

Great Master 36

Chapter 36 Contact! Contact!

Arthur furrowed his brow.

It wasn't just that the baby he had rescued had been snatched away, affecting his XP harvest, but also because there was something amiss about the incident.

He had held that baby.

It was just an ordinary child from a civilian family, nothing special.

So why was someone so adamant about this baby?

Even going as far as to raid the police station!

Moreover!

Four other babies had been lost before this.

Seeing that Arthur was only frowning and did not lash out in anger, Malz breathed a sigh of relief, as he had imagined Arthur would immediately curse him as useless when he first spoke up.

Because, that was exactly what came out of his mouth when he had first heard about it.

Right there at the Shire District Police Station, under the watch of at least twenty people, that baby was snatched away, and a patrol officer was even killed.

From start to finish, those frightened officers and patrolmen neither fired a shot nor drew their longswords.

If not useless, then what?

Especially after, they boldly claimed they were afraid of accidentally hurting the baby.

If he hadn't been hoping for a peaceful retirement, he would have slapped the other party then and there.

It was just like "Crosus's donkey"!

"Crosus's donkey" refers to a local delicacy, small, lacking strength or endurance. Apart from its savory meat, it has no virtues.

Of course, each time it is slaughtered, it cries out very loudly.

In South Los, many tough-talking incompetents are ridiculed as "Crosus's donkeys".

After cursing internally for a few moments, Malz took several deep breaths, forced himself to calm down, and began to explain the case to Arthur—

"Yesterday morning, the first to report were the Kofi couple from Pea Lane, followed by the Neil couple from Pipe Lane, and at midday there were the Nande couple from Olive Lane and the Puton couple from Milk Thistle Lane."

"The first and the second cases were reported just twenty minutes apart, while the third and fourth cases were almost reported simultaneously."

"At the time, the Shire District Police Station dispatched all available patrol officers."

"No more cases of infant abduction occurred after that, until the incident that just happened on the public carriage."

"After several witnesses identified the bodies, these two individuals appeared near all the baby theft incidents. They were believed to have committed the previous cases, but they stopped yesterday afternoon because of increased police patrols. Today, they took advantage of the rain and acted together again."

This Third-Class Officer reported the case progress while sharing his thoughts.

Arthur did not object.

Because, what the other party said was quite reasonable, with witnesses to boot.

And this made Arthur all the more concerned about who had snatched the baby.

After all, two traffickers were taking such great risks, the other party must have spent a lot of money— a price worth gambling their lives on.

What did the other party want to do?

Arthur pondered this thought, then asked,

"The ones who snatched the baby, did you see them clearly?"

Malz's expression immediately turned sour.

Because, out of more than twenty people, not one could identify the assailant's face and even had a comrade killed by them.

"Did none of you see clearly?"

"Or did the assailants use some objects to cover their faces?"

Arthur pursued the questions.

Both results meant the face of the attackers wasn't seen, but the implications between the two are vastly different.

The latter case involved objects for concealment.

The former?

That was rather intriguing to ponder.

In the Shire District Police Station, based on the memories of his predecessor, the permanently stationed officers and patrolmen totaled more than twenty.

One person not seeing clearly, two people not seeing clearly, could be forgiven in a panic.

But more than twenty people all not seeing clearly was impossible.

Either these officers were in cahoots with the assailants, intentionally concealing information,

Or the attackers used some means.

The former was unlikely as, although the officers and patrolmen of South Los were not exactly moral, buying so many people at once would have been too difficult.

The latter?

It naturally involved the Mystic Side, or some special techniques that produced effects similar to those of the Mystic Side.

Adding to that the baby that the robber was so insistent on.

Immediately, a term flashed through Arthur's mind—

Ritual!

A ritual of the Mystic Side!

Apart from this, he could think of no other possibility.

At the same time, he finally understood why Malz had come to find him.

It was not only because he had once saved that baby, making him connected to the case, but also because the incident reeked of the bizarre.

Therefore, it was hoped that he would utilize his powers as a Spirit Medium.

But a man knows his own situation best.

He was well aware of how his Spirit Medium powers worked; if he had time to prepare, he could certainly perform miraculously.

But such sudden incidents were the most difficult to handle.

Even Old Charlie was reluctant to face such sudden events.

But Arthur did not shirk.

Because...

XP!

To keep the XP he was about to receive and to gain more XP, Arthur quickly calmed himself down and pondered the information Malz had given.

Relying on certain experiences from his hometown, Arthur knew that the key now was to find commonalities in the cases.

All were infants, the same group of traffickers, along with Pea Lane, Pipe Lane, Olive Lane, Milk Thistle Lane...

Hmm?!

Suddenly, Arthur narrowed his eyes.

Apart from the commonalities Malz mentioned, Pea Lane, Pipe Lane, Olive Lane, Milk Thistle Lane were all in the Shire District...

No!

More precisely, they were all near Cork Street!

Moreover, the four addresses were parallel in pairs, forming a trapezium when connected.

But adding one more point would turn it into a pentagon, or rather...

A pentagram!

With a ritual of the Mystic Side as a backdrop, Arthur naturally associated it with the pentagram.

The five infants were the five points of the pentagram.

What about the very center?

It was a building!

It was...

No. 14 Cork Street!

Almost the moment he pinpointed this location in his mind, Arthur's eyes narrowed again.

It was too close to No. 2 Cork Street.

So close that one could not see it by looking up or down.

So close that the baskets used at the grocery store, pork shop, milk store, and bakery could be used by one and then passed to the next.

Contact! Contact!

Thinking of his previous speculations, a cold light flashed in Arthur's narrowed eyes.

The toad!

It was that toad!

The other party was using the pure blood of the infants to heal itself!

Arthur was at least 80 percent certain.

And the fixation on that infant was because the infant's home was on a point of the pentagram.

Undoubtedly, the five infants had been carefully selected by the toad.

Why not a beggar?

Because the infants went missing yesterday morning, which didn't match up with the time the unknown entity "left the beggar's body"!

However, he did not act immediately but continued listening to Malz's words—

"I didn't see it clearly!"

"That's the strangest part!"

"That guy shot the officer watching the infants, then picked up the infant and left—everything was so open and aboveboard, yet no one clearly saw...uh, perhaps more accurately, they saw but later couldn't remember the assailant's face."

Malz's words became uncertain.

And as he spoke, he gauged Arthur's expression.

Then, the third-class officer began to twist his body unnaturally—because, at this moment, Arthur was a bit too frightening.

In the pouring rain, within the dim and empty house, a neatly dressed, handsome young man cradling a bizarre-looking puppet, his gaze unusually tender.

He then raised his hand and began combing the puppet's hair.

Watching this scene, Malz's scalp tingled.

And at that moment—

Whoo!

A chilly wind mixed with raindrops blew through the gap in the door.

Instantly, Malz shivered.

The hairs on the back of the third-class officer stood up immediately, and his whole body leapt towards the door, clearly intending to run.

But Arthur's voice from behind made him stop his steps.

"'Anna,' did you hear the cries from Charcoal Street?"

Charcoal Street?

The location of the fifth infant's family!

Malz turned around, his eyes intensely fixed on Arthur and the bizarre puppet in his arms.

And seeing Malz turn around and his facial expression, Arthur was certain.

He knew, he had guessed correctly.

So next, naturally, was...

His time to perform!