

Great Master 341

Chapter 341 Death Whispers Softly

Ivan, crouching in a small alleyway on Cork Street, busily planted a bomb inside a snack cart disguised as something else, all while keeping a close watch on No. 2 Cork Street, hidden behind a large banyan tree.

1000 gold notes!

As long as he could block the owner of No. 2 Cork Street from leaving or injure him, he would receive this bounty!

The job had suddenly appeared at the 'Bounty Tavern' yesterday afternoon.

Everyone was shocked by such a big offer.

The 'Bounty Tavern' was located at the junction of the Shire District and the Dort District, not along Cicico Ruins Road but on the other side, on Boding Street.

No. 233 Boding Street's 'Water Lizard Tavern' was one of the 'Bounty Taverns'.

Of course, it's not that the Shire District didn't have 'Bounty Taverns'.

However, the 'Bounty Taverns' in the Shire District had an entry threshold; not everyone could get in.

Many mercenaries, bounty collectors, and bounty hunters sneered at such thresholds, but in reality, some of the really big jobs were at the 'Bounty Taverns' in the Shire District.

And the 'Water Lizard Tavern'?

Most jobs there were worth 50-100 gold notes.

Occasionally, there would be a job worth 200 gold notes.

Any more?

None.

Therefore, the offer of 1000 gold notes made everyone who was drinking at the 'Water Lizard Tavern' freeze.

The next moment, it was a scramble for the job.

Even though they knew who lived at No. 2 Cork Street, it was the same.

Never underestimate those who earn their keep from bounties.

They not only possess exceptional strength but also have incredibly good information networks.

Therefore, they were all too familiar with the reputation of 'Spirit Medium' Arthur Kredos.

But,

the job also mentioned, didn't it, that merely hindering him from leaving or injuring him would suffice, and it wasn't truly a head-on confrontation!

So, these people were full of confidence.

Ivan was one of them!

Ivan, who was skilled at using explosives, had always looked down upon the so-called 'Mystic Side'—he had killed at least two 'Mystic Side Persons'.

Maybe those guys had bizarre methods, but in terms of real combat power, Ivan thought they were just so-so.

Those Flame Arrows weren't any better than firearms.

And the so-called secrecy was a joke in the face of Explosives.

If one bundle of explosives wasn't enough, then use two.

As long as you keep layering them, even the most powerful 'Mystic Side Person' is bound to be obliterated.

Just like now, facing Arthur coming out of No. 2 Cork Street, the bounty collector already had two bundles of explosives in his hand—Ivan's plan was simple, to use two bundles of explosives to harass that 'Spirit Medium', and then, to ignite all the explosives in the snack cart.

What next?

He forcefully pushed in the direction of that carriage.

Then, just wait to collect the money.

Perhaps that 'Spirit Medium' wouldn't just be blocked or injured, he might even be blown to bits.

By then, he would definitely get a hefty bonus.

Thinking so, Ivan grinned.

Then, suddenly, Ivan sensed something off.

He heard heavy breathing that sounded like that of a large animal.

Instinctively, Ivan looked down.

And then...

he lost his head.

Kuliqui bit off the bounty collector's head in one bite and then leapt onto the roof of the building, using the chimney as a shield, leaping toward his next target.

From the moment Arthur left the house to the time he got into the carriage,

all four bounty hunters lying in wait nearby were taken down by Kuliqui.

And many more bounty hunters had their throats slit by Fujin and Wuni as they passed by in Silence.

Arthur's carriage started off slowly, and bodies began to fall gradually to the ground.

The Fresh Blood flowed slowly, as lifeless eyes stared after the departing carriage.

With the elevated view provided by Fujin, Arthur could clearly see the 'flowers' blooming constantly on both sides of the road as his black carriage rode past.

Crimson and vivid.

Resentful and fearful.

The blood and emotions of the corpses began to intermingle, celebrating for 'Death's' passage, and as one body after another fell, they were performing the 'Song of Death' with their lives.

Silence and withering song.

Life, at this moment, became cheap.

No!

It should be said to have become fair.

In the face of 'Death', everyone is equal.

But Arthur was an exception.

Because—

he was "Death" itself.

All along the way he killed.

Corpses lay everywhere, a testament to decay.

Edwin, the coachman, smelled the scent of blood. In fact, from just a moment ago, the scent of blood crazily assailed his nostrils.

'How many people have died?'

Edwin was not one who had never seen death.

Even, he had personally killed quite a number.

This coachman of Marinda had been through countless battles, big and small.

But the coachman had never experienced what lay before his eyes—

a sudden mountain of corpses and a sea of blood!

Without any warning, death had simply appeared.

Not one or a few.

But a group!

But swathes and swathes of the dead!

'Malz is probably going to be working overtime non-stop.

I hope he can hold up!'

Edwin started to adjust his mindset in his own way.

He was very clear about how these guys died; his subordinates were regulars at the "Bounty Tavern" in South Los, so naturally, he knew what had happened.

And this was also one of the reasons he became Arthur's coachman again.

Marinda hoped that Arthur could make it to Elta Square without any trouble.

And the other reason?

It was to publicize her relationship with Arthur to more people.

'Perhaps the mistress also didn't expect Lord Kledos to be so "direct," right?

But it's good!

It's like clearing a piece of "business" for the mistress!

The mistress and Lord Kledos really have a spiritual connection!'

Edwin, of course, remembered the name Arthur had asked him to use.

On the surface, Edwin chose to follow Arthur's instructions, addressing Arthur as Arthur, but deep down, Edwin still gave Arthur his honorifics.

Not just because of Arthur's strength, but also because Arthur had always "cooperated" with Marinda's actions.

You see, his mistress had received news from the "Bounty Tavern" yesterday and thus had the idea of bringing the "Bounty Tavern" under her wing.

Previously, she had wanted to, but there had been no justifiable reason.

Now?

Not only did she have a reason, but those guys were also all dead.

Completely replaceable by her subordinates.

To put it simply...

Good riddance!

Having completely adjusted his mindset, Edwin started humming a country tune he had just casually adapted—

"Arthur, Arthur, so stubborn.

How's your garden doing?

Crimson blood, beautiful eyeballs, where are they buried?

The bodies line up in neat rows!"

This adaptation was just an impromptu creation by the coachman.

Nothing special.

But Arthur heard it.

The young Spirit Medium rolled his eyes, indicating Edwin's adaptation was really bad, then, he lifted his left hand and gently snapped his fingers.

Snap!

In the crisp sound, the Death Qi from those fresh corpses swarmed.

In an instant, vast amounts of invisible 'Death Qi' hovered above the carriage, moving with it, growing stronger as the carriage moved.

By the time the carriage arrived at Elta Square, the 'Death Qi' above had already turned into dark clouds in the eyes of the Gifted Ones, shielding out the last sliver of sunlight.

And in their ears, endless cries and howls of the Undead rang out.

The oppression brought by the pure condensation of 'Death Qi' directly made the [Spirituality] of the Gifted Ones tremble.

And when the carriage door opened and the young Spirit Medium stepped out slowly, the condensation of 'Death Qi' around him reached some kind of climax—

Thump! Thump!

The Gifted Ones at Elta Square fell to the ground one after another.

Their gazes towards Arthur were filled with horror, and in their hearts, there was only one voice—

This, was Spirit Medium Arthur Kredos?!

Chapter 342 Pirate's Blood!

In Elta Square, the 'Gifted Ones' were horrified and puzzled.

Merely possessing 'Talents,' but not yet genuinely realizing them, they could not comprehend the scene before them, while those who had stepped into the 'Mystic Side' felt the sweat in their palms.

Entrants!

Was this the might of an Entrant?

They looked at the slowly walking 'Spirit Medium', Arthur Kredos, with doubt and fascination.

Including the Xi Jin brothers.

But soon, the three pirate brothers cracked a smile.

Excitement!

What could be more thrilling than hunting an Entrant?

Naturally, an injured Entrant!

An injured Entrant was a rare opportunity for the trio—who had inherited some of the 'Pirate King' Edward's legacy and had stepped into the 'Mystic Side' through the ritual 'Pirate's Blood,' requiring them to plunder continuously: wealth, women, power, to further their advancement through 'Pirate's Blood.'

Over the past decade, their acts of plunder had already pushed 'Pirate's Blood' ritual to the limit of the 'Arcana Level.'

Just one more grand act of plunder was needed to smoothly promote them to the 'Great Arcana Level.'

As to why they dared to challenge an 'Entrant' when they were just at the 'Arcana Level'?

Besides being at the peak of the 'Arcana Level,' it was because those elevated by 'Pirate's Blood' on the 'Mystic Side' could 'Resonate' and 'Amplify.'

This was the unique aspect of 'Pirate's Blood,' allowing the strength of the other two to be concentrated onto one person, harnessing their combined power of two hundred percent.

This was also the secret behind their ability to constantly plunder seemingly more formidable fleets on the high seas and come out successful every time.

When their powers 'Resonated' in one person, the ensuing 'Amplification' could push the resonated individual to the brink of the 'Great Arcana Level.'

When facing an Entrant who was severely injured.

The limit of the 'Great Arcana Level' was not without a fighting chance.

As for how they were so certain Arthur was injured?

They certainly didn't trust the intelligence provided by their collaborators.

They trusted their eyes more.

Arthur, in front of them, emitted an astonishing presence, but when compared to other 'Entrants' they had encountered before, there was a hint of 'instability'—it was clear that Arthur had indeed been injured.

Only an injured 'Entrant' would look like this.

The three brothers exchanged glances.

Eventually, the eldest of the Xi Jin brothers stepped forward and made his way towards Arthur.

At this scene, the attention of everyone else in Elta Square was immediately drawn.

Especially the 'Gifted Ones,' who couldn't understand why this man would dare to challenge such a formidable 'Spirit Medium.'

The remaining 'Mystic Side Persons,' although surprised, showed expressions eager for the spectacle.

What about ordinary people?

There weren't many ordinary people in Elta Square at the moment.

The moment Arthur appeared, those ordinary people all fainted.

The guards of Earl of South Los had taken them all away.

There would inevitably be an infusion of memories.

False memories?

Unimportant!

For ordinary people, knowing too much was not good; in contrast, being aware of only what they should know would make them happier.

Of course, if they didn't want the happiness arranged by others, then they should resist.

Like swifts facing the storm head-on.

Unfortunately, such people were too few.

So few as to be negligible.

Most of the time, people are willing to talk but never to take action, no matter how many millions of words they say.

Even Arthur was the same.

If he could live a tranquil life, Arthur would not be scheming and struggling so much.

He would willingly be someone's dog. Alas, they didn't want him.

They didn't want him, and they even wanted to kill him for his flesh.

Then don't blame him for sharpening his claws and fangs, ready to taste those guys.

Watching the leader of the Xi Jin brothers approaching, Arthur identified the man as a pirate at first glance, the small ornaments and the condition of his skin made the man's identity quite easy to recognize.

As a result, he could most likely discern that the ritual they had chosen was "Pirate's Blood".

This ritual, originating from the "Pirate King" Edward, is the most commonly selected by pirates on the Mystic Side.

Compared to other rituals, "Pirate's Blood" is not only simple but also requires only soaking in rum, belting out the "Pirate's Song", and then, before all the fresh blood has drained, finding the hidden gold coin in a box filled with stones using the hand that had been cut.

No complex or hard-to-find base materials are needed, just a ship adrift on the sea will do.

Moreover, the effects of "Pirate's Blood" are extremely rapid, as long as constant plundering keeps the spirituality pleased, one can quickly rise through the ranks.

Why did Arthur know this so clearly?

Because of William.

After encountering the Mystic Side, William, given his pirate origins, paid particular attention to the Mystic Side of piracy.

And why didn't William choose "Pirate's Blood"?

Pros and cons!

While growing rapidly, pirates who chose "Pirate's Blood" for their ritual would indeed grow physically stronger and could control their ships at will, without the need for more sailors, navigating and manipulating sails, rigging, cannons, and so on by mere thought.

But they lacked a substantial number of secret techniques.

And once they left their ship, the combat power of pirates who chose "Pirate's Blood" would plummet drastically.

Why was Edward able to become the Pirate King in the first place?

Wasn't it because of the "White Crow"?

Without a legendary warship as his steed, the highly ambitious William at the time wouldn't have chosen "Pirate's Blood".

However, owing to his background, his collection of "Pirate's Blood" ritual materials was quite comprehensive.

Therefore, Arthur was very clear about the intentions of the three pirates before him.

It was nothing more than "resonance" and "amplification", then using their Physique to overpower him.

If they had been other Mystic Side Persons, Arthur might have hesitated, worrying about whether they possessed some secret technique, considering whether he needed to engage them at close quarters.

But three pirates who had performed the "Pirate's Blood" ritual.

And, pirates who had come ashore, no less.

Arthur's expression remained unchanged as he continued to walk forward at a leisurely pace.

Seeing Arthur's unwavering approach, joy flickered across the eyes of the eldest Xi Jin brother.

Perfect!

He had chosen their strongest suit, Physique!

Then...

Die!

Murderous intent surfaced within him, his face twisted with ferocity.

The eldest of the Xi Jin brothers collided straight with Arthur.

It wasn't a head-on collision, however.

But a clash of shoulder against shoulder.

Bang!

In the muffled sound, the face of the eldest Xi Jin brother, twisted with ferocity, suddenly changed, as an overpowering force from the point of impact coursed through him.

Thud, thud, thud!

The leader of the Xi Jin brothers was forced to retreat step by step until he was caught by his two younger brothers, who stopped his backward momentum.

"Resonance!"

The eldest Xi Jin brother shouted, and his two brothers immediately stood behind him, placing their palms on his shoulders.

Watching this scene, Arthur silently removed the glove from his right hand.

The young Spirit Medium lightly flicked at the spot he had just been hit.

Dust, of course, was nonexistent.

But,

Misfortune was indeed present!

It, leads to death!

Chapter 343: Walking over Corpses!

Doom is intangible, formless.

Death shadows every step.

Thump, thump thump!

The hearts of the Xi Jin brothers began to beat violently, gradually synchronizing their rhythms—Resonance, using their hearts as the foundation to invoke "Spirituality" through Ritual, unifying as one entity and lending their strength to a single person.

This unique technique of the "Pirate's Blood" had been utilized by the Xi Jin brothers countless times already.

Even with their eyes closed, they could complete everything within a breath.

However, just as they were about to finish, the eldest of the Xi Jin brothers subconsciously glanced at Arthur.

Looking at Arthur's calm demeanor and tranquil gaze.

For some reason, the eldest of the brothers felt a sudden pang in his heart.

Does he know we're using "Resonance"?

Then why isn't he taking precautions?

Could it be that he is confident his "Physique" surpasses that of the three of us combined?

Although the eldest Xi Jin brother admitted to himself that he had underestimated his opponent, he did not believe that Arthur's "Physique" could surpass the combined total of the three brothers.

Nor could it be possible that it was double their combined total.

Meaning...

The use of "Resonance" was exactly what their opponent wanted to see.

The opponent had prepared a strategy specifically targeting their "Resonance."

This thought caused the eldest Xi Jin brother's heart to skip a beat.

Suddenly, the previously unified heartbeats developed interference.

The remaining two Xi Jin brothers didn't understand why their elder brother made such a mistake, but they immediately adjusted their heartbeats, aiming to sync them once again with their brother's.

Similarly, the eldest Xi Jin brother also realized his mistake.

He did not know what sort of plan Arthur had.

But once "Resonance" begins, it's like an arrow on the bowstring, it must be launched.

Immediately, the eldest Xi Jin brother quickly adjusted his heartbeat, trying to match the rhythm of his two younger brothers.

But just when the two brothers instinctively coordinated with their elder, intending to synchronize with the current rhythm.

There was another miscalculation.

The Xi Jin brothers panicked.

They quickly tried to adjust again.

But,

It was wrong again.

Three strikes and you're out.

The next moment—

Thump thump thump!

Bang!

The sound of their heartbeats grew louder, like the bursting sound itself.

Thud, thud, thud.

Three bodies, dressed in suits and leather shoes, fell to the ground simultaneously.

Arthur, however, didn't even spare them a glance, merely slowly raising his gloved hand.

And it was at this moment that the young 'Servant' standing behind Little Lisop suddenly made his move.

Clang!

The Longsword unsheathed, the young Swordsman's face, ice-cold, was filled with intense murderous intent.

Kill Arthur Kredos!

This was, after all, one of his most important missions on this journey.

And the other?

Of course, it was becoming the Champion of the Swordsmanship Competition.

Obtaining a 'Knight' title from the Earl of South Los would help stabilize that great man's schemes in South Los once again.

Perhaps, it could even take things to the next level.

That was what he really wanted to do.

And to become a 'Servant' for Little Lisop?

It was nothing more than a temporary expedient.

How could the Lisop Family possibly employ him?

He was loyal to that great man from the very beginning to the end.

Thinking of the praise from that great man after he killed Arthur Kredos and became the Champion of the Swordsmanship Competition, receiving the 'Knight' title.

The young Swordsman's blade became even faster.

On the Swordsman's blade, a chorus of bird calls could be heard.

Arthur immediately recognized that the opponent was using the White Bird Sword Technique!

Not the inferior version he had imitated, but the simplified "White Bird Sword Technique" that the Duke of the Inner Bay had adapted for the Seven Years' War!

Although it was far from the original, the simplified version already possessed a third of the true "White Bird Sword Technique's" grace.

Hum hum hum!

Among the fine chirp-like sounds, the young Swordsman's blade moved even faster.

The killing intent hidden within the sword made Marinda in the Bell Tower clench her fists.

Previously, this lady could not confirm the identity of the individual.

But as he drew his sword, the lady immediately knew the opponent's identity—a Diehard, selected by the Duke of the Inner Bay from the army and secretly trained as an elite.

Unlike the overt Lion Guard.

These elites were more akin to a Hidden Guard.

Specially crafted to deal with certain matters for the Old Lion that weren't suitable for public attention.

'Damn bastard!'

Marinda's gaze swept over the Old Lion's Hidden Guard, her eyes fixated on Little Lisop—the son of a lord displayed considerable speed.

"Stop! Stop right now!

I command you to stop immediately!

This isn't in line with the contract I signed!"

Little Lisop shouted loudly.

He appeared completely taken aback by the unfolding events.

However, Marinda knew that while the surprise might be genuine, his current actions were merely to extricate himself from the situation.

He was supposed to act ignorant of the young swordsman's identity, as if he himself had been deceived.

But in reality?

He must have already been in cahoots with the Grand Duke.

No!

More accurately, it was his father who had been in cahoots with the Grand Duke.

'Damn "noble rules," they're so binding!'

Marinda cursed inwardly, her brow slightly furrowing as she pondered how she could maximize her benefits.

As for Arthur?

This lady wasn't worried at all.

How could 'Cat Faction. Hei' possibly fail to deal with a Hidden Guard of the Old Lion?

But to others unaware of the truth, it seemed more likely that the Old Lion's Hidden Guard who struck suddenly would win.

Especially the Hidden Guard himself was of this belief.

He had keen intuition!

As Arthur put on his gloves again, he could sense that dreadful aura dissipating.

Clearly maintaining such a posture or using such secret techniques for long with his injuries was impossible for Arthur.

Moreover, sustaining this posture or using these techniques was likely to aggravate Arthur's injuries.

This was why he drew his sword so decisively.

He was already injured, and now more severely so—this was an opportunity he had no reason to relinquish—

Buzz buzz buzz!

The sound of bird song grew louder, the sword moved faster, and the murderous intent on the young swordsman's face became almost tangible.

His heart was cold.

His sword was cold.

And then...

He was frozen solid.

Originating from the Evil Spirit Orb, the Cold instantly turned the young swordsman into an ice sculpture.

The ice sculpture, maintaining a charging posture, fell straight to the ground.

Crack!

Along with the body, it shattered into crystals of ice that sparkled brilliantly and beautifully under the evening sun.

But the next moment, the sunlight was obscured.

The ice crystals were enveloped in Shadows.

It was Arthur.

Arthur stepped onto the ice crystals, disregarding their composition, he continued forward.

Walking over corpses?

Who wasn't advancing over the bodies of their enemies?

Arthur had not even the slightest ripple in his heart.

It was not until then that the onlookers realized Arthur had never stopped his advance, maintaining his unique cadence throughout.

Hiss!

'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion.

'Storm Sword' Deljo.

Both drew in a cold breath instinctively, stepping back in an effort to be less conspicuous.

'Lord Ernest,' 'Lord Dibwa,' and 'Lord Bass,' the lords' relatives, stared dumbfounded at the scene.

This was their opponent?

What a joke!

We'd be dead if we went up there!

The three noble scions inwardly wailed.

But the onlookers who were just there to observe and not compete had fewer reservations; they reassessed the rapidly rising 'Spirit Medium' with looks of amazement.

Afterward, they stepped aside slightly, giving clear access to the path leading under the Bell Tower.

Under everyone's gaze, Arthur stepped forward. Upon reaching the base of the Bell Tower, he looked at Freeman and Amiel and said softly—

"Arthur Kredos, registering."

As his words fell, the Bell Tower immediately rang out with a loud resonance.

No more, no less, precisely five tolls.

Not too early, not too late, just at five o'clock.

Chapter 344: Different Expressions!

Freeman's face blossomed with an enthusiastic smile as he respectfully placed a registration form before Arthur and diligently pointed to where a signature was needed.

"Just sign here, please."

Between the words, a sense of 'pride' inexplicably emerged on the visage of the Newborn Blood Descendant.

To this Newborn Blood Descendant, the stronger Arthur was, the stronger it proved his 'father' to be—everyone knew that cooperation was based on the equality of strength between both parties.

And the stronger his 'father' was, the safer he himself would be.

Even if his 'father' didn't acknowledge him, the relationship between them was indeed real and indisputable.

Moreover, such non-acknowledgment could be mitigated.

For instance...

Take a roundabout approach!

Watching the 'Spirit Medium' signing, Freeman felt immensely grateful that he had 'correctly calculated' the profits of Rat Street in advance.

With these profits, he hoped he could establish some connection with the 'Spirit Medium' before him, right?

Freeman thought so, his smile growing more fervent.

This elicited a look of disdain from Amiel standing beside him.

'Such a tasteless fellow, not even knowing to offer this greatness a chair.'

With that thought in mind, the lady from Talin immediately rose and moved her own chair behind Arthur.

"Your Excellency, you may sit while signing."

After saying this, Amiel lowered her voice and said,

"Your Excellency, do you need a maid?

I can cook and also concoct some Magic Potions, and I have a rudimentary understanding of Alchemy..."

Amiel was introducing herself.

At this moment, Amiel was filled with regret for her 'recklessness' upon their first meeting.

If she had known how powerful Arthur was, she would have 'stated her intentions' at their first encounter.

Instead of making amends like now.

While mending the pen after the sheep is lost wasn't too late, everything spent was real.

After Arthur had signed his name and returned the form to Freeman, he calmly observed Amiel—with the young 'Spirit Medium,' the lady's impression from Talin was indelibly strong.

Not only because she had impersonated Marinda at their first meeting,

but also due to her subsequent display of 'adaptation to circumstances.'

The way she was prepared to discard her pride to survive and live better was indeed commendable.

Arthur was certain that the lady from Talin before him possessed a survival capability comparable to that of a cockroach.

Under Arthur's gaze, however, Amiel thought of even more—

'Do I need to warm the bed if I become a maid?

That's how it's depicted in those comic books.

Should I go buy some pantyhose?

Or get a maid outfit tailored for easy wear?

One wouldn't be enough; what if it gets dirty and needs to be washed, so two easy-wear maid outfits will do, and two pairs of pantyhose!

That's another significant expense!

After buying these, I might not have enough left for the newly released 'Dangerous Liaisons' comic book this month... Should I 'calculate' the income from Rat Street like Freeman?

Not too much, but enough to buy lots of comic books!

Especially that collector's edition 'Eye-Opener' I've had my eyes on for so long!

The thoughts of the Talin-born lady dwelled on her favorite comic books, and upon recalling their content, she immediately flushed with embarrassment.

'Hey, hey, hey, why are you blushing?

You're not projecting yourself into some bizarre role, are you?'

Arthur thought critically, but outwardly he remained calm.

Since their relationship was only casual, any extra words were unnecessary.

Maintaining silence, on the other hand, proved to be a decent choice.

Even so, it made the surrounding "Gifted Ones" feel envious—Amiel might have been fundamentally unreliable, but his looks were undoubtedly great, even handsome, especially his light blue eyes, which were particularly attracting.

As the person in charge of registration, Amiel certainly left a profound impression on these young men.

Many of them were even smitten.

These youngsters even decided that once the registration was over, they would try to invite Amiel.

But before they could extend their invitation, everything had already ended.

Seeing Amiel kneeling submissively and bashfully in front of Arthur, the young men, though resentful, also knew that they stood no chance.

'Hmph, what's so great about this 'Spirit Medium'?''

Many "Gifted Ones" felt sour deep down.

Compared to the "Gifted Ones," those who had already stepped into the "Mystic Side" were full of envy, amazed that someone could establish a connection with an "Entrant," which was truly remarkable.

However, among these "Mystic Side People," "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion and "Storm Sword" Deljo were not included.

Since his arrival, "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion had been recalling every scene involving Arthur and had been putting himself in the combatant's role.

The final outcome left him worried.

Because no matter how he simulated it, he would not be a match for the other party.

The power he prided himself on was completely futile against that silent "Cold Aura."

Yet to just give up like that, Kangsion found it hard to let go.

He knew well that the reward was a method to break through the shackles of the "Great Arcana Level," something he had desperately sought but never found.

If he missed this opportunity, he would likely never be able to join the ranks of "Entrants," especially after witnessing Arthur's might, for "Whale Slaying Sword," obtaining the status was now a must.

'Maybe I can...'

Suddenly, an idea flashed through the mind of "Whalen Slaying Sword."

Afterward, Kangsion no longer lingered, turning around to leave the square.

"Storm Sword" Deljo followed shortly after.

In contrast to "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion's worries, "Storm Sword" Deljo was in much better spirits.

He was confident that he could handle that "Cold Aura."

'Thank you to that unnamed swordsman for appearing as a stepping stone.'

If it weren't for you, I too would have been turned into an ice sculpture if I had suddenly encountered such "Cold Aura," but not anymore!

However, the 'secret technique' that the 'Spirit Medium' used against the Xi Jin brothers...

What is it?'

With such curiosity, "Storm Sword" planned to have his companions gather as much information on the "Spirit Medium" as possible.

He hoped to find a shred of Spider Silk within.

Little Lisop stood amongst the crowd, watching "Whale Slaying Sword" and "Storm Sword" depart, while continuously muttering the previous words that 'he had nothing to do with that young swordsman.'

He was the very image of someone scared out of his wits.

This caused people around to look at Little Lisop with disdain.

And that was exactly what Little Lisop wanted.

He needed such disdain.

Because he had already figured out how to deal with Arthur!

Glancing at the "Spirit Medium" under the Bell Tower from a distance, the son of a lord sneered coldly in his heart, thinking viciously—

'Rejoice! Be happy!

You'll never know what you'll face later on!

I'll make you understand what the 'reality of the world' is!'

With this in mind, the son of the lord also turned and quickly left Elta Square.

What the lord's son completely failed to notice was that as he left, the corners of the "Spirit Medium's" mouth, who had never paid him any attention, lifted ever so slightly.

Chapter 345

Since Arthur had already entered Elta Square, how could his eyes not follow?

Fujin, hidden at the top of the Bell Tower, overlooked Elta Square, taking in every expression and performance; everything was under his gaze.

Those 'Gifted Ones'.

Those 'Mystic Side People'.

Of course, that also included Little Lisop and three other Noble nephews.

Let's not mention those three Nobles trapped in a dilemma.

'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion and 'Storm Sword' Deljo, as well as Little Lisop, Arthur could guess what they intended to do.

However, compared to the first two, Arthur was looking forward to what Little Lisop would do even more.

The other party would certainly resort to what they do best by habit.

The whole 'Noble Trick' set.

Arthur had been looking forward to it for a long time.

'Come on!

It must be quick!

Don't let me down!

Arthur silently thought to himself as Wuni, who was standing by, followed him.

Although he derogatorily called the 'Noble Rules' a 'Noble Trick', it did not prevent Arthur from paying close attention to every word and action of the other party.

He needed to know what they were doing and when.

Then, he would be able to take effective countermeasures.

He might even have some unexpected gains!

Arthur thought to himself, his gaze turning towards the entrance of Elta Square—after the young 'Spirit Medium' had attracted most people's attention, the lady quietly descended from the Bell Tower and came to the carriage by the entrance of the square.

Upon seeing Arthur's gaze, the lady smiled brightly and waved her hand.

Arthur immediately smiled back.

He then nodded to Freeman and Amiel before getting up and heading towards Marinda.

Under everyone's watchful eyes, Arthur and Marinda, in an intimate posture, headed towards the carriage.

Amiel watched Arthur depart, her eyes reflecting a sense of loss—

Thighs!

The glittering golden thighs were drifting away from her!

If it weren't for Marinda's presence, she would have definitely slid over and clung to those glittering golden thighs.

What about the embarrassment with so many people looking?

What is there to be embarrassed about?

Some people can kneel in front of a crowd at a construction site and ask someone to be their godfather!

Her, Amiel, merely wanted to cling to a pair of thighs, so what?

Was there anything wrong with it?

No!

A secure thigh was key to living a life of complacency!

This was the lifelong pursuit of her, Amiel!

"Stop looking, or Miss Caesar will find trouble with you!"

Freeman warned.

It wasn't that he and Amiel were particularly close, but a hands-off supervisor like Amiel was hard to find. If he had to replace her, his plans would definitely be delayed substantially, not to mention the added complexity in warming relations with his father.

Amiel did not respond, simply bowing her head to pack her things.

Because she knew Freeman was telling the truth.

She had heard quite a few rumors about the 'Lady of the Eternal Night'—the previous daring to impersonate her was because she had the orders of the Lord Count.

But now there was no Lord Count to back her up!

'Sigh, I'd better go back and revisit the new painting book I got!

Only the world within the painting book can heal my wounded soul!'

Amiel once again immersed herself into a certain role, starting to feel sorry for herself.

Freeman was used to it and didn't care at all.

But the surrounding youths looked at Amiel's desolate expression and then at Marinda, who was so intimate with Arthur—their eyes were red with jealousy—

"Is that the 'Lady of the Eternal Night'?"

"Sure enough, she has the unconventional beauty that rumors say she does."

"Damn it, what's with that 'Spirit Medium'? Why do both Lady Amiel and Miss Caesar look at him differently?"

"Being strong makes you amazing, huh?"

"Looking handsome gives you the right to do whatever you want, huh?"

...

Such voices, of course, could not escape Arthur's ears.

He really wanted to tell these youths that being strong truly made one amazing, and being handsome indeed gave one the freedom to do as one pleased, but regrettably, he knew during these carefree years of their youth, their pride was such that they would absolutely not take his words to heart.

Therefore, he chose to express himself through actions—

Arthur, who was walking side by side with Marinda, suddenly raised his hand.

He didn't actually touch Marinda, but from behind, it looked as though he had placed it on her waist.

"Childish!"

That was Marinda's comment.

This lady had also heard what the youths were saying.

So, she didn't object but rather played along.

After all, this was also beneficial for her, as it helped her to better cleanse her 'sullied reputation.'

Thus, when Marinda turned her head and her deep blue eyes looked at Arthur, they rippled like a lake disturbed by a gentle breeze.

This scene was witnessed by the youths in the square.

Immediately, their hearts shattered in that moment.

They each became utterly dispirited.

Arthur and Marinda, on the other hand, climbed onto their carriage with smiles, and as the coachman Edwin cracked his whip, the carriage slowly pulled away—

"I hope this state of theirs won't affect the official match tomorrow afternoon."

"Don't worry, the hearts of youths are quite resilient— when a better-looking or entirely new lady appears before them, they will bounce back."

Arthur said this as he adjusted his sitting position.

When facing his collaborator Marinda, Arthur had long since stopped sitting up straight and instead made himself comfortable in whatever way he pleased.

Marinda did the same.

The lady laid back in her chair and, after packing some tobacco into her pipe, began to puff out thick clouds of smoke.

After the pipe had flickered several times, the lady spoke again—

"Arthur, what do you think about 'Bounty Tavern'?"

"Fifty-five points," Arthur replied.

At the moment Marinda spoke, Arthur knew exactly what this woman was scheming.

It was nothing more than to incorporate 'Bounty Tavern' into her sphere of influence.

Of course, Arthur had no objections to this.

He was not one to scorn the prospect of his power growing.

"How about I give you it all?

Fifty-five points?

Do you know how much I invested in the early stage?

Do you know how much I need to invest for maintenance afterwards?

Twenty-three points!"

Marinda rolled her eyes, ranted a bunch, and then threw out a price.

The twenty-three and the remaining five, Arthur didn't inquire.

Because, the young Spirit Medium knew, that five was for the Lord Count.

Merchants like Marinda, who wanted to make a living in South Los, had to follow certain rules.

Him?

He was an exception, at least for the time being.

Not because the Countess looked at him differently.

But because his business...

Was too small!

Although 'Mr. Wu's Exchange' had opened, it was still some time away from turning a profit, and 'Miss Qiu's Security Company' was in the same boat.

However, as things progressed, he would probably have to learn from Marinda.

Unless...

Thinking of something, Arthur suddenly lowered his voice and asked—

"What's your view on South Town?"

Chapter 346 Greed! Greed! Still Greed!

From South Los, one would only have to travel thirty kilometers southwest to behold a town with a population of twenty thousand.

This place is South Town!

A town that was established only after the Seven Years' War had ended.

In other parts of South County, such a population would be enough to be called a small city.

But near South Los, it can only be called a town, and only a town—in fact, it's practically impossible to find such a large gathering of people near South Los.

Unless...

There were no coal and iron mines.

At the end of the Seven Years' War, the young Lisop, who was bravely aggressive in combat, was the first to achieve three remarkable feats and was knighted as a 'Knight' by Baron Bolna, the commander at the time. Later, he saved Baron Bolna in the battle of the Mord River Path with a 'Desperate Assault' that turned the tide of the entire battle, allowing the Southern County Alliance to win. With this merit, he was awarded the title of 'Lord.'

Although it was not hereditary, it was enough to make others envious.

But what was most enviable was the Lord's luck—

Holding the title of Lordship, even if it wasn't hereditary, one still needed to own a piece of land. A manor with 200-300 people was the preference of Lords at that time.

Lisop was no exception; he chose the then-unnamed land of 'South Town' as his domain—located away from 'South Los Avenue', and given that the Southern County Alliance was in its honeymoon phase, the Old Count of South Los did not pay much mind. Once Lisop offered the appropriate gold coins and swore allegiance to the Old Earl, he gained this land.

Such an oath was different from the Lionheart Ceremony.

The Lionheart Ceremony was much more formal and was a contract in the truest sense, with not only a 'Ceremonial Sword' but also the notion of 'Meritorious Service.'

It was a shared glory and a shared loss.

But an oath?

It was more like a form of employment.

The strongest bond between both parties was 'taxes.'

Anything more?

That would likely be an alliance by marriage.

Beyond that, there was nothing.

In the beginning, no one cared about this obscure land.

It wasn't until after the Seven Years' Battle ended, as Lisop was building a manor and struck coal, followed by iron that people realized just how lucky Lisop was.

It's important to note, the Old Earl's surveyor had inspected that no-name land and even dug down ten meters, but coal was found at eleven meters.

In any case, once this news spread, the reputation of the Old Count of South Los took a hit.

Everyone mocked the Old Earl for his 'blindness.'

And then, the 'fake cheque' incident dealt another blow to the Earl's reputation.

On top of that, during the Seven Years' War, the Old Earl was in charge of logistics and had no 'glorious military achievements,' gradually being overshadowed by the younger Grand Duke of Inner Bay.

Rumors claimed that the Old Earl's death in dejection began with Lord Lisop's actions.

Of course, Marinda was aware of these matters.

Moreover, she knew some secrets.

For example, the role the Old Lion played in these incidents.

However, this lady was very clear that Arthur was not asking about these.

But a more 'practical' question—

"How confident are you?"

Marinda sat up straight, holding her tobacco pipe in her hand again, her expression serious.

But at the sight of Marinda's demeanor, Arthur simply rolled his eyes.

"Why did you suddenly leave the Bell Tower and decide to wait for me beside the carriage?"

"Don't tell me you just wanted to purely witness the crushing of those young people's hearts!"

Arthur mercilessly exposed the other party.

The young Spirit Medium was certain that Marinda had chosen to reveal herself so candidly, apart from reinforcing the perception of their 'relationship' to outsiders, because she wanted to see Little Lisop's frustration—or rather, that latter reason might be the most important.

He also knew the history of South Town.

After Marinda informed him that entrants from the nobility of South Los would appear in the competition, Arthur had spent the last two days, aside from necessary sleep and preparation, reviewing information about these Nobles.

Especially Lord Lisop.

There was no choice!

He was too noticeable.

Not only because of the coal and iron mines but also his 'wavering' attitude.

The former represented interest, and the latter the favor of the Earl of South Los—from a certain perspective, it was a win-win situation.

He wanted the coal and iron mines.

He also wanted the favor of the Earl of South Los.

Of course, it wasn't easy!

That's why they needed Marinda.

And Marinda, even after being exposed, didn't show a hint of embarrassment. The lady took her cigarette holder, once again lounged carelessly on her chair, and after taking a deep puff from her pipe, she continued.

"What's with that look?

I sense you're up to no good."

"You're mistaken—I'm about to inherit the title of Baron Kemir. How could a baron have no land of his own?

What do you think of South Town?"

Arthur said.

Marinda who was leaning back crossed her legs in the chair completely.

South Town, she coveted it.

Alas, the difficulty was too great.

That's why she had chosen the Bern family's estate.

And her enthusiasm earlier was only to gain more favor from that Mother Tigress!

However, the lady did not outright refuse but instead furrowed her brow, pondering seriously.

About three or four seconds later, the lady finally spoke.

"Impossible!

Lord Count would never allow another 'Lord Lisop' to emerge!

Even though I've always displayed loyalty toward Lord Count, it wouldn't be allowed!"

"Nothing is impossible for a willing heart!"

The young 'Spirit Medium' shook his head and said—

"When a person is faced with two terrible choices, they will always choose the lesser of two evils."

"Sure, so they say.

But can you be certain that neither of those terrible choices will touch Lord Count's nerves?

Keep in mind, if they do, Lord Count is the type to flip the table!"

Marinda emphasized.

Yet, the lady was writing a name on the palm of her other hand with her finger.

Old Lion!

Clearly, the lady's words said no, but her body was exceptionally honest.

She had already begun to think about how to take advantage of the situation.

In the whole of South County, only the Duke of the Inner Bay could overrule the Earl of South Los.

And as it happened, Lord Lisop had numerous connections with the Duke of the Inner Bay, which truly could be exploited!

But how to use it?

Marinda, having a preliminary idea in mind, looked again at Arthur.

The lady wanted to 'hear' Arthur's thoughts.

However, the young 'Spirit Medium' didn't immediately reveal his thoughts and instead changed the subject.

"It won't be necessary, as long as we make good use of it, Lord Count will definitely side with us—a 235 split should be enough."

"Should that be enough?"

Marinda's words were not too certain.

But the word written on her palm was very affirmative—

Not enough!

Other industries, of course, would be no problem.

But the mining industry, definitely not.

South Los, though rich from its extensive coastal and overseas trade, does not have actual mining resources.

And everywhere places all sorts of restrictions and high prices on exporting mineral resources!

Not to mention, the cost of coal South Los imports from other regions to get through the winter is astronomical each year.

One could say that the coal and iron mines of South Town are the final pieces to complete the Earl of South Los's power puzzle.

With this in mind, Marinda was certain that the Earl of South Los would never agree to the previously mentioned profit-sharing ratio.

"Then it's almost settled,"

Arthur said, smiling. He spoke softly—

"Now, all we need to do is invite His Excellency!"

Chapter 347: The Start of Sincerity!

...

Invite that noble?

Invite whom?

Who can be involved in such a matter?

Marinda's normally unfazed eyes showed a hint of confusion, and when Arthur mentioned that name, the lady was even more stunned—

"Julie?"

Is it the Julie I know?"

The lady asked for confirmation.

"Unless you have another lady who is 2.5 meters tall and with a robust physique by your side, then Lady Julie is indeed the one you're imagining,"

Arthur said with a smile and a shrug.

Marinda stared intently at Arthur, and after confirming that Arthur was not joking, the lady couldn't help but sigh.

"You're such a scoundrel!"

Marinda had roughly guessed what Arthur was planning.

It was different from the layout she had been plotting.

Arthur's was bolder and...

Honest!

Yes, honest!

Because this guy had never intended to deceive the countess.

In fact, he had planned to drag the countess into the game from the beginning.

If that was the case, then executing the plan would be much simpler!

Moreover, the countess who would be in on the game also had to honor the 'noble rules'—not only reducing the risk of her flipping the table but also turning her into an ally...

"Sly Arthur!

How could someone like you ever be the 'Black Cat'!

You are more like a snake!"

Marinda muttered.

"Ah yes, yes, yes!

You'd better take a good look at my 'shadow'—perhaps beneath a cat's feet, there really is a snake!"

Arthur rolled his eyes and leaned back in his chair.

Marinda responded with a raised middle finger, then exhaled a ring of smoke.

This ring of smoke did not dissipate like the previous ones but quickly expanded big enough to fit a person through.

The next moment, Marinda stepped into the ring of smoke and vanished.

Clearly, Marinda had gone to extend the invitation to Lady Julie.

And both had tacitly avoided mentioning how Arthur came to know this lady.

In South Los, some things don't need to be asked repeatedly.

Yet some things must be emphasized over and over.

For example: Food!

"Tonight, Marinda and I are hosting a guest.

I need three portions of beef pie in puff pastry and the same amount of creamy pumpkin soup, plus servings for eight of the mixed fried and roasted platter and equal shares of white bread, and three servings of food at their creative discretion.

Oh, and don't forget a barrel of decent wine,"

Arthur instructed Merlin, who was tidying and arranging the courtyard.

He then took out two gold notes.

Based on past estimations for 'Grandma Andor's Kitchen' food, one gold note was more than sufficient to cover the cost and setup.

The other gold note was for the wine.

Arthur had not forgotten that when Lady Julie left, she had mentioned 'enjoying wine and pleasant conversation.'

Clearly, this was a lady who loved her wine.

Even if there were some ulterior motives, the basic preferences still needed to be accommodated.

"Of course, sir,"

Merlin set down his gardener's trowel and took the gold notes, then headed toward Dar Alley—running errands for the household in his spare time was part of the secondary and tertiary manservants' duties.

...

As for why there was leisure time?

Of course, it was because the Death Serpent Banyan had occupied almost the entire courtyard of No. 2 Cork Street.

Merlin, except for tending to that small patch of cat grass and catnip fields, didn't have to deal with weeds anymore, which greatly reduced his workload.

Moreover, such errands allowed Merlin to feel at ease.

Earning five Zeroes a day for almost doing nothing, however, could invite idle talk.

Arthur clearly perceived his 'manservant's sense of ease.

He found it interesting—

'A child with "Talent" who has not entered the "Mystic Side," and an uncle who has?'

Interesting!'

Previously, when Arthur noticed something off about Merlin's reaction to the Death Serpent Banyan, he had sent Fujin to investigate.

Then came an unexpected discovery.

Arthur never imagined that Merlin's seemingly ordinary Uncle Gaius would turn out to be a "Mystic Side Person."

Furthermore, he was researching potion-making—

When Merlin hurried back, the man emerging from the secret room still had a test tube in his hand.

The subtle bubbles emanating from the test tube were all too familiar to Arthur; it was a phenomenon that occurred when a potion was perfected by harmonizing the base material with "Spirituality."

Such a discovery astonished Arthur.

Almost instantly, Arthur began to suspect that Merlin's presence by his side was premeditated.

Did Gaius and Merlin, this uncle-nephew pair, harbor some secret intentions?

But Arthur did not rush to seek confirmation.

He knew that such confrontation would not yield the best results, especially with Merlin and Gaius operating under his watchful eye.

Waiting for the other party to slip up would be the best choice.

Thinking this, Arthur pushed open the door and entered No. 2 Cork Street.

Almost immediately, he saw his cat.

Pendragon sat perched on a stand to the side of the corridor, eyes fixed on Arthur as he returned home, meowing continuously with elongated, grumbling tones.

Clearly, Pendragon was still questioning why Arthur hadn't taken him along.

'Of course, it was because I don't want you to be in danger!'

That's what Arthur thought to himself, but that's not what he said aloud.

The young Spirit Medium, after hanging up his coat, scooped up the large ginger cat and said—

"We all left, and someone had to stay to watch the house, right?"

Home is very important. Without it, we would have no place to sleep or eat. You wouldn't want to sleep on the streets or miss out on dried fish, would you?"

"Meow~"

The elongated meow began to shorten.

Though still somewhat puzzled, the cat was clearly starting to accept what Arthur was saying.

Unquestionably, even the smartest of kittens can still be swayed by dried fish.

To make Pendragon accept this reasoning more quickly, or to completely divert his attention, at Arthur's command, Kuliqi's dog's head emerged from Arthur's shadow, displaying a provocative and sly expression as if to say, 'Come at me!'

"Meow!"

Pendragon instantly fluffed up and pounced from Arthur's arms.

Cat scratch!

Cat flying kick!

Kuliqi ducked and ran with his tail between his legs.

Watching this scene, Arthur smiled at his dog, who looked to him for rescue, and gave a thumbs up.

He then entered the kitchen.

Although the two apprentices would help with the setup, there were some basics that Arthur had to handle himself—aside from the Hand of Void carrying Atos's Box, the remaining five Hands of Void began adding charcoal to the boiler, boiling water, arranging tea utensils, searching for tea and snacks, etc.

Sitting in the chair, Arthur quietly waited for his guest.

But then, in the next moment, the young Spirit Medium's brows knitted slightly—

'Hmm?'

Chapter 348: Fat Sheep!

No. 2 Cork Street?

Right here!

'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion searched for his destination and, once he had confirmed the direction, the middle-aged man, tall and sturdy like a young giant, tightened his grip on the door-sized great sword on his back. It was only when his palm touched the hilt that he felt a trace of reassurance.

In fact, had he not been in South Los, the master of Whale Island would have long since held his great sword in hand.

At the same time, he would need to summon his private soldiers.

It wasn't that he was a coward.

Everyone knew that the master of Whale Island was not a coward.

It was just that the man he was about to face imposed such an overwhelming pressure on him.

It wasn't the first time he had heard the name of the other party.

'The Stormcaller' Bolbinton, who had once sought refuge on Whale Island, had mentioned him—

'If you don't understand death,

then, you should meet Arthur Kredos!'

When he spoke those words, Bolbinton shivered like a fledgling from a brothel.

At that time, Kangsion even mocked the other's cowardice.

Especially when he mentioned he would attend the 'Swordsmanship Competition' and that 'Arthur Kredos' would also participate, Bolbinton left that very night without saying goodbye and headed to the next island. After that, Kangsion was ready to treat the so-called 'Stormcaller' as a joke.

And then...

He became the joke!

He witnessed the death brought by 'Arthur Kredos', and even though it was several hours ago, the fear still gripped him.

That fear, it was truly a power of a different level!

It was an utterly irresistible crushing force!

He wanted to flee, but he couldn't!

Because...

He had to become an 'Entrant'!

If he didn't become an 'Entrant', Whale Island would be doomed!

This was something he could not accept at all!

So, after much thought, he came.

He couldn't defeat Arthur, that was a fact, and naturally, he couldn't obtain the critical chart for breaking through to 'Entrant' status from the hands of 'Baron Korol.'

However, that didn't mean he had no other methods.

For example: to exchange for the crucial chart of an 'Entrant' from Arthur Kredos.

'It should be possible!'

Kangsion cheered himself on.

He swore he hadn't been this nervous his first time.

With this in mind, Kangsion took a step forward and walked into Cork Street, sticking close to the wall.

Then—

Damn!

What the hell is this!

Kangsion looked at the [Death Serpent Banyan] in the courtyard of No. 2 Cork Street and instinctively retreated, and his Plank Sword was immediately drawn.

The 'Whale Slaying Sword' looked tense, sweat beginning to form on his forehead—he didn't recognize the [Death Serpent Banyan], but the overwhelming pressure it gave him was unmistakably real.

It was...

The feeling of death!

It was very similar to the 'Aura of Death' he felt when he encountered 'Arthur Kredos' that afternoon!

But more importantly, this [Death Serpent Banyan] was planted in the courtyard of 'Arthur Kredos' home.

'Is this what an 'Entrant's' courtyard is like?

A casual plant is enough to instill fear in me!'

Kangsion swallowed, hoping the saliva could moisten his parched throat.

Meanwhile, Arthur, concealing himself on the side, saw that the time was right and pretended to open the door—although the [Death Serpent Banyan] was strong, it was still only a 'sapling' that wasn't even a match for the War Tree; to truly deter his opponent, it required some of his 'assistance.'

'No need to thank me!

For me, this is what I ought to do!'

Arthur gently touched the [Death Serpent Banyan], taking advantage of the fact that the tree could not speak.

Afterwards, he moved past the banyan to appear in front of Kangsion.

"Good evening, Lord Kledos!

I mean no harm, I'm just here to visit you!"

Kangsion immediately put away the Plank Sword and greeted Arthur with an unprecedentedly restrained attitude, waiting for Arthur's response.

He swore, he had never been so nervous waiting for a response, not even after the first three seconds with that lady.

"Ah, you shouldn't have come."

After sighing, Arthur didn't persuade the visitor to leave but instead turned and walked into No. 2 Cork Street.

Does he know why I'm here?

Kangsion was taken aback.

Almost subconsciously, Kangsion thought of Arthur's title, 'Spirit Medium.'

If it were any other 'Spirit Medium,' the odds would be that it's fake, a deception.

But the 'Entrant' before him...

Must be real!

After all, he had heard about the other guiding the deceased to The Eternal Resting Land!

But that thought was quickly dismissed by Kangsion as he looked at the door to No. 2 Cork Street that had not been closed and hurriedly followed.

"I apologize for the intrusion, please excuse me!"

Upon stepping into the corridor, the master of Whale Island said so, uncharacteristically polite.

Then, he proceeded with caution through the corridor and into the 'Spirit Medium Parlor.'

When he saw the cups and teapot set out on the table, the master of Whale Island became even more certain—

Lord Arthur Kredos already knows everything!

I have nothing to hide anymore!

With this realization, the nervousness that had gripped the master of Whale Island faded away.

It was simple, if the other party knew everything and was still willing to meet him, it meant there was still hope for resolving the matter.

If he had refused to meet at all, that would have been the most troublesome scenario.

Wait, wait!

My three-second incident...

Suddenly, the Island Master became restless.

He had paid a hefty price to shut up that lady.

But he couldn't muster the same leverages for the person before him.

In nervous apprehension, the overwhelming embarrassment made the Island Master lower his head, unable to face Arthur's gaze directly.

'Huh?

Does he think there's something to discover about me?'

Arthur looked quite surprised at Kangsion standing before him; after a brief contemplation, he said directly—

"Speak."

"My first three seconds... no, I mean, I didn't have a first time... that's not right, it wasn't my first time in three seconds..."

As Arthur asked, Kangsion almost instinctively spoke.

After the words left his mouth, Kangsion realized what he had said and began to explain repeatedly.

Whoa!

Arthur's eyes lit up; he must have discovered some significant leverage!

Yet, as a young, upright, naive, and benevolent 'Spirit Medium,' Arthur still maintained his composure and continued—

"That's not it!"

"Oh, the thing just now, that was about a friend of mine, not me, I just miss him since leaving Whale Island, that's why I misspoke!"

After explaining once more, Kangsion then continued.

"Master, I wish to exchange with you the 'Entrant's Chart!'

If possible...

I am willing to offer all the wealth I have accumulated over the years!"

'Entrant's Chart?'

Is this the key to entering the 'Entry' level?

Although he was hearing about these for the first time, it didn't stop the young 'Spirit Medium' from slightly shaking his head and speaking in an even more indifferent tone—

"Not enough!"

Chapter 349 Gift of the Sea!

"When you have the initiative, be bold."

"Demand a high price from strangers."

"Demand an even higher price from acquaintances."

These were Old Charlie's words, and Arthur agreed deeply—having the initiative meant that everything was soon to be his.

As for why demand an even higher price from acquaintances?

At that time, Arthur didn't understand this either and asked Old Charlie with some confusion.

Old Charlie could only sigh helplessly in response to this question.

"Spiritual compensation fee!"

Arthur still did not understand at the time, and Old Charlie did not explain further.

Now, of course, Arthur understood—

Once you take money from an acquaintance, no matter whether you lose money or make a profit, they believe you earned, which makes them uncomfortable.

If they find someone offering a lower price than yours, it is even worse; the acquaintance will only scold you for being unscrupulous.

However, they never care about quality or reliability, focusing only on the price.

But if it were a stranger's shop, they would not care as much about the price, paying more attention to the quality of the store instead.

It's somewhat like when dating a rich person, not caring about money but needing spiritual support, and when dating a poor boy, not caring about spiritual support, but needing money.

"Maybe this is 'business', not the so-called 'acquaintance's intentions', huh!"

Arthur muttered to himself a pun he just thought of, his gaze turning towards Kangsion in front of him.

After Arthur decisively refused, "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion didn't show anger on his face, nor was he surprised, but he just softly sighed—

"Indeed 'nobles can't be trusted'!"

Initially, when I contacted 'Baron Korol', he said he only needed 100,000 gold coins to give me an 'Entrant's' chart.

While I was figuring out how to raise the money, he suddenly contacted me, saying that if I helped him with a favor, he could give me a better 'Entrant's' chart!

Obviously, that scoundrel was exploiting their locked-up knowledge to squeeze me!

But Master, you didn't!

You just honestly refused me, without ever thinking of deceiving me!

Your sincerity is enough to prove that you are indeed a master!

Moreover, the 'Entrant's' chart in your hands must be better than that rogue noble's!

Please teach me!

"I can accept anything except death or slavery!"

Kangsion said this, bowing deeply to Arthur.

Are there different kinds of charts?

And they vary in quality?

As Kangsion bowed, Arthur quickly organized the information.

And when Kangsion straightened his back, Arthur continued to speak calmly.

"Do you know where I am from?"

"Your origins?"

Kangsion looked perplexed.

'Swordsmanship Competition' registration is today, 'Whale Slaying Sword' just arrived in South Los, and information about Arthur was only heard from Baron Korol's attendant on the way.

Of course, it wasn't comprehensive.

No!

It definitely wasn't comprehensive!

Or those cunning nobles definitely hid the most crucial information!

"I am the 'Black Cat' of the current 'Cat Faction.Black'!"

Arthur spoke frankly, revealing what was no longer a secret.

With Garcia's 'publicity', in South Los at this moment, anyone who seriously investigated could know this information.

As for why Kangsion hadn't tried to investigate?

The probability was that he was absolutely confident in himself!

He didn't think with his 'Great Arcana Level' prowess that he would face any opponents in the 'Swordsmanship Competition'—even if other participants also enjoyed 'Noble Privilege', 'altered age, origin', and the like.

In fact, that was the case.

In any part of South County, 'Great Arcana Level' represented a power that couldn't be ignored; as long as it wasn't when facing some 'Great Nobles', nobody would question his rule over a territory.

Just like Kangsion's Whale Island, it was just like that.

Hence, Kangsion had never considered that a 'Swordsmanship Competition' might encounter an 'Entrant', he thought his biggest opponent in this 'Swordsmanship Competition' would be 'Storm Sword' Deljo.

Hiss!

As Arthur sharply inhaled a breath audibly, realization dawned on Kangsion's face.

"No wonder there's a power of death mixed in, is this 'Cat Faction.Black's' 'Communicate with Spirits'?"

No wonder you can't teach me!

The difference in initial rituals makes the 'Entrant' charts different; although they can still be used, they will cause a lot of trouble later, some even causing irreversible damage!"

Watching realization dawn on Kangsion's face, Arthur sat there, unfazed, while internally he thought—

"Exactly!

The ritual is related to the subsequent 'charts'!"

What would the follow-up chart for the "Orange Cat" ritual be?

A self-portrait of the Great Orange Cat?

Or a chart of the Great Orange Cat eating?

After mocking himself, Arthur quickly became serious.

When Kangsion mentioned the "chart," Arthur had guessed whether the "chart" and the "Gifted One" stepping into the "Mystic Side" were closely related rituals.

The answer was neither good nor bad.

Different rituals could also use "charts."

But, there was a corresponding price to be paid.

And certainly, it was not as perfect as it would be under a direct lineage.

Even more, one could not advance further.

And this was exactly what the nobles and the major powers wanted!

They needed the "Mystic Side Persons" who did not belong to their "inner circle" to always be one level below them—

'Knowledge linked layer by layer, yet blocked at every level, huh?

What an effective tactic!'

Arthur thought to himself, yet he was not anxious at all.

With his current situation, he had too many breakthrough points to make up for this.

The Earl of South Los goes without saying.

The remaining three of the four Barons of South Los.

Beyond the nobles, there were also other forces worth watching.

Moreover, he had the greatest advantage, he was already an "Entrant"—as long as this was true, he had the initiative and room to maneuver.

Arthur's thoughts were racing with many ideas.

And Kangsion had made a decision across from him.

"Master, your character and strength have thoroughly convinced me!

I hope you can extend a helping hand to Whale Island—because there has emerged a 'Western Sea General' among the pirates of the Western Sea, and not to be outdone, the pirates of the Eastern Sea also plan to hold a 'Pirate Gathering' next 'Summer Celebration Day,' which will affect both coastal and oceanic trade.

But those of us on immovable islands will be hit first.

These pirates will loot everything they see like a swarm of locusts passing through.

But if there were an 'Entrant,' it would be different!

The prestige of an 'Entrant' is enough to deter them!"

Kangsion had changed his strategy.

This 'Whale Slaying Sword,' realizing he could not become an 'Entrant' in a short time, immediately decided to hire an 'Entrant' to go to Whale Island.

He didn't trust anyone else for this task.

But Arthur?

This 'Whale Slaying Sword' absolutely trusted him.

It wasn't just the character Arthur had displayed that made the 'Whale Slaying Sword' respect him, but also the reputation of the previous generation's 'Black Cat'—everyone knew the previous 'Black Cat's' aloofness.

How could the successor of such a person be inferior?

At least there was no worry about him seizing another's nest.

Kangsion would be terrified of other 'Entrants' going to Whale Island, but he was reassured with Arthur there.

"I am willing to use all my savings to invite you to a holiday on Whale Island.

Of course, to more justifiably fly the flag of the Kledos Family, you will have a thirty percent share of the island's future income."

While saying this, 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion stood up and bowed.

This time, it was no longer a bow.

But a kneeling on one knee, holding up the Plank Sword in an oath—

"Tumultuous waves, stormy winds, and thunder!

I swear by the sword in my hand that from this day onward, I will defend the reputation, interests, and territory of the person before me, share common cause with him, and fight to the death against his enemies.

My oath will spread over the great sea!

And it shall never change!"

Kangsion almost gave Arthur no chance to refuse and began his vows.

Unlike the vows of the 'Lionheart Ceremony.'

And different from ordinary vows.

This was the 'Gift of the Sea'!

With the stimulation of Kangsion's "Spirituality," Arthur could easily sense the intentions of the person before him—although it was not as intimate as the 'Lionheart Ceremony,' it still had its binding powers.

A perfectly resigned expression appeared on Arthur's face.

And seeing the resignation on Arthur's face, Kangsion immediately felt elated inside—

'Indeed, one must be shameless!

This time...

I've hit the jackpot!'} }

Afterward, this 'Whale Slaying Sword' stood up, leaned in close to Arthur, and asked in a low voice—

"Master, shall we go for a big score?"

Chapter 350: That Big Vote!

Planning something big?

Arthur looked at Kangsion with a hint of amusement in his gaze.

If it hadn't been for the recent "Gift of the Sea", he would have thought that this 'Whale Slaying Sword' was trying to set him up.

However, precisely because of the "Gift of the Sea", Arthur understood that the 'big job' the 'Whale Slaying Sword' spoke of was probably truly significant.

Perhaps it was precisely because such a 'big job' existed that it had led to the 'Whale Slaying Sword's' preconceived notions and the subsequent 'Gift of the Sea'.

When a person has a certain goal in mind, anything that happens that may benefit this goal will be rationalized by them.

Old Charlie had said this.

Arthur agreed deeply.

So, at this moment, Arthur naturally did not mind hearing what the 'Whale Slaying Sword' had to say.

"Master, the reason these pirates from the Eastern Sea knew so quickly about what happened in the Western Sea is that someone has been deliberately spreading the word.

That person is very secretive, and very capable!

But obviously, he is not familiar with 'the rules of the sea'... He will never know what kind of people he has hired, and what those people might blabber after drinking too much."

Upon saying this, the 'Whale Slaying Sword' smirked proudly.

As the owner of Whale Island, Kangsion was essentially privy to anything that happened on the island.

Plus, the nonsense that sailors spoke when drunk and their boasts in brothels.

Kangsion always managed to know some things others didn't.

Of course, some were true and some were false, requiring discernment.

This time was no exception.

And this time, Kangsion took it especially seriously.

Because, the sailor who went on babbling after getting drunk bled from seven orifices and died—such an obvious display of contract power prompted Kangsion to immediately block the news and initiate a thorough investigation.

"Through my investigation, I am certain that this person is up to no good!

As for what exactly he wants to do?

I don't know yet!

However, one thing is for sure, because of this person's propaganda, some impatient bastards have already started to gather—Coconut Island, that's where they are congregating.

They use it as a base...

And it's not far from my Whale Island!

But before they reached Coconut Island, my men confirmed that they had been spotted loitering on several uninhabited islands nearby!"

As Kangsion spoke, a smile appeared on his face.

Arthur understood the meaning behind that smile instantly.

Pot calling the kettle black!

No!

It's acting in the name of justice!

The young 'Spirit Medium' quickly corrected his inner phrasing.

Pirates mostly live by plundering and rarely save up wealth, preferring to spend their ill-gotten gains on liquor and women.

But not all pirates do that.

For example: pirate captains.

These captains don't refrain from indulgence because they have accumulated a wealth far beyond that of the crew members!

Simply put, they still have leftovers after enjoying themselves.

Most of the time, these treasures would be kept where each captain deemed safest.

Especially when setting out for certain tasks, these captains would definitely arrange their wealth securely in a safe place.

Like those uninhabited islands nearby!

'After the 'Gift of the Sea' and showing goodwill towards me?'

Arthur thought subconsciously.

Because, such wealth, easily taken, was something Kangsion himself could easily achieve.

But right away, Arthur shook his head in secret.

'No!

Though these pirate captains are wealthy, solely relying on these treasures is definitely not enough to be considered "high rollers"!

After all, Kangsion is the master of Whale Island.

The wealth he possessed absolutely surpassed that of the pirate ship captains.

Therefore, even if Kangsion harbored covetous thoughts, he would not use the term "high rollers" to describe them.

Hence, Arthur did not speak out immediately, instead patiently waiting for Kangsion to continue.

As expected, after a brief pause, Kangsion immediately went on to say—

"While sending people to scout those deserted islands, I encountered Bloody John's men!

They seem to be quite interested in those islands, too!

Even though they pretend nothing's amiss, I could detect their anxiety—Bloody John, who is rumored to have obtained part of Pirate King Edward's inheritance, is actually nervous about those insignificant deserted islands... I don't believe there isn't any secret there.

As for this bastard eyeing the captains' wealth?

I don't believe it either!"

The Whale Slaying Sword spoke with great certainty.

And Arthur did not rebuke him.

Because, in William's notes that were left behind, Bloody John was also mentioned.

Before the Seven Years' War, at the end of the Silver Age, Bloody John had already taken to the sea, and it wasn't until the period of the Seven Years' War, as he repeatedly raided military ships and his notoriety rose, that he became an idol to the later generations of pirates—William's own journey to sea was inspired by this very Bloody John.

'The inheritance of the Pirate King...

The White Crow!'

The image of this 'Sky Battleship' sprang to Arthur's mind, and then, somewhat uncertain plans he had previously rapidly began to solidify—he definitely wasn't looking to trap Marinda.

Definitely not!

He simply wanted to gain more control, that's all!

"Keep a close eye on him!"

Arthur said so.

"Understood, Master!

If there is any news, I will contact you immediately!"

The Whale Slaying Sword pulled a Messenger Stone from inside his clothes.

After Arthur took the Messenger Stone, the Whale Slaying Sword once again bowed respectfully.

"At your command at any time!"

With those words, the Whale Slaying Sword rose and bowed to Arthur again, and after confirming there were no further orders, he chose to leave quietly.

Standing in the courtyard, Arthur watched as the figure disappeared into the night, feeling a slight admiration in his heart.

'A fellow good at seizing opportunities and daring to take risks!'

Carrying that admiration, Wuni on the rooftop followed silently and without trace.

Although Arthur had the 'Gift of the Sea', when faced with such risk-taking individuals, he still chose 'observation'—getting personally involved was rare, but not unheard of.

Arthur did not want to make a wrong move and lose everything!

Afterward, Arthur stood at the entrance of the courtyard, replaying the recent meeting in his mind while he waited for the meal delivery from Grandma Andor's Kitchen and his guest to arrive.

Fortunately for the young Spirit Medium, one followed the other.

The meal came first, the guest arrived after.

It was perfect timing, neither making him wait too long nor appearing rude to his guest.

And Merlin had timely delivered two barrels of alcohol.

The mead was a regular purchase.

The other barrel of apple cider was complimentary.

Standing next to the dining room, close to the kitchen, Arthur watched Marinda and Julie emerge from the smoke rings, greeting them with a warm smile—

"Good evening, Lady Julie!"