

Great Master 241

Chapter 241 The 'Spirit Medium' Infiltrating the Wolf Pack!

Shadows rolled outside, and the pure white land of deathly silence gradually vanished.

Amid sighs, Old 'Spirit Medium' readjusted his monocle. He caressed the pure white surrounding him, feeling the changes within. Then, he raised his hand and snapped his fingers—

Snap!

A white warhorse, drawing a pure white carriage, burst through the thick fog amidst the low chanting of countless lost souls, causing the shadows to retreat once more.

The carriage door slowly opened, and invisible steps extended to the feet of Old 'Spirit Medium'.

Step by step, Old 'Spirit Medium' ascended.

Just before entering the carriage, Old 'Spirit Medium' whispered softly, in a voice only he could hear.

"Arthur, you must remember the words your grandfather told you."

Having said that, Old 'Spirit Medium' entered the carriage.

The carriage door slowly closed.

The next moment, the white warhorse pulled the pure white carriage, racing across the land of shadows like a sword of pure white, splitting the shadows in two. Countless lost souls that had perished within the shadows instinctively followed the carriage of the New King.

Old Charlie sat expressionlessly inside the carriage.

He didn't think.

Nor did he ponder.

He couldn't afford any guilt.

To deceive Them, he had to become like Them.

...

The jolting of the carriage woke Arthur from his slumber.

He yawned widely, wiping the moisture from the corners of his eyes.

"Hunter!"

Seeing that Arthur was jolted awake, Simon immediately frowned and slapped the side of the carriage, yelling out.

"Officer Simon, don't blame me; I've been as careful as possible. It's too dark, and, besides, the roads here are just too rough—damn it, Lord Count clearly allocates funds every year!"

Hunter looked aggrieved.

This shirking attitude displeased Simon.

However, he did not say anything more.

Because Arthur was gesturing to him with his hand.

"How long have I been asleep?"

Arthur asked.

"About eight hours since we set off; it's been dark for two hours now," Simon reported truthfully.

Clearly, without a command from Arthur, Simon would not stop to look for a campsite.

"I've been too tired lately; let's find a place to set up camp.

We should have enough food and water with us.

Besides, we're not in a rush to get to Yumir Manor; there's no need to travel so hastily."

Arthur naturally would not reproach a subordinate like Simon.

He knew Simon had good intentions.

He also knew that Simon's actions were not just for flattery or showing off but rather to make him more worthy of the apprentice policeman's title.

It was simply a bit overzealous.

"Understood!"

Simon gave a nod and then slapped the carriage again.

Soon afterward, the carriage and the two horses following it stopped by a clearing on the roadside—clearly, a campsite frequently used by travelers and merchants.

Not only had the weeds and shrubs around the site been cleared, but stones had also been laid out to form a fire pit.

More importantly, the sound of a stream could be heard nearby.

Although the carriage carried two barrels of fresh water, Newt still went with a pot to fetch water from the stream.

The two barrels of water had been boiled, then lemon juice was added before they were sealed—a method learned from long-distance sailors at the docks, which allowed fresh water to be preserved for a long time.

However, once opened, the preservation time would be significantly reduced, necessitating quick consumption.

And close to South Los, water sources were plentiful, but nearing the Mount Gale Region, that may not be the case.

Therefore, when there's a water source, it's better to fetch water directly.

While Newt went for the water, Hunter had already gathered firewood from nearby and lit the fire pit.

In the glow of the fire, the darkness around was dispelled.

To see further into the distance, Simon lit three torches and placed them at the edge of the campsite—being on the first watch of the night, he had to be fully prepared.

So, while Hunter and Newt used the dry food they carried to prepare dinner, the apprentice policeman was already organizing the four firearms of varying lengths strapped to his body and the sword at his side.

"You all rest tonight, I'll keep watch."

Cradling Pendragon, Arthur suddenly spoke up.

"Consultant?"

Simon, Hunter, and Newt looked on in surprise.

According to the rules, Arthur, treated as a first-class officer, was not required to stand watch.

"I slept too much this afternoon, it'll be hard for me to fall asleep tonight—and for a 'Spirit Medium,' the night is a good time for meditation.

The peacefulness of the wilderness especially makes me feel like I might gain something.

Please trust the intuition of a 'Spirit Medium'."

Arthur's earnestness led Simon, Hunter, and Newt to exchange looks before agreeing.

Not needing to keep watch, Hunter and Newt happily went to fetch their blankets.

"If you need anything, please wake me up."

Having fetched his own dinner, Simon spoke up once again.

"Of course!

I'm just a 'Spirit Medium', not some warrior, and I won't try to be a hero."

Arthur first took two small dried fish for Pendragon, then poured some boiling water into a cat bowl and set it aside before finally grabbing his own dinner—a baked potato, grilled sausages, baked bread, and salted oatmeal porridge.

Everyone had the same food.

Moreover, in the wilderness, such food was considered lavish.

It was certainly better than cold, hard rations.

Exhaustion from traveling made Hunter fall asleep as soon as he finished dinner, and within seconds, his snores thundered through the camp.

Even Simon, who clenched his teeth and persevered, entered dreamland a few minutes later.

Arthur sat on a log by the fire pit, while the well-fed Pan curled his front legs, squinting toward the fire pit.

"Be careful not to scorch your face!"

If it weren't for having collected all six whiskers already, Arthur would have never allowed Pendragon to do something so risky.

But now?

Arthur lifted his hand and added two more logs to the fire pit, making the flames burn brighter and warming up Pendragon and his companions Simon, Hunter, and Newt even more.

Crack, crack!

The logs made a unique sound in the flames as Arthur sat in front of the fire pit, his gaze drifting somewhat.

He had been reflecting on the dream in his memory since waking up.

It was blurry and very chaotic.

But his intuition told him it was important.

As his spirituality increased, Arthur was quite aware that intuition often pointed to the answer.

'Did Old Charlie want me to remember what he said?'

With the tranquility of the night aiding him, the young 'Spirit Medium' gradually began to recall the words spoken by Old Charlie in his dreams.

But there was a problem.

Old Charlie had said so much, but which words were the key ones?

Arthur sat by the fire pit, pondering deeply.

In the end, he decided to let it go.

It was simply too much, and he decided to play it by ear.

Then, the young 'Spirit Medium' lifted his head to look at the night sky.

At that moment, the moon hanging in the night canopy was almost completely round.

Next evening, it would be a full moon!

It was also his most crucial moment!

'I hope everything goes smoothly!'

That's what Arthur thought quietly to himself.

And in the next moment—

An unprecedented intense feeling of heart palpitations emerged.

Chapter 242: Driving Away Snakes and Asking People!

The sudden palpitation did not cause Arthur to panic.

The young 'Spirit Medium' didn't stand up to look around either; he just sat on the horizontal log by the fire pit, discreetly surveying his surroundings.

The early autumn night brought chills and an increasingly profound darkness. The occasional cries of nocturnal birds added an absurd touch to the atmosphere.

But besides that, there was nothing worth Arthur's attention.

There was nothing to be seen in his field of vision.

There was no presence in his "Spirituality".

His "Death Intuition" did not flicker.

The "Vigilance Oil Lamp" also had no reaction.

But that momentary heart palpitation was definitely not an illusion!

'What exactly is going on?'

Arthur thought quickly in his mind, but his face became even more composed. He continued to add firewood to the fire pit with one hand while shifting his perspective with the other.

Let the 'Blood Descendants' hidden farther away in the darkness start patrolling around.

At the same time, Fujin, who was resting in the forest, also took flight.

A crow, Arthur brought only one with him, leaving the other at No. 2 Cork Street serving as a guard.

And soon, Fujin's extraordinary vision locked onto someone.

At the same time, the 'Blood Descendants' had also found a group of people.

'Two groups?'

One should be from the Old Lion of Inner Bay.

The other one?

Was the palpitation caused by that group?'

Arthur was slightly surprised in his heart. As a young, upright, simple, and kind 'Spirit Medium,' he always remembered Old Charlie's teaching to 'be kind to others' and 'extinguish the family at the first sign of trouble.' How could there be so many people watching him?

'It must not be me!

Maybe it's Old Charlie who has provoked some lady again!

Or possibly Drake or Cassandra has caused some trouble!

The likelihood for Drake is higher.

For Cassandra, it's moderate,'

the young 'Spirit Medium' firmly thought to himself while memories surfaced of his uncle and aunt—the former, much older than him but still giggling and fidgety every day, had been involved in most of the few incarcerations Arthur remembered.

The most recent one was because of a club. His unreliable uncle Drake had said he would introduce him to the adult world.

Then, just as they stepped into the club, they ran right into Old Charlie coming out.

'Arthur has been begging me for ages, I had no choice!'

Because of that sentence, he was confined by Old Charlie for a week.

And Drake?

He was confined for a month.

Aunt Cassandra, on the other hand, was much better. Although she was cold and venomous to strangers, piercing their hearts with her words, she was gentle and warm to family. When he was under house arrest, it was Aunt Cassandra who stealthily brought him desserts, comforting his heart with sweets.

This aunt was someone who would generally not start trouble.

Of course, if someone provoked her, they would have to face the 'greetings of the Kledos Family.'

If linguistic talent could also be considered part of the 'Awakened Bloodline,' the young 'Spirit Medium' believed the 'Kledos Family' to be the top of the world.

Even against Divine Spirits, they could perform remarkably well.

Especially the ladies of the 'Kledos Family,' who could harness it to 120% Effect.

Revisiting memories of his former family, Arthur's expression relaxed even more.

He was no longer anxious.

Now that he had detected the presence of others, it was simply a matter of waiting.

What's next?

Leave it to time!

The firewood in the fire pit burned all night, and Simon woke up just before dawn.

Seeing Arthur keeping watch, the apprentice policeman immediately went to find more firewood to bring back.

It wasn't until the apprentice policeman had made Arthur a hot cup of cocoa that Hunter and Newt sleepily sat up. The two policemen moved closer to the fire pit, working the stiffness from their hands and feet, while checking Arthur's expression. When they realized he showed no sign of anger, they finally breathed a sigh of relief.

"Hunter, Newt."

Suddenly, Arthur called out.

"Advisor!"

The two men immediately responded with a bow.

"Today, I need you two to go ahead. Simon and I will depart 1-2 days later—we need you to get to Mount Gale Region in advance and find out everything about Yumir Manor.

Remember to be careful."

Hearing Arthur's reminder, the two policemen's hanging hearts were completely eased.

What they were afraid of was being targeted.

As for a task like this?

The two patrol officers both laughed.

They might not be good at fighting, but when it comes to gathering information, it was a piece of cake for them.

"Leave it to us!"

"Well, it's up to you now. I'll explain about the travel allowance with Malz!"

Arthur's words filled the two patrol officers with overwhelming joy.

Because, having previously made a mistake, both were in their punishment period, deprived not only of their salary and subsidies but also of the travel allowance for this trip.

However, they understood that with the advisor's recommendation, the police chief would surely provide them with a full subsidy.

If they handled the matter well, maybe their punishment period would even be removed.

Immediately, they ate breakfast with great enthusiasm and set off on horseback.

'Before gold coins, even kings doff their caps—let alone two patrol officers?'

Arthur was quite willing to do something that would cost him a tiny bit if it would motivate the agents.

And if that something was merely a word and didn't cost any of his own money?

Then it was all the more necessary to do it.

'Thank you for the generosity of Lord Count!'

With gratitude in his heart, Arthur gave an earnest bow towards the direction of South Los.

Simon at his side was completely confused.

But the apprentice policeman did not ask further, only keeping in mind the tasks that were his responsibility—

"Advisor, are we resting here for a day before leaving?

Or are we going to rest in the town ahead?"

"Let's stay here, the scenery is quite nice!"

Arthur said, smiling.

Tonight was the full moon, and he had left South Los in order to avoid the gaze of others, and this wilderness was just right—not only was there no one else around, but he also had his observers under control.

Especially the latter, Arthur cared about that quite a lot.

Particularly after discovering that the campsite had a fire pond that kept snakes and insects at bay, which troubled the observers, he decided that this had to be the place.

Not for any other reason, but simply in the hope that the snakes could eat a bit more.

After all, he had the "Dark Serpent" bloodline.

Even if it was a remnant, it still aligned him with the 'snake' camp.

"Then I'll go and hunt some game!"

Simon took down a longbow and arrows from the wagon and headed towards the nearby jungle, while Arthur wandered around with Pendragon, appearing as if he were admiring the outdoor scenery.

Soon afterward, he returned to the campsite with only a cursory interest.

But for the stalkers, things got tough.

The snakes around them seemed to riot and rushed at them.

Even though most of the snakes were non-venomous, the sheer number of them was still too much for the observers, and they couldn't stand it. After one of the stalkers was bitten by a poisonous snake, the group gave up.

Under Fujin's watchful eye, the people withdrew.

But the sole stalker did not retreat.

Far from retreating, they headed straight for Arthur's camp.

When this stalker appeared in Arthur's field of view, making sure Arthur saw him, the person removed the hood from their cloak, revealing a narrow face.

"Duke of the Inner Bay's advisor 'Sinclair' greets Mr. Arthur Kledos.

I am here on behalf of His Grace to invite you to be our guest at Inner Bay."

The individual introduced himself with a smile, extending an invitation that was clearly not well-intentioned.

This much was something Arthur was absolutely certain of.

The malice and mockery in the person's eyes were not at all concealed.

Arthur saw all this and showed a regretful expression that took the other by surprise.

As the other began to look puzzled, Arthur spoke up.

"It's not the 'Mechanism Master', the 'War Elephant', or the 'Blood Shadow's Thorn'?"

As he said this, the young 'Spirit Medium' sighed.

Instantly, the smile on the face of the Grand Duke's advisor turned to a hard, immobile expression.

Then the advisor's face darkened—

"Mr. Kledos, you..."

But before the other could finish, Arthur waved his hand to interrupt, and then, with a mysterious air, raised his hand and pointed upwards.

The sky?

The advisor of the Grand Duke was taken aback and subconsciously looked up.

Then their eyes narrowed in shock.

Chapter 243: Double Act!

...

Particles of ice crystals, like dust, fluttered down, chilling and prickling the face of Sinclair, the advisor to the Duke of the Inner Bay, when they landed.

How could it be snowing in South Los at this time?

Throughout all seasons, snow in South Los is only possible in the bitter winter, and now it was just the beginning of autumn, making natural snowfall utterly impossible.

Putting aside natural causes, that only leaves human intervention!

'Arcana' level!

The answer that burst forth from deep within caused the pupil of the Inner Bay Grand Duke's advisor to contract rapidly.

Instinctively, he turned to flee.

At the same time, his mind was riddled with confusion.

Why?

Why was there an 'Arcana' level powerful being by the 'Spirit Medium' without his knowledge?

Or to be precise, why didn't he know when a new 'Arcana' level power appeared in South Los?

Just yesterday, he had asked a 'Scout' to provide important information about South Los.

If there were news of an 'Arcana' level power, the 'Scout' would not have failed to inform him.

Unless...

There were problems with the 'Scout'!

The more he considered this possibility, the more the advisor to the Duke of the Inner Bay felt his heart tighten.

He was well aware that if things were as he suspected, it would be a devastating blow to Inner Bay.

Because—

The 'Scouts' he was dealing with were nearly the highest rank among them.

'I must relay this message back!

This is the most important thing right now!' he convinced himself.

Initially, Sinclair had fled instinctively at the presence of an 'Arcana' level power, but now with a justified reason, he ran with all his might.

Yet an ice crystal arrow shot out from the forest on one side.

Thud!

The ice arrow pierced the abdomen of the Duke of Inner Bay's advisor, pinning him to the ground.

The blood had not even begun to flow before it was frozen by the ice arrow, and along with the majority of his body, he was frozen to the ground as well, but this did not hinder the advisor's struggles.

Ignoring the bone-chilling cold, he tried to rise, laboriously using hand signals paired with Glyphic Language to harness mysterious powers.

Invisible winds began to converge.

But the next moment, they dissipated into nothingness.

A pair of black boots appeared quietly and silently before the eyes of the Duke of Inner Bay's advisor.

Crimson eyes, glowing with a luminous sheen.

Forcing the advisor to lower his head.

He hid his expression as best he could in this manner.

But deep down, his heart was already in turmoil.

'A member of the Bloodline Clan!'

He had been informed earlier that a member of the 'Bloodline Clan' had appeared in South Los, which also fit the facts that the pursuit of the same 'Bloodline Clan' member had last been seen vanishing near the South Los Territory.

However, the fact that this member of the 'Bloodline Clan' had reached 'Arcana' level was something he could not have imagined.

You see, although the 'Bloodline Clan' is mysterious and powerful, with immense potential, their growth is incredibly slow.

A typical noble scion, as long as they have extraordinary talent, can successfully awaken their bloodline, and then, combined with the family secret art, rituals, and plenty of resources, they could reach 'Arcana' level at around 40 years old, with some very special cases even advancing to 'Great Arcana'!

But the 'Bloodline Clan' is different, their unique bloodline dictates that even with ample resources, they need time to accumulate.

According to records about the 'Bloodline Clan,' every member who has reached 'Arcana' level has been well past a hundred years old.

Similarly, this is particularly envy-inducing for other nobles.

Because even a noble who ascends to 'Great Arcana' level, by the time they reach a hundred years old, they are already in their twilight years, their life's fire flickering out.

But the 'Bloodline Clan'?

In the prime of their youth!

...

You should know that the "Blood Marquis" was one of the founders of the Silver Age.

His father, the "Blood Duke," was incredibly active during the Holy Empire Era.

Therefore, many people speculated that the demise of the Bloodline Clan was because someone coveted this special bloodline, which triggered the subsequent massacre.

Of course, this had nothing to do with the Grand Duke's advisor.

The advisor to the Grand Duke was also unaware of the truth of those times.

But he knew what a "Bloodline Clan" representative of the "Arcana" level meant.

It signified the hope for the revival of the "Bloodline Clan."

And this was something His Grace the Grand Duke definitely did not want to see.

Nor did many other nobles.

So...

The threat must be eradicated once and for all!

Thinking thus, the Grand Duke's advisor displayed obedience—an obedience that was sensible, as after fully grasping the gap between himself and a powerhouse of the "Arcana" level, he realized any resistance was futile, especially against the interrogation methods used by members of the "Bloodline Clan" who reached the "Arcana" level, which were enough to send shivers down one's spine.

So, he complied.

But compliance did not mean surrender.

Because, although he didn't possess the formidable strength of the "Arcana" level, someone far surpassing the "Arcana" level stood behind him.

Thus, he exuded "confidence."

Under normal circumstances, a series of interrogations would follow.

And when that time came—

"That will be my chance!"

The advisor to the Grand Duke of Inner Bay thought quite confidently to himself, even as his entire person was frozen stiff, his face, like a crystal of ice, still faintly radiated an air of arrogance.

The "Blood Descendant" bowed his head, looking at the ice sculpture, and stomped his foot down.

Crack, crack, crack... Bang!

Amid a series of cringe-inducing noises, the ice sculpture ultimately shattered.

The "Blood Descendant" did not even glance at the broken fragments on the ground; he lifted his head and looked at Arthur, his red pupils growing increasingly intense.

"According to the contract, we are now square."

"I thought that only by reaching the level of 'Mechanism Master,' 'War Elephant,' or 'Blood Shadow's Thorn' would the contract be considered fulfilled," the young Spirit Medium said with a playful smile on his face.

"It was clearly stated in the contract—I would provide you with some information about the Death Poetry Society in South Los, and you would lure out one of the advisors of the Old Lion of Inner Bay—anyone at advisor level would suffice," the "Blood Descendant" emphasized with a slight frown.

"Just a joke!

It was only a joke, has nobody ever told you that you severely lack a sense of humor?" the young Spirit Medium spread his hands in resignation.

Ignoring him, the "Blood Descendant" stated plainly.

"The contract is fulfilled!"

"That's it? You're not going any further?"

You haven't asked anything at all," the young Spirit Medium pointed at the corpse on the ground.

"If you were still in good health, I would choose to dig deeper, but your recent battle with 'Shadow Snake' Ciudik has left you unable to utilize your full power in the short term—this becomes far too dangerous for me. I will wait for the day you're healed!"

Also...

I need time to find the one hiding behind the scenes who unexpectedly exposed me. I never anticipated making my presence known in such a manner; I wouldn't be able to rest easy without properly "thanking" that person.

If you have any information about that individual, I'd be willing to pay a high price for it!"

Having said that, the "Blood Descendant" turned into a mist and disappeared from the spot.

"Truly more cautious and careful than I am!"

The young Spirit Medium once again shrugged his shoulders in resignation, while secretly thinking—

'You all saw that, didn't you?'

Chapter 244 Ritual!

Why did Arthur and the "Blood Descendants" need to put on a double act?

Of course, because there was an audience!

The stalkers driven away by the serpent had retreated, but something had been left behind.

With Fujin's eyes, Arthur could see it clearly.

Thus, Arthur decided to reveal more information—

It wasn't just that his cooperation with the "Blood Descendants" needed to be known by more people, but also the fact that he was "seriously injured" had to be widely recognized.

The former was to set people at ease.

This included, but was not limited to, Marinda.

Of course, this lady's priority was at the very front.

After all, she brought him the most benefits.

And the latter?

To some extent, it was even more important than the former.

Arthur knew his own strength clearly.

In very special circumstances, he feared nothing; but under normal conditions, he was like a paper giant, easily punctured with a poke.

And situations that could be considered special were naturally few and far between.

Mostly, it was still typical circumstances.

So, he needed to create more advantageous conditions for battle.

Anyone facing someone who was severely wounded would let their guard down.

And that gave him an opportunity.

Of course, what's more important was his own strength.

'Soon, very soon.

Tonight is the full moon!'

Arthur thought to himself as he put Pendragon back in the cage and, taking a shovel from the carriage, started to bury bodies— the "Blood Descendants" had already searched the dead for him.

With continuous use, Arthur became more familiar with the power of the "Blood Descendants."

His control over the power was also becoming more refined.

At least, when covering his enemies with frost power, he could 'feel' whether there were any valuable items inside the corpses' clothes or on their bodies.

Like Sinclair, who was currently being buried.

There were no real Arcane Artifacts on him, only two scrolls, which were also damaged under the frost power.

'For an advisor of the Old Lion of Inner Bay to be this poor, he must be the least regarded in the advisory group.

It's precisely because of this that he came to South Los to try his luck, hoping for a significant discovery that would win the Old Lion's favor.'

Just like the "Staff Group" of the Earl of South Los.

The Grand Duke of the Inner Bay also had a similar entity, known as the "Advisory Group."

Similarly, such "Advisory Groups" also had ranks, including "Standard Advisor," "Silver Mane Advisor," and "Golden Mane Advisor," which corresponded to the Earl of South Los's "16th Staff Team," "66th Staff Group," and "Staff Group," as recognized by the outside world.

Of course, these were just the public claims.

What was known to the outside world.

Arthur guessed that besides these, there certainly were entities unknown to the outside world.

However, those were not what he could access at the moment.

Right now, he just hoped for darkness to hasten.

He was looking forward to the changes the Ritual "Orange Cat" would bring him.

'Hope it's not too bad!'

In the face of such crucial moments, even Arthur felt a bit nervous, and the best way to alleviate nervousness was—eating, or petting a cat.

Conveniently, Arthur had both conditions met.

After laying the Inner Bay advisor's body to rest and confirming that the 'eyes' had disappeared, Arthur set up the iron pot and started cooking 'dry food'—it was a type of food similar to military rations he was aware of.

You just need to boil water, immerse them in it, and after repeatedly boiling, they would form a food similar to 'porridge.'

Of course, don't expect it to taste very good.

But it was enough to fill the stomach.

In the early stages of the Seven Years' War, it was popular among new recruits, and by the end of the Seven Years' War, it was despised by the majority of the veterans.

Those who praised and loathed it were the same people.

However, there were also some oddballs who always loved it.

For example: Malz.

These dry rations were provided by Malz, a full sack of them.

As the old police chief put it, "This is the standard ration for a soldier for one month, carrying it on the road will put you at ease."

Arthur agreed with this.

He knew well that when a person is truly hungry, they are no longer human.

All ethics and morals would be thrown out of mind.

Only one thing remains...

Eat!

What's being eaten?

It doesn't matter.

As long as it's edible, it's good enough.

Arthur stirred his spoon in the pot, the porridge bland and tasteless, so he began to add sugar to it—anything tastes good once it becomes sweet.

Simon also agreed on this point.

The apprentice policeman who had caught two wild rabbits came back, his nostrils flaring as he smelled the aroma.

"It smells so good!"

The sweet scent gave the apprentice policeman plenty of motivation to head to the creek to skin and gut the animals—rabbits in early autumn had become plump, especially around the hind legs, where the fine layers of fat turned to liquid under the flames and, with the rotation of the iron spit, ran all over the body.

When a large amount of pepper, salt, and cumin were sprinkled on, the fragrance of the fat burst forth, making those who smelled it swallow their saliva involuntarily.

"Advisor."

The apprentice policeman handed the fatter of the two legs to Arthur and chose the other for himself.

And the foreleg meat, which had never touched spices, was for Pendragon.

The two men and a cat happily proceeded with their lunch.

In the afternoon, Arthur spread out the soft sheepskin blanket and lay down on it, snuggling with Pendragon as he fell into a deep sleep.

It was Arthur's turn to keep watch last night, so naturally, catching up on sleep at this time was to be expected.

Simon had no complaints and began to clean up the surroundings quietly and gather more firewood.

By the time the apprentice policeman came back with firewood for the fourth time, the sky had already darkened gradually.

As the flames in the fire pit leaped up with the addition of the wood, the sun had fully set.

With nightfall, Arthur let go of the struggling Pendragon, who, sitting beside him with a disgusted face, then began to groom himself.

Arthur waited patiently until Pendragon finished grooming, then the young 'Spirit Medium', with hands full of water, deliberately stroked Pendragon from head to toe.

The little cat's green eyes stared at Arthur, filled with disbelief.

His meows were filled with dissatisfaction.

But in the end, he could only resign himself to grooming again.

"Advisor, you and Pan have such a great relationship!"

Simon, who had already prepared dinner, had envy written all over his face.

"Believe me, having a cat brings joy!"

You could get one too!"

Arthur offered the suggestion to the apprentice policeman.

Immediately, the apprentice policeman scratched his head.

He would like to as well.

But living in the police dormitory, he didn't have the conditions for it.

'When I become a regular and have my own single dorm, I'm going to get a cat!' thought the apprentice policeman to himself.

There's no need to go into detail about the simple dinner, and, using 'You need to drive tomorrow' as an excuse, Arthur rejected the apprentice policeman's offer to keep watch and quietly waited for him to fall into a deep sleep before standing up and walking to the fire pit.

He placed six of Pendragon's whiskers, a fresh sprig of catnip, a stick of silvervine, 50 grams of salt, and 100 grams of dried fish into a clean cast-iron pot, following the requirements of the "Orange Cat" ritual.

Once the six whiskers had completely dissolved into the salt, Arthur crushed the remaining ingredients with force.

Then he took out the Golden Acorn, carefully placing it into the pot.

After doing all this, the young 'Spirit Medium' took a slight breath and waited for the transformation.

Ten seconds later—

Meow~

The crisp and tender sound of a cat's meow brought a smile to Arthur's face.

Chapter 245: The Secret of the Orange Cat!

According to the records, when one hears the crisp and tender meow, it signifies that the most crucial part of the "Orange Cat" is complete.

What's left?

Eat the Golden Acorn that has blended various base materials.

And then?

Feel the changes that the "Orange Cat" has brought to oneself.

Arthur didn't hesitate and directly took the Golden Acorn out of the iron pot.

From its appearance, it was smaller by several sizes than when it had just been thrown in, and its shape had become round, with a pale gold color.

It looked a bit like a golden date.

The scent was also somewhat similar, with the unique aroma of dates.

After observing for a few seconds, Arthur directly tossed the greatly changed Golden Acorn into his mouth.

The texture was a bit doughy but filled with an oily broth. Upon taking a bite, although it wasn't as crisp as a date in the imagination, without pits, a satisfying sensation arose when chewed heartily. The savory flavor was just right, at least far less than 50 grams of salt would be.

The savory oils combined with the soft texture...

"Stewed steamed bun in an iron pot!"

Arthur's eyes brightened, his throat moved up and down, and he swallowed all the food in his mouth.

Although by the standards of the 'Mystic Side,' this transformed Golden Acorn should be referred to as 'Ritual Object,' the appearance and taste, especially the latter, made it hard for Arthur to call it a 'Ritual Object.'

In the end, he chose to refer to it as 'Food.'

After all, whose home-cooked stewed steamed buns could be 'Ritual Objects'? It's not like they went to Harbin where even the frozen pears are artfully plated.

Is it delicious?

"Delicious!"

Arthur answered without any hesitation.

It certainly wasn't lip service but the most genuine feeling of Arthur at the moment. Aside from the iron pot stewed cornbread, what else could compete with a stewed steamed bun in an iron pot?

Even if stewed dishes could be mixed with rice, they would still fall short.

Arthur's response was instinctive.

But after he spoke, the young 'Spirit Medium' became alert, and then his vision changed—

First, he saw Pendragon eating cat food, meowing cheerily as if expressing its deliciousness, then curling up and falling asleep after it was full.

Then, he saw Pendragon eating dried fish, two bites for each piece, excitedly declaring its deliciousness before curling up and sleeping after the meal.

Next, he saw Pendragon eating the 'Police Chief's biscuits, gobbling them down as if a bulldozer, finishing half a bowl in one go, then curling up in the 'Police Chief's cat nest and sleeping.

About dozens of scenes passed by, all about eating until full, then sleeping upon waking up.

'Why does it feel like watching a glutton?' Arthur thought subconsciously as he watched Pendragon in the scenes.

Then, more scenes appeared, and Arthur saw fragments of Pendragon's days as a stray: either stealing other cats' food or on his way to do so.

Once he got robust, he started gathering other cats to take over territories from cats of other streets.

Just like a snowball effect, he quickly took over the district with the most abundant food.

Seeing this, Arthur's mouth curled up slightly.

'Truly my cat!' He assessed, but then a scene appeared that made the young 'Spirit Medium's eyes narrow.

The vagabond!

That crazy, crazy man who 'taught' him swordsmanship.

He...

Was feeding Pendragon.

The man happened upon Pendragon, plump and round, in a small alley behind West Mok Avenue; although rounded, it didn't stop Pendragon from continuing to seek food.

Or rather, Pendragon's added cuteness from being plump made people feed him unconsciously.

The ragged vagabond was just like that.

Moreover, while feeding the little cat, he would unwittingly pour out his heart.

His words contained everything, including the so-called 'Swift Bird Swordsmanship' breathing method, meditation method, many secret techniques, and also many unknown secrets of the 'Mystic Side.'

However, the haphazard narration often made Arthur frown.

But one thing, the vagabond very firmly described.

It was about the Countess of South Los.

'Such a unique charm!'

That's how he referred to the Countess of South Los.

Afterward, he said one more thing.

'I never expected! Never expected!

It would be like this!'

Just as Arthur continued to listen, the other's speech became jumbled again, and through Pendragon's perspective, the beggar was very elusive, with bizarre occurrences frequently happening around him. Without doing anything, hands would extend out from the walls, and sometimes, while simply lying there basking in the sun, his shadow would rise on its own and strangle the beggar's neck.

This had startled Pendragon several times.

But Pendragon quickly got used to it.

'No wonder you remained so calm despite encountering so many killers and smelling the scent of blood; so this was the reason!'

Arthur had already found it strange that Pendragon was so unfazed.

In his opinion, cats should be very sensitive creatures.

Yet, Pendragon seemed somewhat dull, not causing a fuss or making a scene, eating the cat food when fed, and sleeping after he had his fill.

This once made Arthur worry whether his cat was mentally ill.

Fortunately, that was not the case.

'Then after the broken leg, covered in injuries...'

As Arthur contemplated, the scene shifted. Pendragon saw a doll holding a long kitchen knife, bearing some resemblance to 'Anna.'

However, unlike 'Anna,' this doll was really moving on its own.

The doll appeared alone in front of Pendragon.

It sliced at Pendragon, knife after knife.

Pan fought back, but to the other, Pan's strength was like trying to stop a car with outstretched arms.

With a single slash, its hind leg was almost completely severed.

Even though he knew what happened later, Arthur's eyes still narrowed slightly, with a chilling intensity rising in his gaze.

He, remembered that doll.

Pendragon was tormented to the brink of death.

That 'beggar' appeared once more.

'Useless.'

Leaving behind just that remark, the beggar turned and left, leaving Pendragon to wait for death in the alley, just like any other stray cat.

'Very good!'

Arthur silently appraised in his heart.

He, remembered that beggar once again.

Afterward, the scene froze.

Everything came to a halt.

But not the heart.

On the contrary, Arthur's heart started beating even more vigorously and powerfully.

Thump, thump, thump!

Each throb was like the beating of a war drum.

Each thump pumped a large volume of blood throughout his body.

And the speed was increasing.

The heart was about to burst!

He was about to face death!

Arthur felt this clearly, but what was clearer was that crisp, youthful meow.

Meow~

The heart about to explode calmed down, and although death still lingered, everything that had stopped remained so, yet in a trance, during this lingering death, Arthur found something extraordinary within this halt—

Light!

Orange light!

These bits of orange light began to gather, clinging onto him, entering his heart, and with the heart's pounding, spread throughout his body.

In front of Arthur's eyes, text began to appear one by one.

[Orange Cat, assessment in progress...]

[Base material assessment passed...]

[Spirituality assessment passed...]

[Willpower assessment passed...]

[Orange Cat, complete!]

...

A sense of relief spread throughout his body, and Arthur felt as though he were soaking in a bath.

This comfort made Arthur want to close his eyes uncontrollably.

But in the next moment, the young 'Spirit Medium' suddenly opened his eyes wide—

No, something's wrong!

Chapter 246: Orange and Death!

The text before Arthur indicated that the "Orange Cat" was complete.

But...

The "Death Qi" had not disappeared!

It was still there.

It was still lingering.

To confirm, Arthur checked the text before him again—

[The ritual "Orange Cat" is complete!]

[Orange Cat: Originating from the complete Cat Hole's Orange Sect, also a faction of Aeolia, it stems from the original "Demon Cat," unlike "Cat's Black" with its concealment and spirit communication, "Cat's Marten" with its agility and power, "Cat's Flower" with its talent. The initiates of the "Orange Cat" ceremony are more stable, possessing adaptability, recovery, and endurance that other rituals of indulgence and vows do not offer.]

[Effects: 1, Ordination; 2, Feast; 3, Self-healing; 4, Adaptive State; 5, Golden Thread]

[Ordination: Facing food, one cannot be picky and must finish it, with at least six hours of deep sleep daily.]

[Feast: The consumed food will be fully digested and transformed into body muscle and fat, causing a slow growth in physique.]

[Self-healing: Faces injuries and negative states with better recovery.]

[Adaptive State: Faster adaptation to unfamiliar, extreme environments; reduces needs when facing special requirement props.]

[Golden Thread: Those who complete the Ordination ritual can harmonize a Spirituality of up to (and including) three, and as Ordination accumulates over the years, the harmony value will steadily increase.]

(Note 1: If "Ordination" is not completed, "Spirituality" will become temporarily disordered; if "Ordination" is not achieved over a long period, "Golden Thread" status will be damaged.)

(Note 2: When facing food filled with toxins or malice, the "Ordained" can ignore it.)

(Note 3: Under the enhancement of "Feast," initiates will break through the original body size limitations as their physique increases.)

(Note 4: "Orange Cat" can not only perfectly integrate other Cat Hole's and Cat Faction's rituals but also stack well with the Spirituality brought by arcane artifacts.)

(Note 5: When the initiates learn rituals of other sects and secret teachings, "Orange Cat" also exhibits strong adaptability, especially as the duration of "Ordination" increases, so does the adaptability.)

(Note 6: While harmonizing and adapting stacked arcane artifacts' Spirituality, it cannot exceed the inherent limits of the artifacts, but "Adaptive State" can make some modifications.)

(Note 7: "Feast," "Self-healing," and "Adaptive State" will also grow slowly as the "Ordination" time increases.)

...

Nothing!

There was absolutely no note regarding that wave of "Aroma of Death."

What was present was only the "Orange Cat's" 'great power'!

Not only was it comprehensive, but it could also adapt to other rituals!

Moreover, it could even grow!

Upon reading the introduction of the "Orange Cat," Arthur suddenly understood why the original entity from the Cat Hole was known as "Demon Cat."

Because—

The older, the more demonic!

Given enough time, it could truly grow into a terrifying entity.

Only, this time...

It was likely to be very extended!

'Does it have a long life?

[Hercules' Gold Potion]!

Almost subconsciously, Arthur thought of the first of the "four great magic potions" concocted by the alchemist and potion master, rumored to transform one into an Immortal Breed with a long lifespan, a perfect match for [Orange Cat].

'Must get my hands on it!'

Arthur thought resolutely.

However, that was for later!

Now?

He looked toward the lingering "Aroma of Death."

[Spirituality] did not warn him of danger.

[Death Intuition] did not flash either.

It seemed just to be simply lingering.

But...

Why was it lingering around him?

'A curse then?

So this is...

"Death Poetry Society's doing?"

Arthur thought almost subconsciously.

He had foiled the Death Poetry Society's plans numerous times, so it was only natural for them to retaliate, and indeed, they should have shown up on this trip—an opportunity too good to miss. If they didn't, Arthur would have been even more worried.

But, wasn't this "Aroma of Death" a bit too pure?

Arthur had seen members of the Death Poetry Society in action before.

Even, to some extent, experienced it firsthand.

The "Aroma of Death" that the Death Poetry Society member possessed compared to the one at hand was like comparing sewage in a ditch to purified water.

The difference was too great!

"Could it be the legendary president of the Death Poetry Society personally taking action?"

Arthur narrowed his eyes, then shook his head internally.

If it were really the president, who had fought the Old Lion of Inner Bay twice without either side winning, then his "Death Intuition" would have been flashing like a beacon by now.

But now, his "Death Intuition" showed no change at all!

Just as Arthur was puzzled, the "Aroma of Death" suddenly stopped wandering.

Under Arthur's "Spirituality," the "Aroma of Death" halted.

It was like a lost child who had seen its family.

Then—

With cheers and leaps, filled with chills and silence, surrounded by calamity and misfortune, it rushed towards him.

Arthur subconsciously wanted to dodge, but the "Aroma of Death" was too fast, too fast for him to really react.

The next moment!

His "Death Intuition" started to flash.

It was not flashing a warning, but a promotion.

"Death Intuition: Having experienced death once, and now encountering the purest 'Death,' your sensitivity to death has long surpassed the so-called 'Death's Favor.' When death directed at you approaches, you will always notice, not only in the present time but also in the brief future to come."

...

And it didn't end there!

The flashing of his "Death Intuition" stopped.

But the text still appeared—

"Breath of Death: The purest 'Death' has given you one of the original 'Talents.' From today onward, your descendants will also have a lesser 'Death Talent' until the tenth generation, after which this talent will gradually disappear. However, as the 'source of the Talent,' when your descendants gaze upon you, even those of the tenth generation might activate the Weak 'Death Talent'! Moreover, possessing this 'Talent', you will bring calamity to any creature not favored by destiny that you come into contact with, causing them, her, him, and it to face misfortune and endure disaster, and such deaths will always bring you more 'Death Qi.'"

"Effects: 1, Death Qi; 2, Deterrence; 3, Extreme Longevity"

"Death Qi: The essence of death from surrounding beings will be absorbed by you, this Death Qi can accumulate, and when you use this Death Qi for attacks or defense, it will be consumed. When the Death Qi is exhausted, 'Breath of Death' will enter a rampaging indiscriminate calamity state, within a hundred-meter radius of you, living beings, unless favored by fate, will hardly escape disaster."

"Deterrence: Facing undead, specters, and other deathly entities, you possess natural deterrence."

"Extreme Longevity: Your lifespan has been extended to the limit of your species."

(Note 1: The absorption of Death Qi is unavoidable, exempt from immunity, and cannot be peeped. When attacked by Death Qi controlled by others, you can choose to absorb or refuse. When refused, the other party's Death Qi attack will dissipate as Death Qi that cannot be absorbed.)

(Note 2: Deterrence may be enhanced by using Death Qi.)

(Note 3: Extreme Longevity cannot exempt accidents, for that is the joke of fate.)

(Note 4: Current Death Qi 44.4)

...

Lonely Star of Calamity!

As Arthur saw the effects and notes of the "Breath of Death," this thought emerged at the bottom of his heart.

"How did this talent come about?

Could there really be such a thing as the Grim Reaper?

And, does he really favor me that much?"

Already back by the campfire, sitting on a log, Arthur was utterly puzzled, lost in thought as if he were an old man engrossed in his smartphone.

And it was at this moment that a deathly silence of pure white appeared—

"Lord Kledos, Morielk of the Death Poetry Society's Thirty Choir has the honor of meeting you!

Death has brought you and me together.

Therefore, I hope you do not let down death and choose...

to surrender."

Chapter 247: Entrant!

Clad in pure white, representing the "Death" cloak, Morielk's gaze towards Arthur was indifferent.

It could even be said to be dismissive.

As the bass of the "Death Poetry Society. Thirty Choir," Morielk had this privilege.

The regular members of the "Death Poetry Society. Thirty Choir" were already the elite of the "Death Poetry Society," not to mention the "Death Bass. Male."

As one of the Four Sounds, Morielk's status within the "Death Poetry Society. Thirty Choir" was only below that of the Right Pastor and the Left Cantor.

He was genuinely an Arcana Level powerhouse.

If not for that spy's excessively special status, a powerhouse of this level would not care about anything minor.

Even South Los was no exception.

Their focus was always on more core matters.

Such as...

Inner Bay!

Compared to the not yet strong enough Mother Tigress, the gradually declining but still formidable Old Lion was their target.

Not only because of the society president's preference but also because of the secrets held by the "Old Lion" — that was what they were concerned about.

As for Arthur?

Though he had heard some reputation of Charlie Credos, it still did not matter to this "Death Bass. Male."

And Arthur himself?

He was an entirely insignificant character, good only to be taken back in exchange for the captured Grover.

If Grover was dead?

Then he would simply provide a burial for Grover.

Although the spy had secretly mentioned that Arthur Credos possessed an extraordinary "Death Talent," he did not feel it now.

And furthermore...

Since he possessed "Death Talent," it's impossible that the "Death Poetry Society" hadn't noticed him — the Right Pastor, as one esteemed person, performed "Divination" every three years to identify members with "Death Talent" and subsequently bring them back for training.

With that esteemed person's caution, how could South Los possibly be overlooked?

With that esteemed person's power, how could he fail to "Divine" Arthur's presence?

Thus, it was just a coincidence.

All of it was coincidental.

Morielk stood there, watching Arthur, his grey eyes devoid of any emotion, unflinched by any of Arthur's resistance.

The ignorant always try to please him with their actions.

To this, he did not mind.

"Consider it the sole pleasure of this journey," he thought.

This member of the "Death Poetry Society" thus mused.

For the sake of concealing his movements, upon receiving the spy's secret message, Morielk had set out overnight without much fanfare, almost without rest, and had finally arrived in South Los.

However, upon reaching South Los, he found that the target had left.

This compelled Morielk to chase once more.

Luckily, he encountered the fools from the "Cloak Society" who actually knew the target's whereabouts.

No further action was needed; merely mentioning his name got these fools to voluntarily lead the way.

However, the "Arcana Level" member of the "Bloodline Clan" mentioned by these fools did capture Morielk's attention — and thus, he meticulously searched the surroundings, ensuring the other wasn't nearby before revealing himself.

"Perhaps I can absorb him!

The legacy of the 'Blood Marquis'...

That is quite substantial!"

Morielk thought to himself, his gaze on Arthur becoming visibly impatient — since the very beginning, the target had been checking his cat, scanning his companions, and then even adding more firewood.

Morielk did not understand why the target would do this.

But then, Morielk's patience ran out.

This member of the "Death Poetry Society. Thirty Choir" was ready to make his move.

However, before acting, he habitually said,

"I am delighted, Death, to have this encounter with you!"

After speaking, the other was ready to make his move.

And just at that moment, after checking that both Pendragon and Simon were temporarily fine, Arthur, without even lifting his head, replied,

"You are pleased too soon!"

The hand that Morielk had raised quivered at these words.

The next moment, he harshly shouted,

"How disrespectful!"

Then he swung out violently.

The dense, mist-like grayish-white seemed like a giant python emerging from a mountain stream, carrying with it the wails of death, charging straight towards Arthur.

The young 'Spirit Medium' appeared to be deterred by such a death threat, sitting motionless, letting himself be engulfed by the grayish-white Aura of Death.

"Hah."

Watching this scene, Morielk let out a cold laugh.

All for show!

In his heart, this member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' judged so, while he began to control the output of 'Aura of Death'.

What he needed was to capture the opponent, not to kill them.

But when he tried to manipulate the 'Aura of Death', he suddenly realized that his 'Aura of Death' was no longer under his control, being continuously absorbed by Arthur.

This startled Morielk.

Almost instinctively, this member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' increased the output of the 'Aura of Death'.

Boom!

The originally human-thigh-thick grayish-white mist instantly became as thick as a water tank.

Moreover, if it resembled a python before, it had now transformed into a giant python—the dense grayish-white mist formed the body, eyes, and fangs of the python.

The grayish-white eyes, larger than a watermelon, stared at Arthur, revealing a fierce gleam.

Out of nowhere, a wind arose!

It was a stinking and fierce wind!

This wind swept through the surroundings.

The flowers and trees, already beginning to wither in early autumn, withered instantly.

All vitality dissipated.

Only death remained.

Roar!

The Death Python stood upright with its upper body, its two-story-high frame casting a shadow directly over Arthur, who sat on a log by the fire pit.

It looked very real, unfortunately, it was all fake...

'Not edible.'

The young 'Spirit Medium' lifted his head, glanced at it, and expressed such a sigh.

This provoked Morielk, the member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir', who sharply said,

"Although I don't know what method you just used, I was just being careless.

Now, this is my true power—'Arcana Level'!

I hope you can always remain so calm!"

Amid his words, the 'Death Python' charged at Arthur, bringing a foul wind with its bite.

A cold smile appeared in Morielk's gray eyes.

By now, Morielk had abandoned the idea of capturing.

Arthur's insult just now made the member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' decide to kill Arthur.

Of course, not directly.

But to...

Thoroughly torment him!

The rage in his heart made Morielk's face under the hood contorted ferociously.

But the next moment, the ferocity on his face turned into a daze.

The life-stealing stench passed by like the spring breeze that brings life.

The fearsome python struck like a mayfly shaking a tree.

Useless!

Not only did the 'Death Python' lose its intended effect, but what was even more terrifying for this member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' was—

This time, it wasn't just the 'Aura of Death' he released that was out of control; the 'Aura of Death' within his body was also being continuously drawn out.

All flowing into...

Arthur's body!

"This?!"

'Great Arcana Level'

No!

Not right!"

Morielk was shocked and instinctively shouted, but his words felt incorrect as they left his mouth.

He had seen 'Great Arcana Level' experts before, but even they did not possess such power.

The next moment, this member of the 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' suddenly realized something and exclaimed—

"Entrant!"

Chapter 248: Hei's implication is: inauspicious!

Entrant?

What is that?

Arthur speculated in his heart, he still hadn't figured out the "Arcana" tier by now, and here was another new, extremely important term appearing.

And the emergence of this brand new term was merely the result of him changing his state towards the Aura of Death from 'rejection' to 'active absorption'.

"Mercy, please, mercy!"

Morielk, a member of the "Death Poetry Society Thirty Choir" and one revered as one of the "Choir Quartet," no longer had the arrogance and contempt he showed when he first saw Arthur.

All that remained was terror and fear.

Terror filled his heart.

Fear spread across his face.

His eyes, along with his drooping head, no longer dared to look directly at Arthur before him.

An Entrant!

It was actually an Entrant!

Morielk's heart was in turmoil, the Aura of Death completely slipped from his control, rushing into Arthur's body like rivers flowing into the sea.

In two breaths' time, Morielk was drained dry.

Ashen white pervaded the entire body of this member of the "Death Poetry Society Thirty Choir."

And then—

Crack!

The crisp sound, like that of porcelain shattering, rang out as Morielk crumbled.

His shattered body flowed down like sand, leaving behind only a white cloak decaying amidst the sand.

'He's dead already?!'

Sitting atop the crossbeam, Arthur was filled with astonishment.

He really only actively absorbed the Aura of Death, nothing more.

And the result was that the other party was absorbed to death?

'The Breath of Death dominates over all death qi and those who manipulate or use it!'

The young Spirit Medium came to this realization in his mind.

'If that's the case...'

Many thoughts emerged in the mind of the young Spirit Medium, but his gaze didn't even glance at the sandy remains of Morielk on the ground; instead, it swept towards the dense forest to one side.

There were seven people there.

These seven people came with Morielk.

To these seven people, Arthur was not unfamiliar.

These seven were the numerous stalkers from before, the ones scared off by the snake, leaving behind the 'eye.'

Now, these seven people were shivering as they watched Arthur.

Because when they had arrived with Morielk just now, they had reactivated the 'eye'—it was Morielk's command.

What Morielk wanted to do, these seven people obviously knew.

It was none other than to use their Cloak Society's name to spread everything, so as to exchange hostages with the Earl of South Los.

To this, the seven people didn't see any problem.

It was widely known that they were just a medium, and everything was unrelated to them.

At least, that's what they thought just a moment ago.

But now?

There was a big problem.

An Entrant!

An 'Entrant' had actually been hiding in South Los, surely harboring unspeakable intentions, and now they had exposed him.

Then...

The seven people shivered even more violently.

Compared to Morielk, these seven couldn't even cry out for mercy.

Their fear rendered their brains blank, all they knew was to stand there shivering.

"Let's leave everything to destiny."

A soft sigh came from the mouth of the young Spirit Medium, reaching their ears.

The seven people didn't grasp the deeper meaning.

They just felt that this 'Entrant' seemed not to be pursuing them?

They seemed...

That they could live?

With this thought, one of the seven, with a quicker reaction, turned and ran.

After the man had run about four or five meters, the others followed suit, and the last one didn't forget to take the 'eye' with him—a fist-sized arcane artifact that looked like a pebble.

Perhaps out of too much urgency or haste, the one taking the 'eye' paid no attention to the ground.

A tree branch lay right before his feet.

The man stumbled over it.

Directly in front of where he fell was a sharp tree branch that pierced right into the man's eye, severe pain made him hurl the 'eye' from his hand.

Whimper!

With a dull whizzing sound, the "pebble" traced a beautiful arc, striking the back of the head of the person who was running the fastest.

Bam!

The fragile skull cracked open, spilling brain matter.

The seemingly hard "pebble" also shattered under this impact.

But the two who were closely following couldn't bother with these details, stopping in terror the moment they saw the brain matter explode.

The two halted, but the three behind them did not.

Suddenly, all five collided.

The next moment, they became tumbling gourds, crashing violently against a dead tree thick enough to require two people to embrace it.

There was a large hollow in the dead tree, from which the faint smell of blood and low hissing sounds emanated, alerting the creatures of the dense forest to the danger within.

All creatures with normal brains would stay away from here.

But the five entangled individuals could not.

They crashed heavily against the dead tree.

The poisonous snakes that had nested inside the tree hollow were disturbed and swarmed out.

Hiss hiss hiss!

"Aaaah!"

Screams rose sharply, then quickly quieted down.

The group of poisonous snakes gained an unexpected meal.

Yet not one of them dared to enjoy the feast, as they all reared up their bodies in the direction of the clearing, drooping their heads and softly hissing.

"Destiny has not favored you," said the young 'Spirit Medium' softly, waving his hand slightly.

The group of snakes he had previously commanded immediately dispersed.

When there were no more watching eyes around, the young 'Spirit Medium' could no longer hold back, covering his face with a hand and whispering.

"Fuck, the real Grim Reaper has come!"

Sitting there, Arthur did not dare to move.

He feared triggering a chain reaction.

An active chain reaction, Arthur didn't fear, for that was what he sought and wanted; he could calmly accept and willingly bear it.

But an unintentional passive chain reaction was something Arthur did not desire.

He wanted to prevent this kind of chain reaction.

He couldn't do it by himself.

But he knew someone who might.

If that person couldn't either, Arthur decided he would live in seclusion for a while; otherwise, he feared that if he slept, the entire city might be struck by a meteorite.

He didn't care about the others; he didn't know them.

But what about Malz, Scott, and those he knew?

And what about Pendragon?

So—

'You must have a way!' Arthur thought, communicating with Wuni left at No. 2 Cork Street in South Los through his consciousness.

Before, Arthur could not do this.

But once the Talent "Breath of Death" appeared, the two crows which came with it completed their promotion in an instant, saving nearly a hundred days of time and becoming stronger.

"Feast of Crows," still in a damaged state with no change in remarks.

But the Attributes "Crow" had changed.

["Crow: Fujin and Wuni, raised through the 'Feast of Crows,' were already slowly becoming Magical Creatures through the passage of time. But when you, with 'Breath of Death' appeared, they instantly completed their ascension. Now, they possess extraordinary intelligence and bodies. They can understand your words, as well as the language of others, can help you scout, can use their claws and beaks to rip through metal armor, or can spout 'Death Qi' to inflict more terrible arcane damage—Fujin, Wuni: We are darkness, seen as ill omens, we bring misfortune, we reap lives for our master, and place them in our master's pasture."]

(Remark 1: Having completed their promotion in a special way, Fujin and Wuni have escaped the constraints of 'Feast of Crows.' They recognize only you as their master. 'Feast of Crows' can domesticate two more crows.)

(Remark 2: Fujin and Wuni, as Magical Creatures that have promoted, can choose normal food, but they prefer to consume Gold Coin or Death Qi. This will allow them to slowly grow into more powerful Magical Creatures.)

(Remark 3: Fujin and Wuni's Spirituality is enhanced. You can remotely control them and use their voices to communicate with others.)

(Remark 4: When Fujin and Wuni are injured, 'Death Qi' can heal them.)

(Remark 5: When Fujin and Wuni die, you can consume 100 'Death Qi' to resurrect them, but a corpse is necessary.)

(Remark 6: When Fujin and Wuni die without a corpse, you can consume 1,000 'Death Qi' to resurrect them.)

...

The brand-new "Crow" and the open spot in "Feast of Crows" gave Arthur many ideas, but Arthur was more aware that these ideas depended on that woman being able to help him.

Otherwise, it would all be in vain!

Caw!

Wuni cried out and turned into a phantom, speeding straight for No. 6 White Bird Street.

That speed was extreme.

But some things were faster.

Like: Rumors.

For example...

Gossip!

Chapter 249: Longbain and Garcia!

Longbain was a gentle gentleman.

Everyone who knew him evaluated him that way.

And every time he heard such an evaluation, Longbain would respond with a humble smile—precisely because of this, he grew to dislike his main job: the Intelligence Trafficker.

Although the 'Cloak Society' went by various names, its essence was still that of intelligence traffickers.

Longbain saw through this long ago.

As one of the earliest members of the 'Cloak Society,' Longbain had joined only to make a living, never imagining that it could flourish and grow—in his estimation, the 'Cloak Society' could last 3-4 months would have been a miracle.

Who would have thought it would last 14 years!

And the scope of its influence grew broader and broader.

But Longbain still wasn't optimistic about the 'Cloak Society'!

Because someone like him, with just a tiny bit of 'Talent,' yet full of fear and not daring to face the dangers and bizarre aspects of the 'Mystic Side,' was somehow considered an excellent information collector by the president and was appointed as the head of South Los' 'Cloak Society'—all for merely doing his job.

He was far from remarkable.

Just like now, having processed the images about the 'Spirit Medium,' 'Blood Descendants,' and the Grand Duke's advisor that came during the day, Longbain was ready to leave work.

From nine to five, with no weekends off, every single day.

"Keep an eye on this place. If anything happens, remember to notify me."

Longbain, openly an art enthusiast skilled in painting and sculpture, left the 94 Clara Street base and instructed his assistant—this assistant was recommended by one of the 'Cloak Society's' higher-ups, and he didn't refuse, nor did he want to.

Compared to the scum and villainy of the 'Cloak Society,' he preferred the sunlight, food, and rich and peaceful life of South Los.

If it weren't for this secret identity, he would have chosen to buy a moderately-sized farmhouse in the outskirts of South Los and retired by now.

And now?

Touching his balding head and putting on his hat, Longbain headed towards the seaside.

He wanted to listen to the sound of the sea.

After Longbain left, his assistant became increasingly reckless—when Longbain was around, he could still restrain himself from going overboard.

Once Longbain was gone, the assistant began to 'self-inspect' some valuable things.

This was naturally against the official rules.

But everyone did it in secret.

Otherwise, the salary handed out by the society wasn't nearly enough to maintain a decent lifestyle, let alone enter high-class clubs.

That little money was completely insufficient.

Especially since he recently wanted to get to know a lady at a high-class club and hoped to have deeper interactions with her, the necessary expenses made him even more impatient.

Too bad they were all trivial matters, which greatly irritated the assistant, especially when he thought of the lady's every smile and frown, and he could only watch, his anger grew.

Time passed second by second.

It quickly grew dark.

Then, the 'Messenger Stone' began to flicker again.

The images related to the 'Spirit Medium' and the 'Death Poetry Society. Thirty Choir' were transmitted back.

Seeing these images, the assistant's expression immediately lit up with excitement.

He knew his opportunity had arrived!

But...

Should he do it?

The risk was a bit high!

But thinking of that lady, the assistant gritted his teeth—he decided to go through with it!

Not just go through with it, but to do it thoroughly.

He planned to sell the information within the 'Messenger Stone' to the major forces he knew, and then, with money in hand, elope with that lady.

He couldn't stay in South Los.

But Inner Bay was another fine choice.

If the lady didn't want to go to Inner Bay, they could take to the seas!

Thinking of the beautiful days ahead with that lady, the assistant excitedly dashed out of 94 Clara Street.

...

"Mr. Garcia, I'm so sorry."

In the editor's office of the 'Horn Report,' Scott returned the manuscript to the sorrow-faced middle-aged man in front of him, Mr. Garcia, with a regretful expression.

Scott truly admired this gentleman from the bottom of his heart.

For ten years, the man had persisted in submitting manuscripts to the 'Horn Report,' but not a single one had been accepted.

It wasn't that his writing was poor, quite the contrary, his foundation was solid, and his logic was meticulous.

It was just...

That it was too absurd.

Not fanciful, but fake.

Each piece, after reading, evoked an unmistakable feeling from the bottom of one's heart that it was 'fake, just too fake.'

Scott felt the same after reading them.

After all, he could understand spies, but to complete spy work based solely on conjecture seemed impossible to the young reporter.

That's why this rejection occurred.

As he watched Garcia leave, the young reporter began to pack up, ready to leave work.

"Day without Arthur sure is leisurely," the young reporter whispered to himself.

Having discussed with the old sheriff the previous night, both confirmed that Arthur must be favored by the 'Grim Reaper,' otherwise how could there be so many cases happening continuously?

However, as Arthur's friend, the young reporter thought it proper to consider Arthur's dignity.

So, on the days when Arthur was absent, the young reporter asked the old sheriff to join him for drinks at the club.

He heard there was a very nice lady there recently.

He wanted to meet, oh to meet.

The young reporter headed towards the Shire District Police Station, while Garcia, having left the 'Horn Report,' walked home with his manuscripts towards Clara Street.

"Ah!

I guess I'm just someone without any Talent!

I thought it would make a great story!"

Garcia's mouth was full of sighs.

What made him sigh even more was that he had to stop writing for a while.

He was out of money.

He had to do something else.

For example: selling intelligence.

He wasn't a professional intelligence trafficker, but he had been carefully observing after discovering some things at 94 Clara Street.

After that, he found some channels to supplement his finances.

As he was thinking about this, the assistant from 94 Clara Street appeared in front of him, blocking his path.

Garcia didn't like this assistant, not even a bit, even after glimpsing their second occupation through his Peeping.

Because, through Peeping, Garcia knew what kind of person they were.

Greedy, slothful, and quite nasty.

In short, Garcia could apply every negative adjective he could think of to them.

"What do you want?"

Garcia asked cautiously.

"News!

A very nice piece of news—at the cost of just a little money!"

The assistant, having already peddled the news around, was returning to 94 Clara Street to prepare for departure when he spotted Garcia on his way home.

Seeing Garcia, whom he had 'put on the path,' the assistant had an idea.

He planned to make an extra profit.

But Garcia was not buying it.

He walked around the assistant and headed home.

"Don't rush, take a look first!"

The assistant took out a 'Messenger Stone' and handed it to Garcia—who also had 'A Tiny Bit' of Talent and manipulated the 'Messenger Stone' with skill.

The assistant had taught him that, charging him ten Suo.

When Garcia saw part of the content inside the 'Messenger Stone,' he immediately widened his eyes.

Members of the Death Poetry Society were untouchables for Garcia.

As for the members of the higher-ranked 'Thirty Choir'?

He didn't even dare to think about it.

Let alone the 'Choir Quartet,' those high-ups.

"100 Suo, and this 'Messenger Stone' is yours.

I guarantee the content to follow is even more sensational."

The assistant said with a timed smile, preparing to abscond.

He was already planning his escape; though the 'Messenger Stone' was valuable, it likely carried the Cloak Society's Mark, which he dared not keep.

Better to give it to Garcia and divert attention elsewhere.

Garcia didn't respond, returning the 'Messenger Stone' to the assistant before turning to leave.

"50, 30...10 Suo!

10 Suo has to be okay, right?"

The assistant quickly dropped his price.

He didn't want to leave empty-handed, not at this point.

A mosquito's leg, no matter how small, is still meat—it could at least earn him a horse-drawn carriage.

Garcia stopped in his tracks.

He actually had 10 Suo, which amounted to all his assets.

Though he was sure the assistant must have sold this news to many big shots already, no small fry would have it.

The blockade those big shots imposed on the likes of them was unimaginable.

If he were to sell it...

He could earn his living expenses!

He could continue his writing in seclusion!

Thinking this, Garcia nodded.

Then, the images of a battle between 'Spirit Medium' and 'Death Poetry Society.Thirty Choir' began to spread in a bizarre and extreme way.

In South Los' Mystic Side, quite a few upper-class individuals became aware.

In South Los' Mystic Side, quite a few lower-class individuals also became aware.

After that, the spread began.

It disseminated at an unparalleled speed.

At the moment, Wuni had just flown into 6 White Bird Street.

Marinda, who had been resting with her eyes narrowed, opened them the moment Wuni flew into 6 White Bird Street—the intensely distinct Aura of Death made the lady feel annoyed.

She saw it as a provocation from the Death Poetry Society.

Immediately, the lady decided to intensify her interrogation of Grover.

She wanted to get everything he knew out of him.

And then?

Naturally, it was to take fierce revenge on the Death Poetry Society!

However, when the lady pinpointed the Aura of Death, her face showed astonishment.

Although Wuni had undergone some changes due to the "Breath of Death," one could still recognize its basic form.

The lady recognized Wuni as one of the two Crows she had given to Arthur.

But at the same time, the lady was certain that Wuni shouldn't possess the Aura of Death.

And that speed—it was clearly the result of a Magical Creatures' Promotion.

Facing this scene, the lady immediately had a realization—

"So that's what it is!"

Chapter 250 Everything Makes Sense Now (Dog Head)

When Wuni flew into the study at No. 6 White Bird Street, Arthur immediately used Wuni's body to hear Marinda's muttered soliloquy.

At this, Arthur expressed his confusion.

What do you mean it's originally like this?

What formidable matter have you grasped yet again?

You're quite like those traditional 'Spirit Mediums', all so shamanistic!

Arthur continuously complained in his heart.

However, on the surface, he was full of apologies—

"Sorry, Marinda, I've disturbed you."

Marinda had a habit of napping for ten minutes at midnight and noon.

If possible, Arthur would prefer not to disturb this lady at such times.

But he really couldn't wait any longer.

Pendragon was still bouncing around, seemingly fine.

But Simon, just as he was falling asleep, turned over inexplicably and bumped into a rock, letting out a groan and then falling unconscious.

Moreover, his breathing began to weaken.

Arthur, however, didn't dare to touch the apprentice policeman.

Because Arthur was well aware that once he touched the apprentice policeman, the latter would only die faster.

"Heh, you're so impatient to show off to me?"

How childish!"

Hearing Arthur's voice coming from Wuni's mouth, the lady scoffed as she picked up her pipe, stuffing it with tobacco leaves, while curling her lips in an apparently disdainful manner, but the corner of her eye kept glancing at the crow on the desk, her barely concealed envy spotted by Arthur.

Instantly, Arthur understood what she had misunderstood.

Right away, the young 'Spirit Medium' was ready to explain.

But before the young 'Spirit Medium' could speak, Marinda's chauffeur Edwin walked in.

The chauffeur, surprised, glanced at the large crow on the desk and, at Marinda's gesture to speak freely, immediately reported the news he had just received.

Upon hearing the news, the lady was taken aback.

"Arthur killed one of the 'Death Poetry Society's Thirty Choir's Four Tunes of Death'?"

"Yes!"

"And Arthur is also an 'Entrant'?"

"Yes!"

The incredulous Marinda asked again.

And the chauffeur once again confirmed the answer.

The lady immediately fell silent; she lit her pipe with a match, took a deep drag, and gestured with her hand for Edwin to leave.

When there were once again only two people in the study, the lady stared at Arthur, the speed of her smoke inhalations increasing.

And in her eyes appeared...

Pity!

Yes, it was pity!

Although Arthur was using Wuni's body, he swore he would never mistake such a look.

Even without the Skill of Insight, anyone could discern the two most obvious emotions—one was pity, and the other was... killing intent.

The former carried a trace of warmth.

The latter carried a bone-chilling coldness.

Both looks were so vividly memorable.

But Arthur was puzzled why the lady would give him such a look; it was completely different from what he had expected.

Arthur had imagined that the lady might be surprised, shocked, or even suspicious, angry, and so on.

But he had never considered 'pity'!

'What's going on here?'

Finding himself somewhat unable to follow the lady's train of thought, the wise Arthur wisely kept silent.

In such a situation, he believed the lady would take the initiative to speak.

And indeed, that was the case.

After exhaling another puff of smoke, the lady sighed—

"Hatred can make people irrational!

And vengeance can compel people to sacrifice everything!

This 'Power of Death' that surpasses limits must have brought you great backlash, hasn't it?

In order to avenge the 'Cat Faction.Black', you mastered such power by hook or by crook!

But you were careful, not only hiding this power, but also using other powers as a cover, in your previous battle with 'Shadow Snake' Ciudik, you employed powers to mask this 'Power of Death,' which allowed you to enter a state of overload temporarily without sustaining injury, needing only a few days of rest.

And it was during this rest that you suddenly saw it as an opportunity."

A chance to lure out my enemy!

And the enemy had appeared!

Moreover, it's a level that delights you!

Without any hesitation, you used your hidden power.

Then, you sought my help again...

You sure do trust me, don't you!"

As she said this, Marinda looked at Arthur, who had borrowed Wuni's body, revealing a shallow smile.

'Like hell I trust your evil ways!' Arthur inwardly scoffed at the subtlety and restraint in Marinda's smile.

He didn't know what was going on in that woman's head.

If he hadn't experienced this himself, he might have believed everything she said.

But...

Why couldn't it be so?

As the contemporary 'Black Cat,' isn't it right that I should avenge the 'Cat Faction. Black'?

And isn't it appropriate for me to have some special powers with great backlash in order to take my revenge?

With this in mind, Arthur, in Wuni's body, nodded slightly.

"Yes, that's right."

Afterward, the young 'Spirit Medium' slightly composed his words before he began to speak directly—

"This was my first time using such power, and its backlash was not as severe as I had imagined, but it has brought even more troublesome issues!

So now, I need a prop that can block my own 'Power of Death,' or one that can shield against things like Death Curses."

"Of course, I'll pay with something of equivalent value or information in return, or I would assist you once."

Arthur stated his request and made his promise.

The two parties were already in collaboration.

There was no such thing as gratuitous help.

Only cooperation under mutual interest existed.

"Indeed, it's the Power of Death!

Is it a forbidden technique performed based on the 'Cat Faction. Black' Core Mystical Arts 'Communicate with Spirits'?

Your identity as the contemporary 'Black Cat' probably can't be concealed any longer!"

Marinda spoke as such and then, once again, she laughed.

But this time, the smile carried a tinge of schadenfreude.

Every time she saw Arthur, the man with a concealed identity, safely staying inside No. 2 Cork Street and witnessing everything happening in South Los, she felt immense envy.

Now, good!

With the exposure of the contemporary 'Black Cat' identity, let's see how you continue to be an onlooker!

The thought of what Arthur might face next elated the lady.

Especially considering that for a considerable time to come, Arthur would have to rely on her, making their cooperative relationship even closer, the lady was even more delighted.

Who wouldn't want a powerful partner?

And it's even better when that partner is within one's control.

Having a 'Arcana' level partner that she could easily eliminate with a mere gesture...

Some of her plans seemed ready to be advanced.

With these thoughts in mind, the lady said directly—

"I have the prop, and I can lend it to you—but you'll need to promise that once your backlash has subsided, you will communicate with an Undead for me."

The future is the future, but now is now.

This lady had a clear understanding.

What she deserved, she was determined to fight for.

"Agreed!"

Arthur gave an affirmative answer.

If it were before he acquired the Talent 'Breath of Death,' he might not have known where to start, but now he felt quite confident.

Moreover, he had faith in the 'Breath of Death'; even if he couldn't achieve communication, he would be able to obtain relevant clues.

After all, if communication was not possible, then intimidation would be the alternative!

Just as the two reached another agreement, Edwin, the coachman, knocked and entered the room again.

The coachman approached Marinda with a strange expression and a hesitant demeanor.

Marinda looked at her confidant in surprise but refrained from reprimanding him, simply demanding—

"Speak."