

Great Master 34

Chapter 34: Shell and Mouse!

The carriage stopped at the edge of Shire District, adjacent to Dort District.

Opening his umbrella, Arthur stepped down from the carriage and immediately noticed the distant gray, dilapidated spires of buildings—the most famous structures in Dort District and the former heart of South Los during the Holy Empire Era: the Holy Temple.

However, as the Holy Empire disintegrated, the core of South Los had long since shifted from Dort District to Shire District.

What was left was the still towering Holy Temple.

"We found him just outside 'Rat Street'!"

"At that time, he was fighting a dog for food!"

Wiggins led the way, describing the situation at the time.

Rat Street, encompassing a dozen streets to the west of the church in Dort District, housed the lowest echelons of South Los, much like the name 'Rat Street' suggests, with its residents all being universally despised like rats.

Most of South Los's bankrupt populace would gather here with their last ounce of defiance.

Until they completely perished.

Or chose to leave.

Beyond the bankrupt individuals, there were also outsiders—vagrants who managed to blend into the city, representing one of the unstable elements of South Los.

Of course, compared to the criminals hidden here, they were hardly significant.

These guys were the real headache.

You should never expect to catch these individuals on Rat Street.

Because on the surface, Rat Street is not just the dozen streets you see; there are extensive, interconnected 'streets' underground—that's the real Rat Street.

If no one leads you, you'll get lost once you enter, and then...

You'll get 'devoured.'

To the true 'rats,' outsiders are unusually welcome.

All this Arthur knew from the memories of his predecessor.

Old Charlie had reiterated more than once to his predecessor not to approach Rat Street without cause, and if one must go there, family members must accompany them, be it Uncle Drake or Aunt Cassandra, and ideally, Old Charlie himself.

In the memories of his predecessor, the expressions of Old Charlie during these cautions were exceptionally stern and serious.

So much so that his predecessor curbed his curiosity, hearing about Rat Street but never actually visiting.

Arthur was very curious too, but he was more rational than his predecessor; he knew all too well the kind of darkness hidden in such 'lawless zones.'

Until he became truly powerful, he would absolutely not set foot there.

Meanwhile, Arthur also looked at Wiggins with surprise.

'To be able to find someone just outside 'Rat Street,' Wiggins's influence in the streets must be greater than imagined!'

Arthur wasn't worried at all about this.

On the contrary, Arthur was pleased.

For the current Arthur, the greater Wiggins's influence or power in the streets, the more it helped him.

As for the day when Wiggins's street power might exceed expectations?

Arthur wasn't worried.

If Wiggins was growing his own power, was he to stop advancing?

He, too, was progressing.

And certainly faster than Wiggins.

Arthur never overestimated himself, nor underestimated others.

He simply had the confidence to continue working with Wiggins.

"What exactly is Rat Street like?"

The young reporter Scott couldn't help but ask, curious.

Wiggins, who was leading the way, slowed his steps and then spoke in a lowered voice.

"Hell."

Immediately, the young journalist shrank back.

But his curiosity did not completely dissipate.

For any journalist, Rat Street had a certain inexplicable allure.

"Just kidding!"

"Rat Street is just a gathering place for poor people, nothing good, but if you want to go, you can hire me to take you there—5 Zeroes a trip."

"Of course, whatever you see inside, you definitely can't report on it."

Turning his head and glancing at Scott, Wiggins knew well what the young journalist was thinking and immediately made his point clear.

"You can't report on it?"

The young journalist looked dismayed.

"You're not the first journalist who wanted to report on Rat Street, but why has there never been any newspaper that published articles about it?"

Wiggins shrugged his shoulders.

There were some things the Golden Finger left unsaid, but the young journalist guessed them and decided not to dwell further on the matter of Rat Street.

Undoubtedly, although the news is important, life is more important.

After walking along the muddy road for another five minutes, the three of them arrived in front of a house, and Wiggins pushed the door open.

In the room, there were three boys around fourteen or fifteen years old, each holding a club. Although their clothes were tattered and their figures were slender, each of them had an extremely fierce look, especially with the cowering expression of a beggar behind them, these adolescent children looked even more ferocious.

When they saw that it was Wiggins who pushed the door open, the three boys put down their clubs, and their expressions softened.

"Boss!"

The three greeted Wiggins and then looked at Arthur and Scott with curious eyes.

"This is Mr. Kledos."

Wiggins introduced Arthur with a polite gesture of his hand, but he pointed casually when introducing the young journalist.

"This is Scott."

Arthur nodded to the three adolescent children and then walked toward the beggar.

Arthur never underestimated people from the streets, especially such adolescents, and he treated them with caution—because you never know what these young ones might do.

Impulsiveness is a hallmark of this age.

Bravado thrives in those from the streets.

When these two are combined, it results in recklessness.

The still-cowering, foolish expression and the scars on the beggar's face proved this point—Arthur believed this was already the result of Wiggins' control.

Otherwise, the beggar would have been worse off.

However, Arthur still frowned.

The beggar in front of him was indeed the beggar he had seen before, but this beggar was not the one he was looking for.

Simply put, the beggar's appearance hadn't changed, but the 'person' hidden inside was no longer there.

It wasn't just because a real Mystic Side Person wouldn't have gotten beaten up without fighting back, but also because that subtle feeling of unease was gone.

Except for the last time, when facing that beggar, and after the other side made a move, when his "Death Intuition" started flashing, and when the beggar first appeared outside No. 2 Cork Street, he also felt an indescribable sense of unease deep down.

Now, it was gone.

Arthur greatly trusted his instincts.

'Was it possession and then departure?'

'Did the fear of a puppet doll directly make the other party abandon this body?'

Arthur speculated.

As for the other party's death?

Arthur didn't even consider it, with the power the other party had shown, how could they die so easily?

Being scared away was already a bold guess for Arthur.

"Mr. Kledos, what's wrong?"

Wiggins noticed Arthur's unease and immediately asked.

"Nothing, you did a great job!"

Arthur smiled and shook his head, then pulled out a gold note and placed it in Wiggins' hand.

About the Mystic Side and Supernatural Power, he hadn't truly figured it out himself, so naturally, he wouldn't blame Wiggins for catching the wrong person.

And since the other party had exerted effort, it was only right to give compensation.

This was about both of their identities and also the cooperation that would follow—Arthur indeed hoped that thereafter, the other party would serve him wholeheartedly.

That's why he then pulled out one of the ten 1-denomination gold notes that Old Charlie had left behind.

Although Arthur also had 12 Suo and 3 Zeroes in change, how could a bunch of Suo and Zeroes have the impact of a gold note?

In fact, upon seeing Arthur pull out a gold note, the eyes of the three adolescent children widened, and Wiggins was full of surprise.

In Wiggins' thoughts, this job, even the next few jobs, were compensation for Arthur letting him off; he dared not expect a payment.

Furthermore, in Wiggins' heart, he hoped after a few compensations, he could smoothly break away from Arthur's control, or begin a partnership with each other under a completely new identity.

But now, looking at the gold note, Wiggins hesitated.

In the end, Wiggins chose to take the gold note.

He knew that starting a partnership with each other under a completely new identity would be the right approach for him afterward.

But he needed money.

This Golden Finger, besides the three boys by his side, still had some subordinates to maintain, plus he had to regularly pay protection fees to those gangs, which always left him barely breaking even.

However, recently those gangs had raised his protection fees, plunging Wiggins into crisis.

The gang's protection fees were mandatory for him.

Unless, he didn't want to live.

Therefore, even though he knew that taking this gold note would fix his relationship with Arthur in the current 'superior-subordinate' dynamic, he still chose to take it.

Arthur, watching Wiggins take the gold note, smiled slightly and was just about to say something when suddenly, the sound of boots splashing through mud echoed in his ears...

And it was getting closer.