in South County, the 'Seven Years' War End Day,' or the 'Peace Festival,' is held every year on May 21st.

The rest are unique festivals of various places.

For example: Inner Bay has the 'Pioneer Celebration Day.'

In South Los, there is the 'Storm Calming Day.'

Other regions will have different festivals depending on the ruling Nobles.

However, whatever celebration is held, the main venue is always the large squares in each area.

Just like Elta Square in South Los, where each celebration begins by ringing the bell twenty-seven times to commemorate the original Twenty-Seven Braves.

On regular days, the Bell Tower only rings six times in the morning and twelve times at night to notify the residents of South Los of the approximate times for daily activities.

Naturally, ringing the bell requires a Bell Ringer.

That person happens to be able to overlook Garden Street.

"Could it be them?"

Marinda's coachman asked cautiously.

He was not familiar with the Bell Ringers of Elta Square, only knowing there were two people who, apart from being divided into day and night shifts, were also responsible for maintaining the Bell Tower and alerting to fires and the like.

More?

The carriage driver didn't know.

Arthur was also unclear, but he was certain that one of the two bell ringers was related to the 'Blood Descendant', and perhaps, both were.

"Don't worry, we have already made a big breakthrough.

Next, we just need to find someone to keep an eye on these two bell ringers...

and that's your area of expertise."

Arthur said with a smile.

"I appreciate your guidance!"

Edwin responded with a smile as well.

Then, the carriage driver quietly departed.

Arthur watched the figure disappear before touching his chin—

'Marinda should give me an additional reward, I wonder what it will be?'

Arthur knew well the generosity of his collaborator.

And he knew, the more valuable he proved himself to be, the more generous his collaborator would become.

'To him who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away!

Tsk, such cruel nature!'

Arthur thought to himself, yet he stepped towards 'Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home'.

He had some matters to inform Linda about.

"Good evening, Mr. Kledos.

Come, let me have a good look at Pendragon!"

Upon entering, Lady Amanda greeted Arthur and indicated that she wanted to see Pendragon.

When he picked up Pendragon, an irrepressible smile spread across Amanda's face.

"He has gained about 1 pound and is very healthy, Mr. Kledos you are a good owner—What would you like to drink? I'm buying today."

"Plain water."

Arthur replied with a smile.

Despite guessing that the lady before him should be related to 'cats', Arthur did not show anything; he was waiting for her initiative and also to complete the 'Orange Cat' ritual.

'Pan, remember your mission well!

Hurry up and shed your whiskers for me!'

Arthur lifted Pendragon, shook him twice, and under the cat's puzzled gaze, he held it close to his chest again and walked toward Linda Camille—who seemed somewhat distracted in the corner, having been completely captivated by Arthur's earlier discourse and after touching that hand, became even more convinced of what Arthur had said.

'It might be tough!

But as long as I persevere, I can surely do it!'

The young girl thought naively.

Even just now, she had touched upon a faint trace.

This excited the girl greatly, but she did not share it with Arthur.

It wasn't that she didn't want to, the girl felt the progress was too slight, she wanted to wait until she had fully succeeded before letting Arthur know.

So, seeing Arthur approaching, the girl didn't say much, just looked at him with confusion.

"I believe you need a pigeon breeder."

After saying this, Arthur pointed outside to the carriage once again.

Although he was certain Lady Amanda had her own rules, he was more eager to have the situation under his control.

Linda looked puzzled, but still bade Lady Amanda farewell, left the store with Arthur, and boarded the carriage again.

Once the girl sat down, the carriage immediately moved forward.

It wasn't until they had gone a hundred meters that the young 'Spirit Medium' smiled and softly said—

"Edith can no longer control her so-called 'Secret Gathering', but this 'Secret Gathering' will inevitably continue to exist. The young people remaining all have considerable influence behind them—and when these forces come together, it will be a power that no one can ignore...

It will become your shield and will also be the weapon in your hands!"

Chapter 214: Baptism of Fresh Blood!

The carriage breezed down Garden Street amidst the twilight glow of the dusk, casting a ruddy hue on the round-faced girl's cheeks and making her appear even more full of vitality.

However, in the deep black pools of the girl's eyes, there was nothing but a lack of confidence.

"But, but I can't do it."

Linda said in a low voice.

"Why not?"

Arthur asked with a smile.

"I don't have Edith's charm, nor her organizational skills, and she can stir people's hearts with her words, something I'm incapable of."

Linda said, growing even less confident.

Arthur just smiled and shook his head.

"Where does Edith's charm come from?"

Is it her looks or the power of the Bernice family?

Considering she's always veiled, the former probably accounts for less than a tenth, it's the latter that's the real source of her charm!

And the Camille family is in no way inferior to the Bernice family!

As for organizational skills?

It's nothing more than the facade of being mysterious and unconventional that attracts those young people seeking 'something different.'

Even her constant veiling is likely the same.

But for you, Linda, this is a piece of cake, for she is just sham, while we are the real deal.

As for stirring up the public?

Ha."

At that, the young 'Spirit Medium' laughed, his smile full of scorn.

He said with absolute certainty in a gentle tone—

"If it were not for the honor of our own bloodline, as 'Kledos Family' bloodline heirs, we could easily incite rebellion time and again, even bringing a nation to ruin."

Having said that, the young 'Spirit Medium' once again looked at the girl.

"So what are you worried about?"

You don't need to worry about these things at all!

Don't forget!

I will help you!"

By the time Arthur spoke the last sentence, Linda had already nodded in agreement.

More than Arthur's analysis of those three points, what Linda cared most about was that Arthur would help her— in the girl's eyes, as long as Arthur was willing to help, the endeavor was bound to succeed.

And Arthur was quite pleased with Linda's reaction.

The Jody, White, Sharp, Bacon families?

Just four families, how could that be enough!

What he wanted was all of them!

He wanted all the heirs of these more than thirty merchants to become his people.

Only then could the 'Exchange' take a big step forward.

Of course, Arthur hadn't deceived Linda.

These people in her hands would become her shield, her spear.

And so, as a member of the 'Kledos Family', 'borrowing them for a bit' should be acceptable, right?

Like one big, loving family, that's hardly excessive.

Therefore, in the more than half an hour that followed, Arthur explained in detail to Linda the scenarios that could arise, and at the end, he summarized—

"News about Edith will quickly spread through the entire circle, and Linda, what you need to do at that time is to send out invitations to these people via carrier pigeon.

You need to show your strength and establish authority.

At the same time, you also need to share something that will pique their curiosity.

For example...

The once 'Blood Marquis,' now the 'Blood Descendants.'"

To better control this 'little circle,' Arthur informed Linda of some covert matters.

"What if someone asks about us?"

Linda inquired further.

"The reputation of the 'Kledos Family' is not something they are privileged to hear; you must sternly warn anyone who asks this question," Arthur said nonchalantly.

The establishment of authority was not only something Linda needed.

He needed it too.

'Is my bloodline that special?

Yes, indeed!

""

"Only such a special bloodline could possess an outstanding heir like Arthur!"

Listening to Arthur's indifferent words, Linda couldn't help but feel pride swelling in her heart.

The young girl nodded her head resolutely.

"Understood."

"Then let's go meet with that 'Pigeon Breeder' now."

Arthur stood up and walked down from the already halted police carriage, heading towards No. 99 Garden Street.

Linda naturally followed closely behind.

Many people witnessed this scene.

The clever ones had already guessed what the young 'Spirit Medium' intended to do.

For instance, Arthur's collaborator, Ms. Marinda.

At this, the lady just chuckled softly, not offering any opinion.

In her eyes, this was what Arthur deserved.

Of course, there were others filled with envy and hate.

For example, the new leader of Rat Tail Alley, Harris, almost gnashed his teeth to pieces.

He dreamt of organizing such a force to secure a place for himself in South Los.

Unfortunately...

The background of Rat Tail Alley made most people avoid him like the plague.

However, he still had a chance!

If he could just get through this difficult time, he would obtain what he had never even dared to dream of.

'Kledos, Caesar, for the sake of my great endeavor, the two of you must die!'

Sitting in a dark room, the new leader of the Rat Tail Alley became increasingly ferocious.

As for Arthur, who walked into No. 99 Garden Street, he had already clearly sensed these peering eyes and even guessed where they were coming from.

The young 'Spirit Medium' slightly lowered his eyes, concealing the smile within them.

'All eyes are on me, making Fujin all the safer.'

As darkness completely enveloped the sky, Fujin had already left No. 2 Cork Street with an Exquisite Human Puppet and the corresponding equipment in hand.

With the Bell Ringer's exposure, Arthur knew well that the operation targeting the 'Blood Descendant' was about to begin.

How could Auburn, as a 'Blood Descendant,' not make an appearance?

And, of course, it had to be in a way that no one could ever imagine.

So, Arthur took a slight risk.

Upon entering No. 99 Garden Street and introducing Tarite and Linda, he placed Atos's Box on one side of the balcony.

Wuni snatched up Atos's Box and flew into the night sky.

Creating a Blood Bat from an Exquisite Human Puppet was impossible without gold.

Thankfully, Arthur could breathe a sigh of relief that Atos's Box already contained 2,000 Gold Coins prepared by Alberts's Uncle Roschek.

'This should be enough, right?'

Arthur mused inwardly, beginning to switch perspectives.

With Fujin scouting, Auburn, as a 'Blood Descendant,' confirmed that there was no one peeping around before he tucked the Emperor's Drum. Pseudo into his chest and put on the Blood of Doting and the Blood Bat Ring, using the Exquisite Human Puppet's Transfiguration as a disguise.

"The night is always wonderful," spoke the 'Blood Descendant' in a low, hoarse voice, hopeful that the Blood of Doting would bluff the Blood Bat Ring.

He lowered his head, watching the blood-red eyes of the Blood Bat Ring begin to flicker.

For safety, 2,000 Gold Coins had already been laid out at his feet.

The next moment, the 'Blood Descendant's' own 'Fresh Blood' began to drain away.

When a third of the 'Blood Descendant's' blood had been drained, a crimson light appeared in front of him.

The light grew from dim to bright in just one breath.

And after half of the blood had drained away, a portal ten meters in diameter began to emerge.

The next moment—

A massive figure burst forth from the portal with a whoosh and stopped beside the 'Blood Descendant.' When the 'Blood Descendant' raised his hand, the giant creature affectionately rubbed its head against him.

Blood-red eyes glanced over the massive beast under the moonlight.

Spiny bat wings, talons like a tenfold enlarged eagle's claws, legs as thick as a rhino's with every single hair standing like a Sharp Dagger, a long but bent Body covered with bone after bone, as if wearing an armor made entirely of bones, and four fangs as thick as a man's thigh protruding from its mouth, making the Blood Bat all the more fierce and terrifying.

The 'Blood Descendant' picked up Atos's Box again, securing the remaining 1,883 Gold Coins inside—without a doubt, the Blood of Doting had successfully bluffed the Blood Bat Ring.

However, the 'Blood Descendant' knew all too well that there would be many uses for money that night.

Once again going over the plan in his mind, the 'Blood Descendant' leaped onto the back of the giant beast.

Instantly, the Blood Bat took flight.

Amidst the sound of flapping wings, another declaration was made by the 'Blood Descendant'—

"Let blood! For us! Conduct the sacred Baptism!"

Chapter 215 A Little Bit of Skill!

99 Western Garden Street, the terrace.

After Tarite brought out tea for the guests, he stood there feeling somewhat uneasy and embarrassed.

Similarly, when faced with strangers, Linda Camille felt equally uneasy and embarrassed.

Arthur watched the two and couldn't help but find humor in the situation—didn't both of them have experience in social situations? Yet, here they were, plagued by social anxiety.

It was like how the lady in Arthur's memory, despite having a face that could bring disaster to a country and rumors of a hundred boyfriends, had never actually held a boy's hand. To avoid awkward situations, she never denied those rumors. Moreover, to avoid trouble, she always presented a cold and aloof demeanor to strangers.

And once you got close?

Prepare to be crushed by malicious words!

What stuck in Arthur's memory most was how this lady had once reduced a suitor who dared to come calling to a state of mental collapse, causing him to flee with a tear-streaked face.

'I wonder how my dear Aunt Cassandra is doing at Inner Bay Girls' School?

She must be quite comfortable!

After all, it's an all-girls school, so there shouldn't be any annoying people around!

Arthur sighed inwardly and then suddenly thought of Marinda.

'Hmm, Marinda is special, isn't she?

There shouldn't be anyone so unique in a girls' school, right?'

Arthur thought, stroking his chin.

Soon after, the young 'Spirit Medium' withdrew his thoughts and looked towards the young girl.

"Linda, go across to the grocery store and buy some tobacco—'Old Iron Armor,' right? The new or the aged one?"

Arthur looked toward Tarite.

Owing to Marinda's influence, Arthur's understanding of tobacco and pipes had skyrocketed.

At least he could tell that Tarite smoked 'Old Iron Armor,' a brand of shredded tobacco that was chaotically flavored when new and scorned by many as not true tobacco.

It was quite popular among smokers in South Los.

"Whichever is fine,"

the 'Pigeon Breeder' said repeatedly.

After the girl stood up, she bowed slightly before heading downstairs and running to the grocery store across the street. The young 'Spirit Medium's' gaze followed the girl, and naturally, the 'Pigeon Breeder's' gaze was drawn to her as well. Beside the 'Pigeon Breeder's' ear, the young 'Spirit Medium's' voice sounded softly—

"If your daughter hadn't died, would she have been like Linda, knowledgeable and well-mannered, yet bashful?

She wouldn't have been as pretentious and dominant as Edith; she was just an ordinary, shy, kind young girl. That's why I hope she takes control of the 'Pigeon Club.'

Because only Linda's kindness can prevent that kind of thing from happening again.

After all, you wouldn't want your daughter's tragedy to repeat, would you?"

Arthur's voice was soft and drawn out.

The word [Bluff] kept flashing.

The 'Pigeon Breeder' watched Linda in the grocery store asking the owner for prices, his eyes softening as if he really saw his grown daughter buying tobacco for him.

The 'Pigeon Breeder' felt tears well up in an instant.

It was a scene he did not dare to envision even in his dreams, despite having imagined it countless times in his heart.

Tears blurred the 'Pigeon Breeder's' vision.

In the haze, the silhouette of the girl blended with that of his daughter.

All the while, the voice of the young 'Spirit Medium' continued.

"You may still be dwelling on your mistakes.

But such brooding isn't a good choice.

Doing something worthwhile is a far better option.

Go and help the innocent and kind Linda; she deserves your help.

You should know—

A fool like Clay is more than enough."

As Arthur spoke, he watched the 'Pigeon Breeder's' expression, when suddenly he frowned slightly.

"By the way, are the grocery stores on your street always this deceitful?

They would even trick a young girl like Linda?"

"Selling fresh 'Old Iron Armor' at the price of aged 'Old Iron Armor'?"

Arthur's voice was full of surprise.

But Tarite couldn't sit still any longer.

The 'Pigeon Breeder' stood in front of the balcony and bellowed across the street—

"Ussack, if you dare sell Linda the freshly-cut 'Old Iron Armor' at that price, I swear I'll beat you black and blue!"

After his shout, the 'Pigeon Breeder' nodded to Arthur and hurriedly went downstairs.

Following were the 'Pigeon Breeder's' roars inside the grocery shop and the shopkeeper's apologies.

Arthur sat in the chair on the balcony, watching everything that happened across the street in the grocery department, lifting his teacup with one hand, slightly sipped, and then his lips curled up into a smile.

You see, breaking the ice is just that simple.

All you need is the right person, a not-so-bad timing, and a little bit of "Bluff" is enough.

And by the time Arthur put down his teacup, the 'Pigeon Breeder' had already led the girl out of the grocery store, with her holding a double-wrapped roll of tobacco leaves, and the 'Pigeon Breeder' continued to babble non-stop to the grinning shopkeeper—Arthur's smile grew more pronounced.

However, when the familiar rickshaw appeared, the young 'Spirit Medium' couldn't help but sigh, got up, and walked downstairs.

"Please make sure to take Linda home safely."

Arthur instructed the patrolling policeman who drove the carriage.

"Don't worry, consultant."

The policeman gave his assurance.

Then, Arthur turned and walked toward Linda and Tarite.

"Something came up, I need to handle it."

Arthur gestured to the rickshaw behind him, and Marinda sitting inside nodded in acknowledgment.

The girl recognized Lady of the Eternal Night and immediately curtsied, bending at the waist.

The 'Pigeon Breeder' also removed his hat and gave a respectful bow.

Without further interaction, as Linda watched Arthur get into the carriage, worry filled her eyes—she hoped Arthur would be safe, but her own power was too weak.

She still couldn't hear the 'world's' voice.

Seeing this scene, the 'Pigeon Breeder' immediately made up his mind.

"Linda, do you want to protect Mr. Arthur?"

"Mhm."

The girl nodded.

"Perhaps you will have extraordinary powers in the future, but before you come into your own, I think some guys are still useful.

Please forgive me for saying useful.

But they only deserve to be used—

Follow me, I'll show you some of the information they exchange."

As he said this, the 'Pigeon Breeder' headed toward number 99.

The girl holding the tobacco leaves hurried after him.

Moonlight gradually stretched behind the girl, the bright color slowly spreading along the entire street, and when it shone upon the rickshaw, overlapping shadows fell to the ground.

Sitting inside the carriage, Arthur and Marinda instinctively shied away from the brightness, seated across from each other in the darkness, watching the girl's figure.

Only after the figure of the girl had disappeared did the two start to speak.

"Confirmed?"

"You've already given such an obvious clue, of course, it's confirmed—both 'Bell Ringers' are Blood Descendants of that 'Blood Descendant.'

And, you would never guess where that 'Blood Descendant' is!"

Saying this, Lady of the Eternal Night looked at the young 'Spirit Medium' with a slightly challenging gaze.

Obviously, Arthur had easily spotted Haite's clues, but her own subordinates had spent an entire day with no result, which made the lady eager to turn the tables here.

"Childish!"

Arthur gave back to her the word she often used to describe him, and then his brain started working rapidly.

Merely seconds later—

An answer emerged in the young 'Spirit Medium's' mind.

Chapter 216: Night of the Moon x Shadow of the Heart

Under Marinda's gaze, Arthur lifted his right hand, his wrist angled downward, as he lightly tapped twice with his index finger.

"Below.

Below the Bell Tower."

The young 'Spirit Medium' said so.

The 'Bloodline Clan' had distinctive features; aside from remote mountains and wilderness, the only way to truly 'Hide' was underground where no one could see.

And for the sake of convenience in their actions, no other underground area in any block was as convenient as the one beneath Elta Square.

Especially when both 'Bell Ringers' were of his own blood descendants, it was even more convenient.

"Tch!"

Marinda let out another sound from her mouth, although knowing that she couldn't keep the result hidden from Arthur, the thought of Arthur guessing so quickly still annoyed her, so—

"I've heard you and Linda Camille are quite close?"

Marinda asked with a knowing smile, her deep blue eyes revealing an unmistakable sense of delight.

As if she had already seen Arthur's embarrassed face.

But the next moment, she was shocked to find.

Arthur was looking at her with a puzzled face.

"Eh? Didn't I tell you?

She's my little aunt.

Remember, as my lover, next time you meet, call her 'Auntie'!"

The young 'Spirit Medium' emphasized.

Lady of the Eternal Night pressed her lips tightly together around her pipe.

'I'm not embarrassed; it's others who should feel embarrassed!'

Arthur took to heart this maxim from the sages and, instinctually, he expanded upon it—if you think I'll be embarrassed, then I'll just drag you down into an embarrassing situation like mine and let you thoroughly feel that awkwardness, since I'm shameless and won't feel embarrassed.

Looking at Arthur sitting across from her, smiling.

Once again crestfallen, Marinda clenched her fists tight.

Finally, Lady of the Eternal Night lifted her hand and knocked hard against the carriage.

Immediately, the carriage started to speed up.

"My people have already informed Harris."

Marinda's expression became serious, and with that, a flicker of surprise crossed Arthur's eyes—the young 'Spirit Medium' was well aware that it was an established plan and Marinda wouldn't bring it up again unless...

"That guy isn't planning to?"

A smile appeared on Arthur's face.

"He would like to, but his subordinates definitely don't wish to."

Marinda took a puff on her pipe, the light flickering slightly, illuminating her beautiful features and the chill in her eyes.

Arthur immediately clapped his hands in collaboration.

"Quite the presumptuous fellow!"

I always thought he was just influenced by the 'association with the wrong crowd,' but I didn't expect him to integrate himself so decisively—most likely, he intends to have his subordinates kill your stalkers during his operation, all to report back to Lord Count in a 'clean' manner, right?

Truly, clean."

Arthur exclaimed in admiration.

It was not an act; he was truly astonished.

Arthur marveled both at Harris's reckless audacity and at Marinda's far-reaching powers—the fact that ones sent by Harris for such tasks were his confidants, and yet those confidants had been bought over by Marinda was beyond belief for ordinary people.

Even Harris himself wouldn't believe it.

But to Arthur, it was all too normal.

Nothing else, Marinda was just too generous!

Arthur had a deep understanding of Marinda's generosity.

If it weren't for a lesson learned from a 'Muck Cart,' he would probably be fully cooperating with the lady, trying his best to demonstrate his value.

Unfortunately, after that lesson, he only trusted himself.

'Ah, one can only rely on oneself!'

Arthur reminded himself once more, and throughout it all, a smile remained on his face.

Having been quietly observing Arthur, Marinda watched as Arthur sighed and then smiled, gently rubbing her thumb that was pinching the pipe.

"What exactly is this guy hiding?

Not just 'Cat Faction.Hei'...

Is there more?"

Marinda wondered.

Arthur, without showing any change of expression, glanced at Marinda's thumb that she had rubbed, and thought to himself.

"This woman is very likely to start speculating from 'Cat Faction.Hei.' Should I reveal a little more?

No!

It's still too early!

Wait a bit longer!"

A smile is an excellent disguise.

But it is precisely because of this that one attracts more attention. Arthur was very clear about this, so he smiled accordingly.

At least, this would give him some 'control' over Marinda's speculation.

Whether it was positive or negative—

"Hmm? He's not revealing more?

Was my pipe-rubbing move too obvious?

Or...

Is he deliberately leading me?"

After waiting for a moment and seeing that Arthur did not speak, Marinda immediately thought to herself.

On the subsequent journey, no one spoke in the carriage. The young 'Spirit Medium' leaned back in her chair as if dozing, while the Lady of the Long Night was engrossed in smoking her pipe. However, the hidden mental activity of the two was something even the moon could not bear to watch, hiding itself behind the clouds.

The bright moonlight disappeared, and vast shadows enveloped the carriage.

The coachman frowned and lit another carriage lamp.

But the two inside the carriage felt more comfortable than ever.

Some people are just naturally inclined to stay in the shadows.

However...

It is very rare for two such similar individuals to come together, get to know each other, and communicate.

Of course, such a situation is quite unsettling for most normal people.

Even, it is something that they would feel disgust and fear from the bottom of their hearts.

For example, Harris.

"You two bastards, just wait!

Your demise is coming soon!"

The newly appointed head of Rat Tail Alley walked into the Bell Tower of Elta Square, scanning the surroundings, and quickly found the secret passage leading down.

It was under a pile of miscellaneous items.

With a wave of his hand, the pile was pushed aside by an unseen force, revealing a wooden door studded with iron nails.

Harris waved his hand again.

The downward door was also flung open.

Immediately, a faint scent of blood wafted out.

"Heh, foolish fellow, didn't even think to put in an extra door to isolate the smell!"

Indeed, with the death of the 'Blood Marquis' and the destruction of the 'Bloodline Clan,' it is only right that it happened—any family with two or three idiots like that would be fatal!

However, this is good news for me!"

As Harris walked briskly downward, he kept thinking. As the scent of blood grew stronger, the disdain in the eyes of the new chief of Rat Tail Alley began to fade, and his expression turned solemn.

The downward passage was spiral-shaped.

About 30 meters in length.

Upon reaching the bottom, a huge pool appeared before his eyes.

A figure leaned against the marble edge of the pool filled with bloody water, soaking as if in a bath. Upon seeing this figure, Harris immediately bent his body slightly in a bow and said loudly—

"Rat Tail Alley's Harris, comes seeking cooperation!"

Chapter 217: On Stage, You and I Perform Together!

Before the figure in the Blood Pool could speak, Harris from Rat Tail Alley continued to speak loudly—

"I have infant and virgin blood here, even if you indulge once, their deaths would not matter, because in Rat Tail Alley, such things are ceaseless.

Similarly, from time to time, I might come across some decrepit Nobles.

Their blood will be the main dish on your dinner table!

As long as...

We cooperate!"

In one breath, Harris had laid out the terms he could offer.

He was very confident in the terms he had presented.

He knew the allure that fresh blood held for the member of the Bloodline Clan before him.

Unlike the rumored Blood Descendants, the member of the Bloodline Clan before him was clearly immersed in the pleasure of blood.

This was perfect for him!

Immediately, the new leader from Rat Tail Alley felt an extra ounce of certainty in his heart.

In fact, it was so.

Upon hearing Harris's words, the figure in the Blood Pool opened their eyes, filled with greed amidst the crimson glow.

"Not enough!"

Harris laughed.

It was not a laugh of extreme rage.

Rather, it was the smile of someone holding a winning hand.

No rejection meant success.

Harris straightened up and said very seriously.

"We can negotiate the details!"

...

At Elta Square, carriages loaded with large barrels lined up neatly and in an orderly fashion, with Edwin directing his subordinates simply by gestures to move these barrels into the Bell Tower quickly.

At the entrance to the secret tunnel, Arthur and Marinda stood shoulder to shoulder.

Their gazes were fixed on the deep entrance, both showing surprise as they listened to the sounds emanating from within.

It wasn't surprise at Harris's actions.

But at the member of the Bloodline Clan.

Something was off!

The young Spirit Medium and the Lady of the Long Night exchanged a look and saw the same realization in each other's eyes—the Lady of the Long Night made a gesture to the young Spirit Medium.

Immediately, the two stepped out of the Bell Tower and briskly yet silently made their way to the edge of Elta Square, into a corner that was out of sight.

"A trap?"

Marinda asked in a hushed voice.

The greed and recklessness shown by the member of the Bloodline Clan were far from the image she had anticipated—considering that aside from exterminating the Sank family, they hadn't done anything too outrageous, and in a way, the Sank family's demise had been silent.

Someone who could use ordinary people to eliminate targets and then lie in wait for over twenty years, even if greedy, would definitely not be so reckless.

What Marinda thought was also on Arthur's mind.

The young Spirit Medium touched his chin and looked at the carriages filled with barrels on Elta Square—these barrels were filled with oil.

Upon learning that the member of the Bloodline Clan was hiding under the Bell Tower, Marinda had begun gathering this oil.

Whether it was day or night.

As everyone knows, against the Bloodline Clan, flame is the best weapon.

Then...

Would a member of the Bloodline Clan not be aware of this?

Of course, they would be!

Moreover, they'd be more aware of it than anyone else.

And more cautious about it than anyone else.

"If Elta Square is gone, the Lord Count won't blame you, will he?"

Arthur suddenly asked.

The moment she heard Arthur's words, Marinda realized what he was getting at, and at the same time, understood why that member of the Bloodline Clan had constructed such a 'crude' secret tunnel—not for the lack of building more doors to insulate against the scent of blood, but to use the scent of blood to mask other scents.

For example...

Sulfur!

Or rather, explosives.

"No!"

Marinda answered with certainty.

However, Arthur noticed keenly that when Marinda spoke these words, she was gritting her teeth.

Clearly, the lady hated it immensely.

'So, blowing up Elta Square is not a problem, as long as a new square is built afterward?

That won't come cheap!' he thought to himself, already chuckling softly.

"Then it's easily done!"

To kill Harris in an explosion while preserving the whole Elta Square would indeed be extremely difficult, but if there were no need to preserve Elta Square, the task would be much simpler.

Especially if he didn't have to pay for the reconstruction of Elta Square...

It seemed there were other things that could be done!

"Since the other party is prepared, we can't let them be disappointed. Let's first roll these oil drums down into the secret passage—let the other party blow up the whole Elta Square, and then... we'll play their part!

However, since we'll be 'performing at our own expense,' it always feels like a loss if we don't do something extra," said Arthur, as his gaze swept over some people on the square.

Like everyone else, these people were under Edwin's orders.

At least, on the surface, that was the case.

In secret, they naturally had other identities.

Marinda was well aware of these people's true identities.

She had originally intended to keep them as bait for fishing.

Now was the perfect time to use them.

But the lady felt it was somewhat insufficient, still a bit of a loss.

"What if we add a leading actor?"

The lady implied.

Arthur, guessing who Marinda was talking about, smiled.

"Will he come?"

"Most likely, as long as our act is convincing enough, and the bait is tempting!"

Marinda said, pausing for a moment.

Arthur then mouthed the name of the person who would be the bait.

The two exchanged a knowing smile.

After that, Marinda tousled her hair, Arthur unbuttoned his shirt, and after Marinda left a lipstick mark on Arthur's neck, they returned to the bell tower.

The scouts who were secretly watching this scene curled their lips in disdain.

Dogs in heat!

So impatient already?

Then they bowed their heads and got back to work.

But just a few minutes later, the appearance of Edwin rushing over caught their attention—upon seeing that the coachman whispered something, Marinda's face changed, and then her eyes lit up with indescribable joy, but after glancing at the secret passage next to her, her expression became conflicted.

Subsequently, most people began to head back to No. 6 Swan District.

Only seven or eight people were left behind to move the oil drums.

Most of them didn't know what had transpired and could only follow orders.

But the seven or eight who remained knew!

They clearly 'saw' what the coachman Edwin had said.

A Hercules Laboratory had been discovered!

The seven or eight left behind looked bewildered on the surface but were inwardly frantic—after all, it was 'Hercules Laboratory'!

A place that could excite anyone, 'Hercules Laboratory'!

Marinda's hesitant behavior at this moment had already convinced them of the accuracy of the news.

Indeed, this woman would not have shown such an expression if it weren't for 'Hercules Laboratory'!

Such news naturally needed to be communicated.

Every scout was looking for an opportunity!

And soon, the opportunity arrived!

Chapter 218: Smoke, Noise, Shock!

Amidst the scouts' anxiety, they suddenly saw Marinda pulling the Spirit Medium toward a corner inside the Bell Tower, whispering something to her.

Due to the angle, they couldn't see what the two were saying.

But they could clearly hear a voice—

"Why do I have to stay here?

Why can't I be the one to go?"

The voice of the 'Spirit Medium' suddenly rose sharply, obviously extremely angry and unable to control her emotions.

Every scout's face lit up with joy.

They knew their opportunity had arrived.

At once, the seven or eight individuals began moving oil barrels even more diligently.

However, each person's gaze was stealthily fixed on that corner.

Then, they witnessed Marinda stepping out of that corner with what seemed to be an emotionless face, but with anger brewing between her brows.

Following that, after less than a minute, the 'Spirit Medium' also emerged.

"After you've pushed all these oil barrels inside, set fire to them.

Don't worry about anything else."

With these words, the young 'Spirit Medium' quickly left.

"Yes, Mr. Kledos!"

One of the scouts replied loudly, and the rest saluted in turn.

In the moment they bowed their heads, the scene they had just witnessed completed itself in each of their minds—

Marinda gave the sudden discovery of the 'Hercules Laboratory' utmost importance, yet she did not want to abandon the task at hand.

Therefore, she wanted her lover to stay behind to complete the planned mission while she went to the 'Hercules Laboratory' first; however, the 'Spirit Medium' wished to go instead, leaving Marinda behind.

Thus, an argument was inevitable.

Afterward, it appeared that the 'Spirit Medium' chose to acquiesce.

But once Marinda had left, the 'Spirit Medium' also quickly chose to leave.

In front of interests, what the hell is love!

Remembering the intimate scene they had just witnessed between the two, the scouts couldn't help but sneer in unison.

But they dared not delay.

Because the actions of this pair of lovers confirmed for them that the 'Hercules Laboratory' was time-sensitive, existing for only a very short period before vanishing—there had been more than one similar instance in history.

Immediately, the scouts began their 'performance'—

"Ah, my stomach hurts!"

"Hiss, I twisted my ankle!"

The scouts voiced various reasons, allowing themselves a plausible disappearance from everyone's sight for a while before returning and more vigorously pushing the oil barrels down the spiraling passageway.

The oil barrels were pushed in one after another.

Clang clang bang!

The rolling and collision noises continued non-stop.

Soon, as the barrels kept hitting each other, they started to rupture.

Some even shattered on impact, their contents splashing everywhere with a clear sound.

And as the acrid scent of oil began to spread, the scouts, who had already completed their task of passing on information, were each gasping for air inside the Bell Tower, constantly saying—

"This is so exhausting!"

"Definitely need to ask boss Edwin for a raise!"

"Right!"

"Truly tired out!"

Amidst these words, the scout who had first spoken lit a match.

Then, he tossed the match down the passageway.

The flame instantly shot up and the scouts took the opportunity to retreat.

But hardly two meters back—

Boom!

A fireball shot up tens of meters high from the mouth of the passageway, engulfing the Bell Tower and, in the ensuing loud noise, a fireball over thirty meters in diameter rose into the sky like a small sun suspended a hundred meters high, illuminating the surroundings and bringing with it a devastating shock wave.

Whoosh!

The shock wave pulverized everything around it and continued on with an unstoppable force, carrying fragments of bricks and stones in all directions.

In the midst of cracking sounds, the billowing smoke unfurled like a black hand rising from underground, not only snuffing out the newly risen small sun but also tearing up the ground of Elta Square.

The entire Elta Square had been flipped upside down.

The flat cobblestone surface, now with a thousand gullies and rifts.

The flowerbeds and fountains that attracted tourists, well, they no longer existed.

What remained was shredded flesh and the stench of char.

And...

Laughter.

Harris walked out of the ruins with a smile on his face.

The newly appointed head of Rat Tail Alley was thrilled—such a blast, not to mention Arthur and Marinda, even if the Lord Count himself had been there, he would've been injured.

As for Arthur and Marinda?

Obviously, they were reduced to ashes!

'Humph, thinking of using me as cannon fodder?

Now, the two of you are turned into cinders, huh?'

Thinking this, the smile on Harris's face grew ferocious.

However, the next moment, the new Ally leader of Rat Tail Alley reined in such a smile as he turned to look at the member of the Bloodline Clan standing beside him.

The heavy robes concealed the other's face and body, but the strong scent of blood still couldn't be hidden; ordinary people would feel terrified as they approached.

"Your arrangements were flawless!

The two who have been giving me headaches are now taken care of!

The rest, please leave it to me—as per our agreement, Rat Tail Alley is welcoming you at any time!"

Harris said so.

The member of the Bloodline Clan nodded.

But just as the two were about to conclude their transaction—

"Cough, cough cough!"

Amid violent coughing, a slab of stone was suddenly pushed aside, and a young 'Spirit Medium' with a dirt-smudged face collapsed there. Beside him was the mangled and charred body of Marinda—the few intact shreds of clothing on that corpse allowing Harris to confirm it was indeed Marinda's body.

After all, he had just seen her, it was impossible to mistake her.

And this mangled, charred condition must be the result of Marinda being very close to the secret passage and bearing the brunt of the explosion.

Calculating the scene that just occurred and seeing Arthur in this state, Harris's face was immediately filled with a smile.

Just before, at the moment of the explosion, the newly appointed Ally leader of Rat Tail Alley had a moment of regret—not being able to declare in front of his enemies their shortcomings was indeed dissatisfying.

And now, Arthur had appeared.

The pity was that Marinda was dead.

But this was satisfactory enough.

He watched as shock and disbelief spread across Arthur's face—even covered in dust, that expression brought him pleasure.

The Ally leader of Rat Tail Alley was about to say something mocking to fully satisfy himself once more.

But before he could speak, Arthur turned angrily towards the Bloodline Clan member and roared—

"What are you doing?"

Do you realize you've ruined everything?

You bastard!"

The roar was hoarse, and amidst his bursting veins, the young 'Spirit Medium's' face and eyes were filled with pain.

His entire body seemed to fall apart as he lay there, mumbling to himself.

"It's over; everything's over.

Twenty years of planning, all ruined by your damn cleverness!

Oh, how I hate this!"

Harris was stunned; he stared intently at Arthur.

'What's going on?!'

'Twenty years of planning?!'

Unconsciously, the newly appointed Ally leader of Rat Tail Alley began to back away.

He didn't feel that Arthur was pretending.

Moreover, and more importantly, when Arthur spoke, he could feel the stiffness of the body of the Bloodline Clan member by his side.

'Did I get caught up in some huge conspiracy?'

Harris couldn't help thinking this way.

And the next moment, his complexion changed drastically.

Chapter 219 Blood Shadow Mistake

On the outskirts of South Los, within Harris's secret base, someone had broken in!

The new Rat Tail Alley chief was not only meticulous in selecting this secret base, but he had also arranged for two secret technique alarms.

Each was exceedingly concealed and in tune with his intentions.

After all, what lay within was much more than just two chests of gold.

There were also the secret technique materials he'd spent his life studying after he inherited them.

That's why he was so cautious.

Indeed, even the covetous reason for those two chests of gold was for the sake of that very secret technique.

Now that the alarm had been triggered, it hit the deepest nerve in Harris's heart—The new Rat Tail Alley chief glared at the member of the Bloodline Clan by his side with unparalleled ferocity.

Because, when the alarm went off, he "saw" the intruder.

Although the face wasn't clear, the crimson in those eyes was unmistakable.

As is well known, only the eyes of the Bloodline Clan are crimson.

Add to that Arthur's tone of exhaustion from shouting earlier, and unwelcome speculations unfolded in the chief's mind.

Keep in mind, Arthur's tone didn't sound like he was addressing an equal collaborator.

Rather, it was as though he was reprimanding a subordinate.

So...

'Could it be that the member of the Bloodline Clan at my side is not a real member, but a high order Blood Descendant in disguise?

The real members of the Bloodline Clan must have gotten some information about me from that damned Spirit Medium and then deduced something, thereby secretly monitoring me and finding my hidden base?

Was the unease I've been feeling because of this?'

The conjecture in his heart caused the chief's murderous intent to surge, and he said in a deep voice—

"Remove your hood!"

The biggest difference between a Blood Descendant and a member of the Bloodline Clan lies in the red glint within their eyes.

Though Blood Descendants' eyes have red, it's far less bright than that of the Bloodline Clan's.

And to confirm his suspicions, all Harris needed to do was to check the eyes beneath the hood.

If the person beneath the hood was a member of the Bloodline Clan, then the scene he just witnessed was someone else's setup. But if the person wasn't, obviously the other party was up to no good.

Harris, with his muscles tense, kept his gaze fixed on the other.

The new Rat Tail Alley chief was waiting for the answer.

The result...

The once-mysterious member of the Bloodline Clan turned and fled.

This action disclosed the answer.

There was no longer any need to check the eyes.

Everything was confirmed.

It was someone from the Bloodline Clan playing tricks!

"Ah!

I'll kill you!"

An enraged Harris charged towards the Blood Descendant disguised as a member of the Bloodline Clan.

With just one step forward, the chief's figure vanished from the spot, only to appear from the shadow of the disguised Bloodline Clan member.

With a ferocious expression, Harris grabbed the disguised member.

His palm was condensing darkness.

Before it even touched the hood, the material began to corrode.

Hiss, hiss!

Amid sounds reminiscent of sulfuric acid burning flesh, the disguised Bloodline Clan member revealed his true face—pale, young, with crimson eyes but devoid of any sparkling light.

Indeed a high order Blood Descendant.

Harris's anger intensified.

Staring at those unflashing crimson eyes, he seemed to witness endless mockery.

Without any hesitation, the pitch-black palm smashed down hard.

The high order Blood Descendant didn't dodge, slightly tilting his head to take the blow on his shoulder, while simultaneously thrusting out his palm.

Bang!

Splat!

Almost simultaneously, their attacks landed on each other.

The pitch-black palm hit the shoulder of the high order Blood Descendant, causing bone-crushing injuries, and the darkness began to corrode the Blood Descendant's body.

Even so, the high order Blood Descendant's palm penetrated Harris's soft belly.

"Do you think such an attack will work on me?"

Harris, with his belly impaled, merely sneered, completely unconcerned.

The High Order Blood Descendant, whose body began to corrode, also wore a cold smile on his face.

"How would you know without trying?"

Blood Gladiators never back down!"

As he spoke, the High Order Blood Descendant rotated his palm—his nails, meticulously trimmed and soaked in medicine year-round, easily stirred Harris's abdominal muscles and organs.

Furthermore, upon contact with blood, those nails sharper than a dagger began to release toxins.

Harris's expression darkened.

The newly appointed leader of Rat Tail Alley sensed this change immediately.

Instantly, blackness rose from the shadows beneath the feet of the new leader, starting to block the release of the toxins in his belly and healing the wounds in a very special way.

"It's useless!"

Facing the attack of the Blood Gladiator, Harris contemptuously curled the corner of his mouth.

If it were the Blood Bride or the Bloody Warrior, he would be cautious.

But facing a Blood Gladiator?

There was no need!

Observing such a change, the Blood Gladiator opened his mouth and aimed a bite at Harris's neck, but was blocked once again by the blackness.

The resilience of that black force far surpassed expectation; the Blood Gladiator's teeth not only failed to reach Harris's neck but were also being eroded by the black power.

In almost an instant, half of his face was gone, revealing a chilling skeleton beneath.

Yet the Blood Gladiator did not care at all.

He allowed this power to erode him.

Because his goal had been achieved.

At that moment, Harris also realized something was wrong.

The new leader of Rat Tail Alley wanted to shake off the Blood Gladiator immediately.

But,

It was too late!

Boom!

The Blood Gladiator's body exploded on the spot.

The power of the Bloody Warrior wasn't much different from that of the Blood Gladiator, but what made them far more feared than Blood Gladiators was precisely this self-destruct ability, even if such self-destruction required time to prepare.

Because the self-destruction was not just about the explosive force.

It was also about—

Blood Poison!

Anyone who came into contact with it would find their skin festering, and the wounds wouldn't heal until their blood ran dry.

A crimson flash shimmered and was gone, then blood mist enveloped the entire square.

Harris's screams rose along with it.

"You're not a Blood Gladiator!

You're a Bloody Warrior!"

His voice was full of disbelief and regret.

Arthur, who had already retreated to a safe distance, couldn't help but curl his lip upon hearing this pretentious shout.

Such bad acting!

When Arthur spotted the 'Blood Descendant' appearing with Harris, he knew something was off—no one could be clearer about the difference between the 'Bloodline Clan' and 'Blood Descendants' than him.

Undoubtedly, the 'Blood Descendant' before him was likely a stand-in for someone from the 'Bloodline Clan.'

Or to put it precisely...

A warning mechanism!

Like a secret technique alarm!

But more flexible!

However, this was more advantageous for Arthur!

The young Spirit Medium immediately made a slight change to the original plan, enlarging the actions of the 'Blood Descendants' raiding Harris's secret base a bit more.

At the same time, he began to bluff Harris and the 'Blood Descendant.'

Harris didn't know that the 'Bloodline Clan' member beside him was a 'Blood Descendant.'

And the 'Blood Descendant' couldn't communicate with his own creator's intentions.

Capitalizing on this lack of information, Arthur easily achieved the situation he wanted.

Even if Harris detected something amiss, it didn't matter.

This was also within Arthur's expectations.

Moreover, compared to the new leader of Rat Tail Alley, Arthur looked at the scarlet mist before him with a trace of sighs rising in his heart.

Chapter 220 Indirect x Waiting x Making an Appearance!

Under the night sky, a scarlet mist spread.

The bright moonlight, too, was tainted red at this moment, adding a touch of eeriness.

Standing on the edge of the scarlet fog, the young 'Spirit Medium' was full of admiration—

'What a fine 'Blood Descendant'!'

The 'Bloodline Clan' can create 'Blood Descendants'.

Even, to some extent, the likes of Blood Slaves and Blood Gladiators can be infinitely created, as long as there is enough fresh blood.

But the 'Bloodline Clan', starting from the 'Blood Duke,' had never done so.

Because, loyalty!

'Blood Descendants,' although naturally feeling a sense of belonging to the 'Bloodline Clan' that created them, still retain their own memories.

Such memories can affect that sense of belonging.

Therefore, 'Blood Descendants' are not one hundred percent loyal to the 'Bloodline Clan.'

Instead, it's more like the feeling of an adopted son towards an adoptive father.

And even biological sons have committed patricide!

What more of these 'adopted sons'?

Stabbings by adopted sons are not unheard of!

Thus, to be able to fight to the death for the 'Bloodline Clan' like the Bloody Warrior before him was already quite commendable—without a doubt, this Bloody Warrior and the 'Bloodline Clan' member who created him must have shared a profoundly deep bond, and to cultivate such a bond requires an exceedingly long time.

Moreover, the uncertainty is too great!

To some extent, emotions are the easiest to manipulate and exploit!

'Alas, compared to creating a 'Blood Descendant,' the power of a contract suits me better!

If the two could be combined, that would be even better!

Arthur thought to himself, his body struggling slightly as he stood up.

The young 'Spirit Medium' staggered toward the overturned carriage.

However, the next moment, a figure blocked his path—a caped figure, concealing his face and body, holding a box in his hand.

Arthur's gaze was fixed on this box.

Because, it was his Spirit Medium Box.

"Lord Kledos, it seems I've found something of yours.

I'd be happy to return it to you, but, could you perhaps give me a tiny bit of compensation?"

The other's voice was hoarse, clearly disguised.

"What do you want?"

Arthur asked in a deep voice.

"The whereabouts of Miss Caesar!"

The other laughed.

The young 'Spirit Medium' maintained his silence at this moment.

Facing such silence, the person continued, laughing—

"The emergence of Hercules Laboratory was an unexpected delight, but your feelings for Miss Caesar were a surprise among surprises.

Who would have thought that you would actually deign to stay here to complete the task for Miss Caesar, letting her proceed to open Hercules Laboratory!

What surprised me the most was, with your vast knowledge, you could easily distinguish the difference between the 'Bloodline Clan' and 'Blood Descendants,' prompting those who planned to kill you to start massacring each other!

Truly remarkable!"

The person said as he clapped his hands.

"Vast knowledge?

If you had read more, you would understand the difference between the 'Bloodline Clan' and 'Blood Descendants'—of course, with your keen perception, you could easily tell.

Even, if you were cautious enough, you could tell as well."

Arthur spoke thus.

The cap of the Mysterious Person trembled slightly, which was evidently a nod in agreement to Arthur's statement.

And the concealed Harris ground his teeth in anger.

According to what Arthur had said, him, not realizing beforehand that the other person was a 'Blood Descendant,' had now become a fool who was shortsighted, and deaf and blind.

'Damn it!

I must kill you!

Kill you!'

The new head of Rat Tail Alley roared inwardly.

However, the new head of Rat Tail Alley did not strike immediately.

He had heard the words 'Hercules Laboratory.'

Only the sudden appearance of this laboratory of the "God of Alchemy" and "God of Potions" could cause that Eternal Night bastard to leave.

Now, his secret base was gone.

All the accumulated worth had gone down the drain.

However, if he could get his hands on the items from the Hercules Laboratory, it would completely compensate for his losses.

Thinking this, the newly appointed leader of Rat Tail Alley began to reveal intense murderous intentions mixed with burning greed.

Through the flickering of "Death Intuition," Arthur quickly pinpointed the other's location.

Nonetheless, he wasn't in a hurry.

He was waiting.

So, after a slight pause, he continued.

"Choose another, I do not wish to use Marinda as a bargaining chip for the exchange."

When Arthur mentioned this lady, a touch of gentleness appeared in his eyes.

Harris, concealed in the darkness, saw this.

The Mysterious Person opposite him also noticed it.

Almost simultaneously, they both curled their lips.

Both carried a certain disdain.

Yet, there was a fundamental difference between them.

But it seemed the Mysterious Person was persuaded—

"Alright, I accept the conditions you proposed."

However, aside from Miss Caesar, do you have any other chips that could excite me?

Keep in mind, this concerns the Hercules Laboratory!"

The Mysterious Person picked up Arthur's "Spirit Medium Box," examining it leisurely while inquiring.

"Of course!

As a 'Spirit Medium,' I know many things that ordinary people do not."

You may ask three questions you are very eager to learn, but can't obtain elsewhere."

Arthur nodded affirmatively.

"Then good, the first question—

'Where is the Hercules Laboratory?'"

The Mysterious Person asked directly.

Arthur, however, frowned.

"This involves Marinda, I've said, I won't use Marinda as a bargaining chip!"

"What if I insist?"

"You are breaking the contract!"

The young 'Spirit Medium' accused.

"Adhering to contracts is the obligation of the weak, breaking them is the privilege of the powerful—and moreover... you haven't realized yet that I've been playing you, have you?"

The Mysterious Person laughed.

But just as the laughter started—

Boom!

The Spirit Medium Box just exploded.

Explosives, gunpowder, bullets, sulfuric acid, and a mix of various things engulfed the Mysterious Person.

Arthur, who had already made a dodging move, stood up as if nothing had happened.

"You didn't realize that I was also playing you, did you?"

The young 'Spirit Medium' said these words and was prepared to leave.

Harris, concealed in the shadows, was about to make his move.

But someone was faster!

It was the Mysterious Person!

Unharmed!

The one who was unscathed in the explosion, staring coldly at Arthur, and then, as if realizing something, didn't speak again but charged forward, grabbing Arthur and running off into the distance at an even greater speed.

Harris had just started to give chase when he sensed something.

Instinctively, the newly appointed leader of Rat Tail Alley took a step forward then cautiously looked back.

Then, he saw a pair—

Of eyes flickering with red light.