

Great Master 32

Chapter 32: Rainy Wednesday

The next morning, a fine rain once again enveloped South Los.

Wednesday was not a day off, and people began their usual bustling routine.

Arthur brought the beef that had been slow-cooked overnight to the table, with its clear broth shimmering with a layer of oil on top, and the beef itself already tender.

After tasting a dice-sized piece of beef, Arthur contentedly squinted his eyes.

Although not comparable to a real chef, the food one makes always scores extra points, amplifying its deliciousness by 1-10 times over the original base.

The magnification depends on the level of hunger.

This morning's beef had expanded fivefold.

And when Arthur had cooked the noodles, the expansion factor rapidly reached tenfold.

Green onions and cilantro were sprinkled on the beef noodles in the bowl, the vibrant green and pristine white beautifully complementing each other, Arthur, having waited for so long, couldn't help but pick up the bowl and take a sip of the soup.

The broth was moderately salty, with a rich meat flavor that made one's mouth water.

Especially when fiery red chili was added to it, it stimulated the taste buds even more.

At this moment, Arthur was extremely grateful to the city of South Los, as the city with the largest port in South County, its developed shipping allowed him to access a wide variety of food.

Chili was one of them.

Of course, green onions, cilantro, and many spices as well.

In the farms surrounding South Los, chili, green onions, cilantro, and quite a few spices had already become essential crops and were the main source of income for the farmers.

However, no farmer had become rich off these not-so-cheap, and in some cases even pricey, condiments and spices.

Because...

They had to pay taxes!

And the lord of South Los was not a person to be trifled with.

Despite having a good reputation, he was definitely not merciful, especially towards those who dodged taxes, towards whom he was even more ruthless.

Even Old Charlie, the "Spirit Medium," had to pay a tax of 29 Suo each year, an amount appropriate for the middle class, white-collar job category.

Slurp, slurp!

Arthur devoured the noodles, recalling memories of the Earl of South Los that came from his predecessor.

These memories were not extensive.

In fact, in his predecessor's identity, he only knew of such a person.

The Lord Count, in his predecessor's memory, was more like a symbol.

That was the case for most people.

Including Arthur.

Apart from verbal thanks, he would definitely not take any further action, even if the person was the very lord of South Los he had just thanked.

After all, in Arthur's view, with the uniquely advantageous geographical location of South Los, tethering a dog there could achieve almost similar results.

"Burp~~"

With the bowl empty, a satisfied belch followed, and Arthur's face was adorned with a contented smile.

The next moment, his smile grew even brighter.

Because, the text before his eyes was dancing—

[The murder case at the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club is being talked about, many more are starting to take notice of you; XP+10]

[More people heard your name; XP+1]

...

Everything was just as he had predicted.

The reputation of the "Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club" itself, combined with the upcoming "Swordsmanship Conference," garnered an exceptionally high level of attention.

If Arthur had at that moment burst out with some details on how Litter had secured the third place at the last "Swordsmanship Competition,"

He would surely gain more XP.

Unfortunately, he had already accepted Todd Gili's compensation.

Although 100 gold notes and the promise of discovering swordsmanship naturally couldn't compare to XP under normal circumstances, considering that he was also going to participate in the "Swordsmanship Competition,"

To avoid unnecessary trouble and earn more XP in the "Swordsmanship Competition," he believed he needed to honor the promise.

Similarly, it matched the impression his predecessor had given people.

'Just 4 XP short.'

Arthur glanced at the XP required for "Swift Bird Swordsmanship. Pseudo" to reach Lv3 and didn't rush; he knew that as the reports about him increased, more and more people in South Los would know his name, and the value of XP he received each day would multiply.

In the foreseeable future, he would have a steady income of XP every day until he hit a bottleneck.

And then?

Naturally, he would need to find new sources of XP income.

He could replicate what he had done in South Los in other cities, or he could engage in combat, exploration, quests, dining on delicious food, and so on.

However, the latter would still need to be figured out.

As for food, if that was what they called delicious, Arthur might begin to doubt life itself.

Exploration and quests should be more specific.

But combat left Arthur puzzled; he had already fought several battles and killed more than one enemy, yet there had been no XP prompt.

If the previous encounters weren't intense enough, then the fight with that beggar yesterday was close to costing him his life.

Even the battle with the toad was exceedingly dangerous.

Yet, there were no XP prompts.

'Could it be that only killing enemies of a certain level grants XP?' he wondered, frowning.

Not only was this requirement extremely difficult for him at present, but if this hypothesis was correct, it meant that the toad was still alive.

This made Arthur feel a tinge of unease.

The only silver lining was that, upon waking up this morning, the stench had completely dissipated, so there was no need to worry about attracting other Mystic Side People.

'If that toad is still alive, I must find it!' Arthur thought, frowning even more deeply.

Finding the toad was more difficult than finding the beggar.

Although the beggar was powerful, Arthur knew what he looked like and had a somewhat reliable group of people searching for him.

But the toad?

Arthur hadn't even seen its true face.

In simple terms, there was nowhere to start.

'How can I draw it out?'

Unable to find it, he could only hope to make it reveal itself.

Arthur squinted his eyes, beginning to think of a workable plan.

And at that moment—

Ding! Ding!

The doorbell rang differently in the rain; Wiggins stood at the doorway of No. 2 Cork Street, unable to hide the joy on his face, which surprised Arthur.

"Did you find him?"

"Yes, found him!"

Wiggins nodded repeatedly, his face lit with excitement.

As Arthur's name kept appearing in the newspapers, becoming increasingly well-known, Golden Finger was even more reverent, and deep down, he hoped even more to gain Arthur's favor.

Because, in his eyes, that would be a highway to heaven.

So, after receiving Arthur's message yesterday, he really did give it everything he had, not sleeping at all through the night, and mobilized all his connections.

He finally found the lead just now.

But Arthur was secretly frowning.

Had Wiggins really found the beggar?

Arthur was skeptical but didn't say it out loud or show it; he simply signaled for Wiggins to lead the way.

However, before setting out, Arthur placed the wooden puppet from the end of the hallway into his embrace.

Wiggins, leading the way, occasionally looked back at Arthur, who carried the Spirit Medium Box in one hand, held an umbrella in the other, and kept the bizarre wooden puppet doll in his arms, feeling the hairs on the back of his neck stand up.

Golden Finger was scared.

It wasn't just Golden Finger; as Arthur boarded the public coach, a man and woman in the carriage were also scared, and even the baby in the woman's arms started to cry from fright.

Arthur, looking at the crying baby, frowned.

Something wasn't right!