

Great Master 431

Chapter 431: The Polecats in the Melon Field, Indistinguishable from Each Other!

There is no reason to refrain from eating the meat that's already at your lips. However, Arthur did not rush in hastily. No one could guarantee that Bloody John's appearance on Coconut Island and those three deserted islands was really because of the Pirate King's legacy. It could be something else. He needed to thoroughly investigate. "Don't worry, just have someone keep an eye on it," Arthur instructed. "Yes, my Lord. I will inform you if there is any news," Said Kangsion, the Whale Slaying Sword, who bowed and then stood up to leave. The swordsmanship competition had ended, and for Kangsion the Whale Slaying Sword, there naturally was no excuse to stay in South Los. Staying any longer would result in being watched by the guards of the Earl of South Los. Moreover, compared to South Los, Kangsion preferred his own Whale Island. After Kangsion left, Arthur pondered for a moment and then raised his hand. The General Puppet appeared in his hand. "Master!" The puppet swelled in the wind, and in a breath, a middle-aged man, two meters tall, dressed in a black military uniform, and with a stern face, knelt on one knee before Arthur "You need to make a trip to Coconut Island. I want you to thoroughly investigate the matter of Bloody John appearing at Coconut Island and watch the nearby three deserted islands carefully, remember to stay as concealed as possible," Arthur instructed. Although Kangsion, the Whale Slaying Sword, always mentioned that Bloody John was interested in those three deserted islands, Arthur's caution naturally would not be confined to just those islands—this was one of the reasons why he dispatched the General Puppet. It wasn't that he distrusted Kangsion. With the Gift of the Sea, Kangsion ranked among the most trustworthy in Arthur's circle. It was just that Kangsion was too opinionated. He could be easily misled. Therefore, Arthur sent out the General Puppet. Of course, another reason was... Strength! Bloody John was an entrant, and compared to him, Kangsion was just a notch below. This was also why Arthur did not remind Kangsion. If Kangsion monitored Bloody John in his own way, he naturally knew how to conceal himself and save his own life. If he were reminded and Kangsion changed his method of surveillance and was discovered? Then Kangsion would be walking on a path to his death. Arthur did not wish to lose Kangsion, this newly loyal subordinate. Not just because of his Great Arcana Level strength but also because of Whale Island. In Arthur's plans, Whale Island had become his backup supply station—if one day he could no longer stay in South Los, he would set sail, using Whale Island as a springboard to head out to sea. "Yes, Master," The General Puppet nodded in agreement and got up to leave. Arthur then handed the Mask of Concealment to the General Puppet. Tailing, surveilling, there was nothing more practical than the Mask of Concealment that could change one's appearance. Especially since the Mask of Concealment could also shield others' perceptions, adding an extra layer of security for hiding the General Puppet's identity. For this 'entrant' and completely loyal subordinate, Arthur was extremely attentive. Having donned the Mask of Concealment, the General Puppet bowed to Arthur once more, then transformed into a wispy breeze and disappeared from No. 2 Cork Street. Looking at the empty No. 2 Cork Street, Arthur grabbed Pendragon— "Hehehe, come, let Daddy take a whiff!" Under the utterly disdainful gaze of Pendragon, amid shoves and nudges, Arthur directly brought his face close, continuously sniffing. Pendragon, with a face full of despair. Subsequently, Pendragon looked towards Kuliqi. Kuliqi, hidden in the dark corridor, puzzledly locked eyes with Pendragon. Pan: Did you just laugh? Kuliqi: Ah? Pan: You even dare to deny it! Kuliqi: ... After Arthur released Pendragon, the beast charged toward Kuliqi, who wore a bewildered dog-like expression. Its speed was so great that it seemed to drift as it ran. Arthur watched the scene with a beaming smile. Then, he stood up and walked toward the kitchen— He hadn't forgotten that

tonight he needed to make "emergency biscuits." ... South Los, Count's Mansion. As Granny Cullen walked from the kitchen with freshly stewed soup toward the study, Julie, towering like a little giant, stormed into the Count's Mansion. Her sizable strides halted suddenly upon seeing Granny Cullen—"Granny, is there any midnight snack?" The Female Swordmaster, as commanding outside as a child scratching the back of her head, asked the old woman. "Yes, I've prepared your favorite roasted lamb leg and mushroom soup," Granny Cullen said with a smile. "Great, thank you, Granny!" The Female Swordmaster called out loudly and then charged toward the study once again. Watching her departure, her massive figure so tall it leveled with the walls and even broader, Granny Cullen took the soup back to the kitchen. The old woman knew well that the Lord Count had no time for soup now. Julie's rushed appearance was enough to indicate that something urgent had happened. 'I hope that everyone stays safe this time,' the old woman prayed quietly. Then, the soup intended for the Lord Count was left simmering on the charcoal stove. The roasted lamb leg and mushroom soup for Julie were placed in a nearby thermal box. The pies and tomato juice for Cathy, the Guard Commander, were stored in another thermal box. And the roasted frogs, snakes, and lizards that the Head Hunter Valerie loved were tucked away in a separate kitchen corner. And Madam Susan? The elderly Madam Susan merely had some soup for her midnight snack. However, unlike the Lord Count, Madam Susan opted for a vegetarian soup. Granny Cullen remembered everyone's tastes. She couldn't help much. But she could ensure everyone enjoyed their favorite foods. Considering they might deliberate late into the night, Granny Cullen eyed the ingredients, planning to make extra delicious food. While busy in the kitchen, Julie had already reported everything about the Swordsmanship Competition to the Countess and had recommended Arthur—"My Lady, I believe Arthur is well suited to be the leader of the '16th Staff Team.' His skills and talent are unparalleled. He also shows the proper respect for you, my Lady. His assets are all here in South Los." The Female Swordmaster's authoritative demeanor did not change even when addressing the Countess of South Los. Hearing her Swordmaster's recommendation, the person in the high-backed chair behind the desk pushed her glasses up her nose bridge and swung her dangling legs back and forth several times before asking an elderly lady nearby in a crisp voice. "Madam Susan, what do you think?" The tall, slender old woman pondered for a moment then nodded slightly. "My Lady, we might give it a try. Arthur Kredos is indeed a rare gem." "Madam Susan, you know I wasn't talking about Arthur Kredos but another Kredos," the Countess of South Los replied, her legs under the table swinging even more vigorously. "That old scoundrel owes me, and his grandson, it's only right," Madam Susan stated. The well-preserved and power-blessed face still flushed with color despite her words. Seeing this, the Countess of South Los leaped off her stool, straightened her 1.4-meter tall body, and declared loudly—"I, Ash Bonaparte South Los, will definitely help you take your 'revenge,' Madam!"

Chapter 432: The Toughest Challenge!

When Marinda appeared at No. 2 Cork Street, Arthur was busy sifting and mixing flour—the roasted flour was emitting a unique aroma. To enhance the sense of fullness while still paying attention to texture, Arthur added enough peanut oil, sesame seeds, and beef jerky. Of course, there was also salt and sugar. Watching Arthur knead the dough with effort, Marinda took a deep breath, inhaling all the scattered smoke, and her pipe disappeared without a trace. Arthur didn't like the smoke, which Marinda knew. Moreover, she would often use this fact to tease Arthur. But that was usually. In a normal 'working' state, Marinda wouldn't let the smoke affect Arthur. "You actually know how to make 'military rations'?" Marinda asked with a bit of surprise. This lady was certain that Arthur was making military rations. Because she had made them herself before. The recipe might have had some differences, as she

preferred to add more crushed peanuts and milk. However, the process was the same. Roasted flour, sifted flour, mixed flour, and then compressing it with molds. In the end, each portion was wrapped up in parchment paper. In her ocean-going fleet, to be prepared just in case, every person had a corresponding ration. "What military rations, this is just plain emergency biscuits. I am simply expanding my snack recipes—making it myself, is more reassuring." Arthur rolled his eyes, reminding Marinda to be precise with her words. "Ah, exactly right! The snack that can stave off hunger for a whole day after eating just one piece!" Marinda raised a middle finger at Arthur. "For others, yes. But for me? Each piece is a snack," Arthur said indifferently. That tone made Marinda itch to kick Arthur. Because... What Arthur was saying was all true. Arthur's 'morning' appetite had been witnessed by Marinda herself. Immediately, the lady's breathing became rapid. Subconsciously, she wanted to take a puff again. However, seeing Arthur busy, the lady chose to turn and walk to the courtyard, standing under the Death Serpent Banyan, and started puffing away. But the more she thought about it, the angrier she got. She felt she hadn't performed well just now. If given another chance, she definitely could have gained the upper hand. No! No need to start over! Just think things through carefully, and she could do it later! Immediately, the lady fell deep into thought, the light in her pipe glowing incessantly, smoke trailing into the distance under the night sky. When Arthur finished replenishing the emergency biscuits and Marinda, having smoked three bowls, returned to No. 2 Cork Street with a heart set on victory, then—"What troubles did you run into there?" Arthur asked. Immediately, Marinda's momentum stumbled. That's not right! Shouldn't she have been the one to start speaking, taking Arthur's appetite as a starting point, then moving on to the process of making military rations and highlighting the fact that Arthur had misled everyone earlier? How could he not play according to the script? Wasn't that just round one, and now we're starting round two? Why is this over already? 'Heh, you think I'm blind?' Seeing Marinda's momentum halted, Arthur sneered inwardly again and again, but outwardly, he became even more serious. "No need to be surprised, right? You left with Deljo and his group not long ago and returned so quickly. There must be quite a problem there, otherwise, with your personality, if you were to come back at this time, you would normally talk about the gains of this trip—even if you had to advance your plans." Arthur said with a smile. Marinda clenched her fists, feeling frustrated. This lady was certain, Arthur was doing this on purpose. Moreover, the words she now disclosed, each character appeared unproblematic on their own, yet when put together, they invariably gave this lady a palpable sense of intense mockery. Mocking her for rushing for quick success. Mocking her for her slow reactions. And mocking her for her inadequate capabilities. Huff! Huff! Huff! The lady's breathing grew rapid. However, she quickly regained her composure and relayed everything Arthur had encountered in the ruins with an extremely objective narration. To this, Arthur was not surprised. He dared to speak and act in such a manner precisely because he had grasped the lady's "career-mindedness." He was well aware of how this lady would approach serious matters. Of course, he harbored absolutely no ill will. It was simply a pure reprisal for the discomfort of being enveloped in smoke. Now? Feeling much better. "Gate of Life and Death 3000, huh? 3000 human lives? Quite intriguing—I'm now even more eager to find out what exactly is hidden within these ruins." As Arthur said this, the corners of his mouth curled up. Watching Arthur exude confidence, Marinda also let out a sigh of relief. Although she had just, in front of everyone in the ruins, displayed absolute trust in Arthur, deep down she had felt some trepidation. After all, it was the Gate of Life and Death 3000, which neither secret techniques nor Undead could approach. Surely they couldn't actually be using lives to fill it, could they? Luckily, Arthur had a solution. No! In the absence of using human lives, he also knew the true gate of life... This guy couldn't have already known where the correct gate was, could he? When this thought emerged, the lady somehow convinced

herself of this notion. Because only then would Arthur be so calm and confident. And only then would it fit the speculation that Arthur had known about the ruins long ago. And Arthur's confidence was no pretense. Nor was it a feigned composure. Out of sight of the lady, one after another, the rats on Cork Street quietly infiltrated the stretch of sand Arthur had specified, blending in with the original Rat Swarm, effortlessly evading the gaze of people like Urs and Deljo, and arrived underground at the site of Gate of Life and Death 3000. No one would pay attention to the rats in the ruins. Just as no one would pay attention to the cream on a cream cake. The appearance of a few rats in the ruins is all too normal. In fact, some explorers consider rats in the ruins a 'sign of good fortune.' Indeed, ruins with rats present are far safer than those without. Of course, there's a risk of the spoils being gnawed on. These incidents were occurring right under Marinda's nose. Even someone as intelligent and cautious as this lady didn't anticipate Arthur using rats to scout the path; she merely thought all of this was part of Arthur's scheme. Just like... The several times before. Huff! "All right, so it really is like that. That thing I want isn't really inside! Only then would you, this fellow, be willing to make a deal with me!" Marinda exhaled a long breath. Seemingly completely relaxed. That thing? Which thing? Do clarify! Arthur inwardly ranted but outwardly just nodded slightly and said in a somewhat playful tone— "The matters there will be resolved by tomorrow night at the latest! But before that, shouldn't we discuss tomorrow's daytime affairs? You haven't forgotten the most difficult part of the process for inheriting your title, have you?" Suddenly, Marinda's face stiffened.

Chapter 433 Marinda's Ambition!

Marinda certainly knew what Arthur was talking about. After dawn, she would begin the ritual for inheriting the title of Earl of Kemir. The whole process was not complicated, roughly divided into two parts. The first part was for the representative of the Countess of South Los to present her with a sword and honor her title. The key was the second part— The banquet! As per the proper procedure, the banquet would start at noon and continue until evening. Though it was a lengthy affair, for most people it was a treat, as there were plenty of opportunities to foster closer relationships during such a long time. Of course, there had to be rooms prepared for the drunk and weary guests during the event. And the food and music could not stop. They had to be available at all times. The food had to be exquisite and delicious. The music had to be pleasant to the ear. All these were no problem. For the wealthy Marinda, these were trifles too small to mention. What really troubled Marinda was... The opening dance! As the successor to the title, she was the absolute protagonist of the banquet. She had to dance with her 'lover' Arthur. For about 3 minutes! This was not like the 'Lady of the Eternal Night's salon'; she and Arthur could not just give a cursory performance—they had to actually dance in front of everyone. Just thinking about that scenario made this lady stiff all over, goosebumps rising, her stomach instinctively cramping, and a sense of nausea rushing to her head. Seeing this, Arthur shouted— "If you vomit in my house, it's 200 Gold Coins!" Phew! Marinda took a deep breath and forcefully suppressed the urge to vomit. Then, the lady raised her hand to give the middle finger. "I'm sure your family must have dragon Bloodline!" The lady commented. As everyone knows, dragons are greedy and have a love for gold and jewels. No! It's no longer love. It's some kind of obsession. In the early Imperial Age, there were sayings like 'a dragon without a bed of Gold Coins doesn't even have the right to court'. As for Arthur? In the lady's eyes, sometimes he was just like a dragon. Arthur just rolled his eyes. Don't compare me to those big reptiles; I am a true descendant of dragons! The young 'Spirit Medium' thought to himself, while his words once again stabbed at Marinda's heart— "Are you sure you vomiting at the banquet would be okay? On such an important day, if you lose face... You'll become the biggest

joke in the South Los Nobility Circle in nearly ten years, and those Nobles will definitely tell their children 'never learn from that barbarian and ignorant woman Caesar, who, because of stupidity and gluttony, vomited at her own title inheritance banquet'!" Arthur described in an exaggerated tone. Marinda didn't refute. Because the lady knew that if such a thing really happened, the Nobles would definitely do just that. Even, they'd go further overboard. So— Phew! Marinda took another deep breath, her expression growing serious; the earnestness appearing in her deep blue eyes made even Arthur unconsciously sit up straighter. "Arthur, what do you think of hunting attire?" Huh? Hunting attire? I'll sit here and watch! Almost the moment Marinda's words left her mouth, Arthur guessed what the woman in front of him intended to say. Right away he shook his head vigorously, but before Arthur could speak, the lady quickened her pace. "How do you like my hunting attire? Would you mind if I tailor one especially for you? Don't worry, it's very clean; I've only worn it once." And I'll definitely make it in time! "Do you prefer black, khaki, or gray?" As Marinda spoke, Arthur's middle finger had already shot up. "Some things only happen once or countless times. So... Stop deluding yourself! "Do you think you can break through the bottom line of South Los' 'Spirit Medium'?" Arthur sneered. Similarly, Marinda sneered too. "If I had the 'Cat Faction' or 'Cat Hole' Entry or Ascend Step Charts in my hands and you still refused, then talk to me about so-called bottom lines!" The lady crossed her arms and looked at Arthur as if to confirm that the bottom line of a South Los 'Spirit Medium' was actually non-existent. In response, Arthur disagreed. "I'm telling you it's impossible! Even if I, Arthur Kredos, were to starve myself, I wouldn't wear your clothes for the 'Cat Faction' or 'Cat Hole' Entry or Ascend Step Charts!" Arthur's words were forceful and emphatic. Marinda, on the other hand, was all smiles. This lady swore, she would find a 'Cat Faction' Entry or Ascend Step Chart at all costs. Of course, it would be best if it were from 'Cat Hole'. Then... Hunting attire? Ha, she had dresses too. Although not many, just one. But that would be enough. 'Indeed, a woman with a strong desire for revenge!' thought Arthur to himself. He knew exactly why Marinda would make such a demand. It was simply retaliation for hitting him where it hurt. But was he not speaking the truth? If it was the truth, couldn't he say it? The young 'Spirit Medium' thought to himself, as his words continued to ring out— "You might as well get ready for 'morning sickness' then! Compared to puking for no good reason, 'morning sickness' would certainly be more well-received. I can assure you, all the guests will be wide-eyed searching for every detail, all ears not wanting to miss a single word." "Ha, and what about ten months later? Or rather, are you confident you can deceive the guests present?" Marinda scoffed again. This time it was about inheritance, totally different from the salon. In the salon, she could pretend to have 'morning sickness.' Later, she could say it was a misunderstanding. But at the ritual for the inheritance, the guests would be of a different caliber altogether. No need to mention others, just the Female Swordmaster representing the Countess herself was an eager beaver; if she pretended to have morning sickness, that woman would surely offer eager assistance. With her capability, even without medical knowledge, she would be able to sense something amiss. At that time, it would be Marinda who became the laughingstock. "What's so hard about that? You're so madly in love with me that you think you must bear me a child to truly keep me by your side. As long as you express this to the Female Swordmaster, she will gladly help. In fact, if you speak to her in advance, she might even play along. And as for ten months later? We're buying time with space here. We have to trust in the wisdom of future generations." Arthur said half-jokingly, half-seriously. He was now deeply entwined with Marinda. Presently, it's Shinan Town, coastal transportation. And in the future, there would be oceanic transportation and island management. Arthur was very aware that he and Marinda were inseparable. So, jest when it's time to jest, sting when it's time to sting, but problems still need to be resolved. "Ha, you paint me as if I were a maiden blinded by love," Marinda retorted. But

in the next moment, the lady took the pipe out of her mouth and inhaled deeply, saying— "Arthur, are you ready to become a father?"

Chapter 434: Competing to Cross, Competing to Cross

Arthur looked across the dining table at Marinda. He knew that this was Marinda laying out their plan to him, but he needed to confirm more things. He scrutinized Marinda's expression closely. "Eagle Eye" and "Insight" were both lit up like searchlights. But he discovered nothing. Suddenly, Arthur breathed a sigh of relief. The young "Spirit Medium" stood up and walked over to Marinda, extending his right hand palm-up— "Of course!" Arthur looked down at Marinda, his gaze tender and his mouth curved into a smile. Under the candlelight, the already beautiful Marinda looked even more enchanting, especially her deep blue eyes that moved like waves. It was as if he was truly seeing the ocean. Intoxicating. Bewitching. Anyone who saw Marinda at that moment would be captivated by her beauty and amazed by the charm of her eyes. But at that moment, Marinda was looking up at Arthur. From Marinda's perspective, Arthur's face was fully illuminated by the candlelight above, with no trace of shadow on his nose, eyes, or neck—only his fair skin was visible. In such bright light, Arthur's long eyebrows, prominent nose bridge, and those bright black pupils were all infinitely beautified. Especially those black eyes, unlike Marinda's deep blue ones. These black pupils were deep yet bright, at this moment looking infinitely affectionate, yet as clear as a child's eyes. The sense of an innocent and guileless young man filled them, such that even when Arthur's mouth corners drooped slightly, it did not destroy that feeling; instead, it seemed as if Arthur was pursing his lips in a smile. Unconsciously, Marinda raised her hand and placed it in Arthur's palm. The two of them looked at each other, Marinda's breathing became rapid, and under the candlelight, specks of dust floated up. The next moment— A purse containing 200 Gold Coins appeared on the dinner table at No. 2 Cork Street. Following that— Ugh! Arthur: ... "Do you even chew your prawns?" The young "Spirit Medium" looked at the floor in front of him, his mouth twitching. "Ate too fast." Marinda picked up a napkin, wiping as she spoke, the entire movement extremely graceful. If it weren't for the mess on the floor, she would definitely serve as a model for Noble ladies to learn from. "This mess is yours to clean!" Marinda spoke those words and then completely vanished into a ring of smoke. Arthur raised his hand and flipped the bird. After that came cleaning and ventilating. "Indeed, no matter how beautiful a woman is, after vomiting... It still stinks! Not to mention going to the bathroom." Arthur leaned by the window, muttering to himself. Meanwhile, at No. 6 White Bird Street, Marinda back in her study unconsciously turned her head and looked out the window towards Cork Street. "That guy is definitely cursing me right now. I should have eaten more leeks." Amidst her soft murmurs, Marinda turned around to start the final preparations before the Ritual of Noble succession. It wasn't just about once more confirming the attendants who would accompany her to Baron Kemir's manor tomorrow morning. It was also about tomorrow's dress. Just now, she had not lied to Arthur. At this moment inside No. 6 White Bird Street, South Los's most famous tailors were all present, modifying that dress according to her wishes. And Marinda? She needed to keep trying it on. For Marinda, this was torture. Marinda, who was not particularly fond of dresses, even though she had drastically reduced the decorations and based the design on riding attire, still found the entire process rather complex. And the tailors? They were enthusiastic. It was not just that Marinda had offered a high salary. More importantly, this was the dress to be worn for inheriting a noble title! As long as Marinda wore this dress to inherit the title, those involved in making the dress could certainly gain significant fame. Even enhance their reputation further. Therefore, each tailor gave their all. But for Marinda, it increasingly became a source of distress. 'I should have dragged Arthur, that

bastard, along with me! He must be leisurely reading a book, eating midnight snacks!' Marinda thought to herself, feeling even more tormented. As for Arthur? Indeed, just as Marinda had guessed, after cleaning up the vomit, he was lying down reading a book, eating snacks. Only today, the snacks were rather different. Arthur held a book in one hand, and with the other, he reached into the purse Marinda had left behind, grabbed a Gold Coin, and tossed it into his mouth— Crunch! The 2-gram Gold Coin was crushed in Arthur's mouth instantly, soon softened under the moisture of saliva, and the taste of rich cocoa and butter emerged during the chewing. In fact, at that moment, Arthur felt as if he were eating a gold coin chocolate. The only difference was, gold coins tasted better than gold coin chocolates and provided a stronger feeling of fullness. He had calculated meticulously: one Gold Coin could replace five emergency biscuits. Yet it only took one Gold Coin to make ten emergency biscuits. In any case, it was somewhat uneconomical. However... These Gold Coins were delicious! As for the Potions to restore physical strength? Arthur had drunk one as well. It just tasted like the original Potion, nothing special, the feeling of fullness was about the same, but nowhere near as Delicious as the Gold Coins. And very soon, the purse that contained 200 Gold Coins was left with only half. "It's good to be seventy percent full! It's good to be seventy percent full!" Arthur told himself, but he couldn't help the heartache that showed on his face. 100 Gold Coins weren't a lot for Arthur at the moment. However, spending 100 Gold Coins on snacks was still extremely extravagant for him now. Even the Old Lion wouldn't dare eat like this every time. 'Hmm? Wait! Old Lion!' As he was putting away the remaining Gold Coins, Arthur suddenly remembered a rumor related to Gold Coins—during the early Pioneer Era when there was a plan to unify the currency, Gold Coins were to be abolished, but they were retained because the Old Lion suddenly discovered a gold mine. Moreover, someone swore that the mine was an unprecedentedly rich vein. 'Do I have a chance to visit that gold mine? If possible, could I lick the gold mine there? If licking is allowed, then eating a few dozen or hundreds of tons in the refining warehouse probably wouldn't be noticed, right?' Arthur stroked his chin with one hand and seriously considered the feasibility of his plan. He always felt that feasting on so much pure gold could unexpectedly benefit him; perhaps the "Serpent of Death" Bloodline might be completed. However, he could imagine the difficulties. That gold mine was the lifeline of the Golden Lion Family, a most crucial asset; sneaking in would not be easy, let alone feasting in the refining warehouse. The difficulty of each step escalated exponentially. However, Arthur had already envisioned a plan— "Perhaps, this could work!"

Chapter 435: Suspect the Doubt, Not the Person!

Arthur thought of the "Death Poetry Society". According to Potterman's description, the "Death Poetry Society" had a considerable degree of cooperation with the Old Lion of Inner Bay! You have to know, he is "Death's Child"! With the help of the "Death Poetry Society", it shouldn't be difficult to approach the Old Lion's gold mine. But aside from Potterman, the "Left Cantor", the "Death Poetry Society" also had a "Right Pastor"! Compared to Potterman, this "Right Pastor" Aeherlad, was of more concern to Arthur. Although he had never met the person, and Potterman didn't provide more information about them, Arthur could guess that the current "Death Poetry Society" was always under their control. If he wanted to truly utilize the "Death Poetry Society"'s power, he must obtain their approval. Or perhaps... They died. Arthur stroked his chin, then shook his head. He knew too little about the "Death Poetry Society". Without absolute certainty, it was better to maintain the status quo. As for the Old Lion's gold mine? "I wonder if the Countess is interested?" Arthur pondered. Then, his thoughts began to scatter. Could he use the Old Lion's gold mine as a "flashpoint" to completely ignite the contradictions among the nobles of Inner Bay and South County, and then... Have the Old Lion attacked by all! To achieve this, he must

make the Old Lion appear weak enough! And then there was the matter of interest! The latter was easy to talk about; the gold mine was the best interest. And the former? It seemed that as long it looked the part, it would do. Just make it so that the "arrow was on the string", and then it "had to be released"! Of course, this was just one aspect. You could say that was Plan A! As a "Spirit Medium", Arthur also had a Plan B. And that was— "Unite" with the Old Lion to swallow up the nobles of South County! Jumping left and right? No, no, no! This was just the spontaneity of a "Spirit Medium". What bad intentions could he, a young, upright, simple, and kind "Spirit Medium" have? He wasn't a conspirator, how could he do such a terrible thing as inciting a war? He just wanted to have a safe walk around Inner Bay and then be able to return to South Los, and if possible, have a taste of the gold mine along the way. "Right, Pan?" Arthur bent down and picked up Pendragon, who was passing by his legs, and asked softly. "Meow!" The cat looked disgruntled. After experiencing the "Orange Cat" Ritual, Pendragon didn't just significantly increase in "Physique" and "Spirituality", but its intelligence also underwent a qualitative change. Although it didn't know what Arthur was asking it. But the cat's instinct told it, it definitely wasn't anything good. "What? You also agree that it's right to reallocate people's wealth based on their intelligence and extract the portion of money that doesn't match their intelligence? Pan, Daddy tells you, that's fraud! We 'Spirit Mediums' never deceive people!" Arthur looked seriously at his little kitty. Pan: ... Pendragon gave Arthur a bewildered cat face, seemingly unable to believe that Arthur could say such shameless words without blushing. "Meow, meow!" Immediately, Pendragon began to retort. Emotionally agitated, Pendragon's meows ran together, and it almost seemed like it was about to speak from anger. "Alright, alright. I understand, I know. No problem, I get you, but you can't become a fraudster, okay? As a 'Spirit Medium's little kitty, you must remember—we 'Spirit Mediums' never deceive." Arthur pretended to understand Pendragon. Pendragon tilted its head and completely gave up on dealing with Arthur. Then, it conveniently saw Kuliqi with a wide grin. You! Why are you laughing? Are you mocking me? "Meow!" With a heightened tone, Pendragon leapt from Arthur's arms and charged straight at Kuliqi. Kuliqi's dog face was puzzled as it was hit by Pendragon's paw pad. What did it do? It didn't do anything! It was just squatting there, sticking out its tongue. Arthur, on the other hand, watched the cat and dog chase each other around the room. He felt that No. 2 Cork Street was better lively. At least, it gave him a feeling of home. When Pendragon lay on its back, panting heavily, and Kuliqi squatted quietly beside it, hesitating whether to lick Pendragon's fur as a gesture of friendship, Arthur picked up Pendragon and stuffed a wad of "Aura of Death" into Kuliqi's mouth, ending the cat and dog battle. Lying back in bed, Arthur closed his eyes. Kuliqi, content after swallowing the "Aura of Death," wagged its tail and stood guard in the corridor. Arthur's breathing, meanwhile, became slow and deep. The young 'Spirit Medium' had a feeling that another long day awaited him tomorrow. He needed more sleep. In fact, Arthur's premonition was soon confirmed— Dawn, five o'clock. Marinda appeared at No. 2 Cork Street. "We need to reach Baron Kemir's manor before seven o'clock, and the estate is 25 kilometers from South Los, so we need to set off immediately." Marinda, with a pipe in her mouth, directly flung back Arthur's covers. This lady knew Arthur didn't have the habit of sleeping naked. "Do you know what time it is now? Five o'clock! I just fell asleep at four-thirty!" Arthur emphasized. "You can catch up on sleep on the way." Marinda took a puff of her pipe, exhaling the smoke forcefully. Even Arthur, groggy with sleep, sensed that something was amiss this time. "Indeed, you're also a woman. It's only during these few days each month that I feel you're a woman." Arthur let out such a sigh. Whoosh! A cloud of smoke, denser than before, enveloped Arthur. Marinda didn't utter another word, but her gaze turned even more severe. This caused Arthur to instinctively look down. He feared he might have involuntarily taken off his pants while asleep. But his pajama bottoms were still firmly on. "What on

earth happened? Please don't tell me you've really got your period?" As Arthur said this, he flared his nostrils, trying to detect any out-of-the-ordinary odor on Marinda. Suddenly, a blush appeared on Marinda's cheeks. But in the next moment, the lady put on a stern face again. Then, after taking two more puffs of her pipe, she asked seriously— "Arthur, do you like me?" "Huh?" Arthur was baffled. He didn't know what he had done to give Marinda such a misunderstanding. He just wanted an additional weakness, not actually to have a weakness. He wanted to explain, but Marinda cut straight to the point. "So, you look down on me?" "Ah?" Arthur was even more bewildered. What happened? What on earth happened? Marinda's speech continued nonetheless. "If it's neither liking me nor hating me... then do you want me to marry you? But I declare in advance, no matter what, I will not marry you!" Amidst a string of perplexing words, Arthur finally came to his senses, looking at Marinda with her stern face, the young 'Spirit Medium' smiled slightly at the corners of his mouth. "You really won't marry?" "I won't." "Really won't marry?" "I won't." "Could you possibly change your mind?" "I said I won't marry, not even at the risk of death." "Thank you so much, I'm deeply grateful." A smile appeared on Arthur's face. "Why are you thanking me?" Marinda asked with a taut face, frowning. "Not only do I have to thank you, but I also have to thank heavens and earth." Arthur shrugged, placing both hands behind his head. Marinda's deep blue eyes sank a bit. "Are you sick?" "Ah, right, right, right, I'm sick, terminally ill with paranoia." Arthur nodded in agreement. "Suspicious of what?" "I always feared that you might fall for me, wanting to marry me, so I've been terrified—plagued with nightmares recently, and now? This is just perfect!" Arthur cheered joyously. Marinda's fist clenched instantly. "What are you joking about!" With that, the lady dumped a pile of stuff in front of Arthur. Arthur narrowed his eyes slightly, looked at these items with surprise, and said— "Is this a wedding invitation?"

Chapter 436: When Pulling the Trigger, the Bullets Fired are the Same, Regardless of Age!

Invitation Cards. The items Marinda threw to Arthur were three invitation cards. They were from Little Lisop and Dibwa, and the two nephews of Lord Bass. The content was the same, expressing the hope to attend the ceremony of Marinda's inheritance of the title. Almost the instant he saw these three cards, Arthur understood why Marinda had reacted the way she had— This lady felt she had been 'set up.' 'Pride, making you feel a loss of freedom at that moment. But this unfamiliarity makes you more hesitant! You are unsure of my motives. Even though it feels like a dignity infringement, you fear it might affect our collaboration, so... you test me this way, and it even disgusts me, right?' Arthur finally understood the situation and his lips curved into a smile. "You do not think this was my arrangement, do you?" he asked with a teasing smile, looking at Marinda. "Not you? Then who else could it have been?" Marinda was incredulous. If it had been only Little Lisop, Marinda would believe it might be the young man acting on his own, but the cards included those from the two nephews of Dibwa and Lord Bass. Don't assume just because Arthur had saved the two men, they would willingly send invitations to a title inheritance ceremony. Even if they wanted to, it can't be possible. Because, behind these men stand their uncles, those two Lords. Unlike the Lisop Family, who are 'new nobility', the two traditional Lords surely wouldn't let their nephews commit such unbecoming acts. In the interactions of nobility, it is absolutely not permitted to rashly appear at such significant events. It would start from a small gathering. Better yet, a private salon. Unless there had been previous interactions— For example: a certain family deep-rooted in South Los had already interacted with these nobles, and then, they would have initiated inviting by sending the cards. In fact, not only did Marinda think this way. Arthur himself was also guessing what was going on. He was sure he had no connections with the Dibwa and Bass families. And the Kledos Family? Definitely not. Arthur was very sure of that. However, at this moment,

faced with Marinda's questioning, Arthur did not provide further explanation. "This was not my intention. Perhaps it arose because of me, but... I did not know about it beforehand." Arthur shrugged, rolled off the bed, and walked straight to the washroom. Marinda frowned behind him. This lady believed that Arthur would not lie to her at such a time. That only meant... The initiative had been taken by the Dibwa and Bass families. 'Does the Kledos family have such an influence in South Los in secret? To affect the Dibwa and Bass families? Remember, those are the most loyal knights of that Countess... Hmm? Could it be that the Countess took the initiative? Impossible! She absolutely wouldn't have done that!' Marinda just had this thought when she completely dismissed it from her mind. She knew very well the personality of that Countess. If it didn't genuinely affect South Los, the other party would not bother, even if many died, as long as South Los remained 'peaceful and prosperous', she could ignore everything, and if it could bring her more profit, that would be even better—that was how she had risen. And as Arthur's strength and power were revealed, although he would be valued by her, it definitely would not reach the extent of 'showing goodwill.' 'What has happened? Or is there some hidden situation I'm unaware of?' Marinda pondered. By the time Arthur had finished washing up and mounted the carriage with Pendragon in his arms, sitting opposite him, Marinda still hadn't sorted out her thoughts—and the more she thought about it, the more she felt as though she had overlooked something important. This feeling was terrible. Arthur, stroking Pendragon, glanced at the restless Marinda. He knew that his 'overthinking' partner had started overthinking once again. Under normal circumstances, this would not have mattered. But today was different. Today was the day the other party was inheriting the title. Any error was unacceptable. After all, the other party acquiring a title, obtaining a brand new identity, and integrating into the circle of nobility could only be beneficial to him. Therefore, the young 'Spirit Medium' sighed inwardly and asked softly, "Once, two children had an argument, where one child killed the other and was imprisoned by the local lord, yet that child did not know fear, because he knew he was still a child, his parents also told him he was a child, and they even persuaded others saying, 'this is just a child.' What would you do, if you were in this situation?" Arthur looked at Marinda with a smile. He was easing his partner's tension in his own way. It proved quite effective. Marinda immediately diverted her attention. "A life for a life!" The lady said promptly. "But what if his parents intercede?" Arthur continued. "Kill them too! This child had an argument and killed someone, most likely under the influence of his parents, perhaps even instigated by them in secret. Indeed, if it hadn't been witnessed, even more outrageous things might have occurred!" Arthur gestured for Marinda to continue. "Kill, then bury the body!" The lady continued. "And if others obstruct?" Arthur asked further. "Regard them as accomplices, and punish them together—some matters cannot be passively observed, for if calamity befalls oneself, who would champion for me?" Marinda said earnestly. Then, the lady asked, "How did that lord punish him?" "He had a servant bring Food, but gave no utensils; the child who caused Death, claiming to be a child, asked the servant for utensils—'Knowing how to use utensils, not needing to be fed, you are no longer a child.' Afterwards, he ordered the murderer to be hanged." Arthur said. "Ah, a suitable punishment." Marinda nodded, then furrowed her brow again. "Such a lord should have a good reputation. Why have I never heard of him?" Faced with the lady's query, Arthur laughed off. He certainly couldn't say that he had made up the story just to divert your attention, right? After all, how could such atrocious acts occur in the real world, right? The young 'Spirit Medium' then handed Pendragon to Marinda. "Pendragon just said that he wants you to hold him for a bit." Pendragon: ... Used as a prop, Pendragon slumped in his master's arms, defeated. But Marinda was instantly captivated. In the past, the lady had wanted to pet Pendragon but had not succeeded. This time she could not only pet but also hold him. It was truly wonderful. Seeing Marinda

holding Pendragon in her arms, Arthur breathed a sigh of relief. Thankful for the cat's contribution! The world is a harsh and unjust place, the universe is chaos, and the only eternal thing is pain... Wow, cat, it's a cat! Sometimes just a word like cat or Mimi can make one feel a trace of warmth. Not for any reason, but because in that moment, you have a cat. Arthur thought to himself as he looked towards Baron Kemir's manor in the distance. There, quite a few people were already waiting.

Chapter 437: The Arrogance of the Visitors is Equal to Their Humility!

Standing by the carriage, Fengter was dressed in a black suit and wore a wide-brimmed hat filled with the traditional noble style of South Los, decorated with a bunch of white swan feathers—he, as a young man, preferred pure hunting attire or a simpler suit. But Butler Vick did not allow him to do so. And this time, he rarely followed the old butler's advice. Because— this matter concerned the face of the Doyle family. You should know that many nobles would attend the lady's inheritance of the title. "Young Master, remember to address Elder Brother Arthur when you see Young Master Arthur," Old Butler Vick admonished Fengter. "Okay, I know." Fengter said with a resigned expression. The young lord and heir always felt that his previous relationship with Arthur was adequate and it didn't need to change, but the old butler informed him that it must change. "Young Master, you might not realize what Young Master Arthur now represents. "But please remember, as long as Young Master Arthur is your brother for a day, the Doyle family can exist without worries for a day. "Even further its status." Fengter recalled the words of the old butler; he didn't know what "Entrant" meant, nor did he understand what it represented. Even though the old butler had explained several times, he still could not understand. However, he was looking forward to meeting Ms. Anna. Seeing his young master's expression, Old Butler Vick's heart was full of helplessness. "If only the young master were like Arthur!" Although it was disrespectful to think so, this old butler truly wished that Arthur would become the heir of the Doyle family. "Entrant"! That indeed was an "Entrant"! The old butler, well aware of what an "Entrant" represented, was filled with anticipation. Unfortunately, it was not to be. However, the Doyle family could still borrow a bit of glory. Thinking of this, the old butler spoke again— "Young Master, remember Young Master Arthur..." Before the old butler could finish his words, Albert on the other side of the carriage took down his long bow from his back, and the ten guards accompanying them raised their long firearms. Without hesitation, the old butler pushed Fengter back into the carriage and stood at the carriage door, blocking any prying eyes with his body. Ratatat! The crisp sound of horse hooves continued unbroken. The next moment, a cavalry troop of fifty men appeared within everyone's sight. Albert, serving as the Doyle family's Swordsmanship Chief and Head Hunter, tensed up, his gaze unconsciously shifting to the manor behind him—the terrain was too disadvantageous against cavalry, they must rely on the manor's defensive fortifications, and although it was rude to enter without announcing, there was no need to hesitate at this moment. However, soon, the Swordsmanship Chief and Head Hunter heaved a sigh of relief. Because the cavalry flaunted a banner— Three blood-red longswords crossed in front of a black iron shield, surrounded by a bundle of irises! This was the flag of the Lisop Family. The three blood-red longswords symbolized having completed three heroic first assaults. The black iron shield signified having once saved a significant figure. And the irises? In South Los, they symbolized having turned around a major battle. In all of South Los, only Lord Lisop fit this description. No! Now it was Lord Little Lisop! Thinking this, the Swordsmanship Chief and Head Hunter signaled a safe gesture to the old butler. Standing in front of the carriage, the old butler then put his dagger and short sword back into his sleeves before smiling and walking forward— "The Doyle family sends its greetings to you, Lord Little Lisop." Nobles always maintain what's called noble demeanor Especially in battle, this must be adhered to. Not to

mention, now at their first meeting. With the cavalry formation opening up, Lord Little Lisop, clad in full armor, rode forth on his warhorse. About 10 meters away from old Butler Vick, Little Lisop dismounted. At this moment, old Butler Vick completely relaxed. At least the Lisop Family was friendly. The hand behind the back slightly raised the index finger. Immediately, the people from the Doyle family raised the muzzles of their firearms. "You are Butler Vick, are you not? It's truly an honor to meet you. Is Lord Fengter present? I hope to pay him a visit." The enthusiasm displayed by Little Lisop surprised the elderly butler Vick, but when Little Lisop indicated he would visit alone, the old butler looked towards Albert. After nods from the family's Swordsmanship Chief and Head Hunter, he then escorted Little Lisop towards the carriage. "Hello, Lord Fengter." "Hello, Lord Little Lisop." The meeting was polite, but the conversation soon heated up. For Little Lisop had brought up his 'Kind Father Arthur.' And Fengter admitted he greatly missed 'Elder Brother Arthur.' Once the two young men found a common topic, everything changed immediately. And the two families also became harmonious, with Lisop Family's Guard Commander and Swordsmanship Chief Gold and Doyle Family's Swordsmanship Chief and Head Hunter Albert conversing softly on one side. The guards from both families, although still clearly distinct, were no longer on edge. Representing the Doyle family, the golden oak banner and representing the Lisop family, the blood sword banner both stood proudly at the manor entrance, unfurling in the wind. Meanwhile, in the distance, a convoy was slowly approaching. Sitting in the carriage, Brule, puffing on a cigar, leaned back in the seat cushioned with velvet and sponge, allowing him to be more comfortable and cozy. Especially when he occasionally saw the dozen carriages behind him, this comfort and coziness soared dramatically. The Bernice family had fallen. The Coste Commerce and Emmond Commerce were gone too. Finally, it was his turn, Brule! South Los, boasting both inland and port assets, was exceedingly wealthy. Legends of wealth happened daily, especially when some long-renowned merchants fell, much like whales, and more merchants would emerge in South Los. Brule was such a man. By scavenging the Coste Commerce and Emmond Commerce, his wealth skyrocketed by more than tenfold. But this also made him a target for the Bernice family, and just when he was planning to flee, the Bernice family collapsed. Completely collapsed. By seizing the upper hand during the conflict, Brule scavenged again, and his wealth once more skyrocketed by tenfold. This made him recently become the largest and wealthiest merchant in South Los, second only to the 'Lady of the Eternal Night,' especially after receiving an invitation to her title inheritance. Brule's inner self swelled immensely. The merchant believed he was favored by the goddess of destiny. Perhaps, he even had a chance to take over the 'Lady of the Eternal Night's' enterprises. Once this idea took root in his mind, the merchant's attitude became arrogant. He not only told his coachman to slow down but also had the remaining merchants follow behind him. He wanted to arrive alongside the 'Lady of the Eternal Night.' He wanted to display his stance. After all, in this title inheritance, he should be the most honored guest. As for nobles attending the ceremony? Impossible! He would not believe that the 'Lady of the Eternal Night' had already breached the nobles' barriers. Huff! The rich smoke was forcefully exhaled by the merchant against the carriage window. Brule enjoyed watching the smoke hit the glass and bounce back ineffectually; he appreciated the sense of futility of being so close yet utterly unable to break through—especially when his opponents felt this way, he would often burst into laughter. At this moment, this was no exception. Huff! Another puff of smoke. The smoke twirled on the glass. Brule admired this scene. Then, from behind the hazy smoke, the merchant saw something. Suddenly, the merchant rushed to the window, forehead pressed against the glass, eyes widening to the extreme, foolishly staring into the distance. The cigar in his mouth? It had already fallen. All that remained was a frantic shout— "Speed up! Speed up! Hurry and speed up!"

Chapter 438: It has made all the preparations to welcome its master!

Arthur looked at the people in front of Baron Kemir's manor. Some he recognized. Others he did not. Little Lisop was one of his own, Fengter was somewhat one of his own too, but who was that obsequious, greasy-faced fat man next to them? "That's Brule. He initially made his fortune by fishing. Then, he quickly took a large share of the overseas transport market after the collapse of Coste Commerce and Emmond Commerce. Lately, when the Bernice family was preparing to move against him, we brought down the Bernice family, and this fellow gained a bit more from the situation. Now, many in South Los believe him to be the best businessman after me." Marinda, standing beside Arthur, introduced this recently renowned businessman of South Los with a tone that carried a hint of disdain and ninety-nine parts anticipation. It was the feeling of watching a meat pig fattening up. "The Cold Winter Festival is coming up soon!" Arthur said softly. Cold Winter is the coldest day in South County. All over South County, there would be a holiday starting three days before this day until the seventh day after, when normal activities would resume. It was considered the longest holiday for most people in South County. During this period, everyone stayed indoors. However, South Los was slightly warmer. Apart from being well-stocked with food, some people would still choose to gather or visit relatives and friends. The most popular food during this time was naturally meat. Pork constituted a significant portion. Therefore, a large number of pigs were slaughtered before Cold Winter. Such pigs, plump and well-fattened, were jokingly called 'Year Pigs' by the people of South Los. "No rush! My reputation is loud enough, and with the recent inheritance of my title, I've already been in the spotlight—while I've made all sorts of preparations, I'd gladly welcome someone to distract the public's attention a bit. Of course, when it's time to butcher the pig, I'll call you to share the meat!" Marinda said, her lips curving around her smoking pipe. Sitting across from her, Arthur gave a thumbs up. Look, this is Marinda. Most of the time, she's the best partner. As for the 'pig' targeted by Marinda? As Marinda's partner, Arthur felt it was only right for him to contribute; otherwise, he would feel awkward when it was time to divide the meat. So— "Isn't one pig a bit too few? If he is plump enough, naturally, he will attract some hungry wolves. It's normal for a group of wolves and one pig to fight and both get hurt. And us? Taking advantage of the situation to devour them is also normal. Of course, we mustn't eat them all, we have to leave some behind to feed a new pig and attract new wolves—South Los is vast, and some overseas islands are wealthy enough." Arthur said so. Marinda blinked, her blue eyes sparkling with more laughter. Look, this is Arthur. Most of the time, he's the best partner. She doesn't need to say much or explain anything, and he knows how to cooperate. "Of course." Marinda nodded. Then, the two exchanged a glance and smiled simultaneously. They both tacitly avoided discussing why not to 'eliminate them completely'. It was not that they weren't greedy enough. It was that the lord of South Los did not permit it. "When will I be able to really go all out! I'm truly exhausted now!" Marinda expressed such a sigh. "When you can go all out, you'll just lament again—how it used to be good, and now it's simply too difficult." Arthur spoke softly. As Marinda looked on in confusion, the young 'Spirit Medium' recited the words that had been prepared long ago— "Only when you stand at a sufficient height and have acquired everything you once dreamed of will you realize that the us of back then was the best version of us. Even if the raging rivers we saw at the time now look like mere creeks, and the towering mountains look just like small mounds. At every stage, we are entitled to say we're tired. Because... Back then, we were standing in the fog, equally lost." Arthur said and looked at Marinda. The lady appeared bewildered. Because she didn't know why Arthur was telling her all this. Wasn't it just a casual remark? "I say this to tell you that it's wrong to criticize your present self with the eyes of the future. I also want to tell you... you have me by your side!" Arthur explained. Immediately, a touch of

emotion appeared on Marinda's face. Arthur grasped this moment, pushed open the carriage door, jumped down from the carriage, letting everyone at the manor entrance see Marinda at this moment and hear Arthur's words— "My dear, we have arrived." A gentle epithet. A shy expression. This was the scene everyone at the manor entrance witnessed. Even though some still harbored doubts about the 'Lady of the Eternal Night' truly being sincere, the scene before their eyes made them involuntarily furrow their brows in confusion. They wondered if they had guessed wrong. Without showing any emotion, Arthur surveyed the surroundings and nodded secretly to himself. If it weren't for avoiding unnecessary troubles and for setting the stage for later, he wouldn't have needed to go through such lengths. He had not only to prepare himself but also adjust the emotions of his business partners. Was it easy for him? In an instant, Marinda understood Arthur's intentions. Although grateful at heart, she was also a bit annoyed. Was her acting not good enough? Would it have killed him to give her a heads up? Immediately, gratitude and annoyance merged into a gaze of coquettish reproach directed at Arthur. Her deep blue eyes, almost as if they could speak, conveyed that slight dissatisfaction, but what caught more attention was the gratitude. Everyone saw this glimpse of gratitude, but no one perceived it as such. Everyone thought it was love. Under the morning sun, the young lad stretched out his arm, helping his beloved girl step down from the carriage. The girl's love for the young man was clear, but upon noticing the spectators around, she remained shy, irritated, yet unable to say something harsh to the young man, leaving only a gaze full of coquettish reproach. Every person watching Arthur and Marinda thought the same. Including Little Lisop and Fengter. 'Is this 'mother'?' Little Lisop wondered to himself and signaled to Gold. Immediately, fifty South Town Cavalry sprang into action, each with a hand on their helmet and the other on their chest, as Little Lisop greeted his 'Kind Father' and 'mother'. Fengter was quick to follow. And the old butler Vick was also well prepared. Ten guards from Oak Manor laid a red carpet straight from the manor entrance to Arthur and Marinda's feet. Then came the petals. Under the direction of Cook Mary, fresh petals scattered over the heads of Arthur and Marinda. Arthur looked at the carpet under his feet and then at the flowers above his head, feeling somehow odd. But the oddest thing was the tightly closed manor gates. Immediately, the young 'Spirit Medium' raised a hand and pointed. Squeak! Suddenly, the distant manor gates opened with a unique friction noise. It seemed to be welcoming its two masters. However, the lifeless manor still seemed to be missing something. The young 'Spirit Medium' thought for a moment, smiled at Marinda, and raised his hand to point again.

Chapter 439: Named as a Warning!

Arthur raised a hand and pointed. Everyone's gaze shifted toward the manor. All at once, to everyone's amazement, the manor that had been full of fallen leaves and whose building corners were damaged and permeated with a desolate feeling, burst into life with Arthur's gesture. The fallen leaves were still there. The damaged buildings had not been repaired. But no one could feel the desolation anymore. What remained was only vitality. Even in the winter day, it was palpably felt. It seemed... Death Qi had been swept away. Or more accurately, it had been thoroughly absorbed. And the only one who could do this was Arthur. Arthur, disregarding the surprise of the crowd, softly said to Marinda— "As we say goodbye to the old and welcome the new, all things come to life! It, has prepared itself to greet its new master! Please, my lady." As he spoke, Arthur also mimicked a bow with due ceremony. Those witnessing the scene couldn't help but marvel at Arthur's magic, and at the same time, the affection between Arthur and Marinda. No one would think that Arthur's bowing could make him lose dignity. Everyone could tell that it was a kind of 'little game' between lovers to foster their affection. Who hasn't experienced that intensely passionate phase? In that stage, both men and women are fervent, like two

lanterns swinging in the wild wind, now you chase her, now she chases you, until an unintentional collision sparks a passionate ignition, shining a brighter light and radiating intense heat. The end? In a wisp of smoke, they ascend to the night sky, forever entwined. At least, that's what they believe at that time. That's why they are unguarded, paying no heed to what around them might be kindled by their passion, and indifferent to the gazes of the world. Of course, more often than not... It's a complete mess! Arthur obviously knew all this, but it did not hinder the devotion in his eyes. Marinda also knew it, but it did not prevent the tenderness in her gaze. Flowers! A sudden shower of flower petals! Mary, no longer a part-time steward but a cook, along with the maids, tossed petals, bringing a whole cartload to mid-air, showering them down. Like a rain of flowers. Under the morning light, colorful and dazzling. 'Hmph, "Spirit Medium" tricks.' As Marinda stepped forward, she was momentarily lost in the spectacle before mentally chiding herself. Arthur saw Marinda's expression, and of course, he knew what she was thinking. Therefore, the young "Spirit Medium" deliberately moved closer to the lady. Instantly, a visceral urge to vomit surged from deep within. 'You bastard.' The lady communicated to Arthur with her eyes. 'Much obliged for the compliment.' Arthur continued walking, responding with a slight smile. To the onlookers, this scene became yet another instance of their playful banter. "Lord Kledos and Miss Caesar are truly a match made in heaven." Brule praised loudly from the side. This man, who had been so ambitious and self-important before, had been utterly terrified after seeing Little Lisop and Fengter. Nobles! They were nobles! Nobles wielding absolute power! Therefore, after running down from the carriage, the great merchant humbly tried to shorten the distance between them. Unfortunately, his efforts were hardly effective. Little Lisop was, at the moment, wholly focused on his 'Kind Father' and 'Mother', with no time to bother with a stranger. Fengter's case was simpler, although he had begun to learn from the old housekeeper how to manage 'Oak Manor', at this stage most of the day-to-day operations of 'Oak Manor' still needed the old housekeeper's oversight, so Fengter didn't pay any attention to Brule either. As a result, the great merchant Brule experienced 'the arrogance of the nobility'. Feeling powerless, Brule could only 'close the gap' by other means. Like right now—Vociferously giving praise. Surely that would win him favor! That's what the great merchant Brule thought. But no sooner had these words left his mouth than he incurred the disdain of those around him. The people around despised the great merchant for shattering the aesthetic harmony between Arthur and Marinda. Subconsciously, many people glared angrily at the great merchant. Especially Little Lisop and Fengter. The two young nobles conveyed with their eyes, 'A match made in heaven, none of your demon or devilish business! Be gone, you fiend! Be gone, you fiend!' The great merchant Brule awkwardly withdrew to one side. Throughout the whole encounter, neither Arthur nor Marinda had glanced at each other. For Arthur, Brule had already been categorized. Giving him another glance would mean Arthur's defeat. Besides, there was something else that concerned Arthur even more—The 'Death Qi' that lurked within Baron Kemir's Manor! While the carriage hadn't yet truly neared the manor, and they were still several kilometers away, Arthur could distinctly sense the abnormality of the 'Death Qi' here. It wasn't 'Death Qi' that naturally spread but rather seemed to be intentionally accumulated and gathered. As for how it was accumulated and gathered? It was surely based on slaughter, supplemented by secret techniques. And such slaughter most likely began with those close by. 'Baron Kemir, due to the absence of an heir and the non-awakening of his bloodline, became temperamental. It seemed like some monster was lurking in the manor. Within a year, six maids and three male servants died. Later, after the old housekeeper who had been striving to maintain the manor passed away, the place grew increasingly unsettled, causing many to resign, while more disappeared without a word. The entire manor quickly fell into decay.' Arthur recalled the information he had gathered about Kemir Manor from

others. This part was without the inclusion of Grandma Andor. However, even including the old woman didn't make much of a difference. From beginning to end, it was all merely the Baron's scheming. But... It was evident the Baron had failed. Not only had his efforts come to naught in the end, but his direction of research was also flawed. Based on the Death Qi that had just dissipated, Arthur judged this point very accurately. Death Qi was not to be used this way! Arthur had the absolute authority to say so. After all, no one understood Death Qi better than Arthur. Similarly, Arthur instantly located the Baron's secret chamber. He swore that he had just been purely cleansing the Death Qi, with no covetous thoughts towards the place. At most... It was incidental. Marinda was even less inclined to pay attention to Brule, as she took out a ring representing the Kemir family from her bosom—a simple ring made from lapis lazuli. There was no inscription on it. Only on the inside of the band, the surname 'Kemir' of the family was written. Marinda put the ring on the index finger of her right hand. Immediately, she took a deep breath. Whoo! In the soft sound of exhalation, Marinda, standing five paces inside the main gate, lifted her right hand, the ring on her index finger aimed at the manor.

Chapter 440 Stonemason Guild!

Invisible ripples spread from this cyan gold ring. Most people could not perceive such ripples. Only those with the "Spirituality" Talent could sense them. However, it did not take long for everyone to feel something was different— Whoosh! Whoosh! Amidst the dull sound of cleaving air, two figures, each four meters tall, flew out from various parts of the mansion, their grey-white bodies with fierce faces, and bat wings armed with hooked claws. "Gargoyles?!" Brule and the merchants behind him widened their eyes, unable to help but exclaim in shock. Their voices were sharp and piercing, instantly causing Little Lisop and Fengter to frown slightly. Both were aware that Kemir Manor was protected by gargoyles. This was a semi-public secret among the Nobility. Otherwise, this place would have been looted clean long ago. Never underestimate the greed of the human heart. But that was only in reference to the Nobility. The Merchants' circle? Even Brule was sweating profusely. As his wealth and status had grown, this merchant had naturally come to know that beyond the everyday world he saw, there lay a hidden one unknown to most. The Bernice family had once possessed such power. But Brule had only heard of it, and had never truly seen it. So when two gargoyles appeared before him, the merchant was utterly unable to remain calm. It went without saying for those merchants behind Brule, who were even less composed than he was. Besides exclamations, many even stepped back continuously. Two of them even fell to the ground outright. But at this moment, nobody had the time to mock these two— all eyes were fixed on Marinda, who stood before the two gargoyles. The lady was gently rotating the lapis lazuli ring. "Go!" A low chant. The two gargoyles took flight once more, returning to their original positions. One to the roof of the main building. The other to the depths of the back garden. And only at this moment was Kemir Manor's defense truly deactivated—except when necessary, these two gargoyles would fall into slumber. Everyday security? That was naturally handled by Marinda's subordinates. "Not bad for defensive power." Arthur, standing to the side watching the gargoyles return to their spots, quietly admired. The young 'Spirit Medium' was also seeing these gargoyles for the first time, but that did not hinder his performance. Such a manner of taking things in stride and commenting from a position of higher understanding was far from difficult for Arthur. Regarding this, Marinda had no doubts. The identity of Arthur as the contemporary 'Black Cat' and the inscrutable 'Kledos Family' had already deeply impressed the lady. With such a background, the lady straightforwardly said— "A masterpiece of the 'Stonemason Guild' during the Silver Age. Although not true 'gargoyles' in every sense, these derived gargoyles, based on automata, still possess formidable

attack and defense capabilities. Most importantly is their short-range flight, which is enough to be favored by any Noble, if not for the high cost of production and the need for more gold for regular maintenance, they would be the best troops." Marinda lamented. 'Stonemason Guild'? Arthur took note of this organization's name, which he was hearing for the first time. At the same time, an appropriately ambiguous smile appeared on his face. "A masterpiece of the 'Stonemason Guild' during the Silver Age?" he echoed softly. No questioning. No disputing. But it was enough. Marinda glanced at Arthur, slightly annoyed, and said softly, "Ah yes, that's right, even at its peak, the 'Stonemason Guild' couldn't compare to one-tenth of the 'Cat Faction,' not to mention the 'Cat Hole.' But, you can't deny their craftsmanship and secret techniques. If the construction of a gargoyle didn't cost 100,000 Gold Coins and the minimum monthly expenses weren't 500 Gold Coins, not to mention the bottomless hole of battle and repairs, then the 'Stonemason Guild' would be one of the most formidable forces in South Los!" Facing Marinda, who had learned to quote his catchphrases, Arthur just shrugged. "You know that's not what I'm referring to," the young 'Spirit Medium' said with a resigned smile. "Of course, I'm aware you're talking about how, after the Pioneer Era began, the emergence of cannons greatly diminished the role of gargoyles, to the point where the 'Stonemason Guild' nearly vanished from public view. However, they have recently improved their crowning creations and started to obtain greater combat power in a more effective and lightweight manner. In Inner Bay, many nobles have placed orders for 'New Guards' with the 'Stonemason Guild'." Marinda spoke in such a manner. New Guards? I wonder what their capabilities are? How much do they cost? It would probably be nice to have a couple at No. 2 Cork Street if possible. Arthur never skimped on arming his 'home.' Yet, once again, Arthur bemoaned his 'lack of intelligence,' having been unaware of 'such a big event' happening in Inner Bay. Unconsciously, Arthur's thoughts turned again to the 'Cloak Society.' Or, to be precise... Garcia! 'Perhaps it's time to put some pressure on him?' As Arthur considered this, Marinda, standing by his side, had already turned to signal to Edwin and Mary. Immediately, the two sprang into action. Edwin commanded the 20 attendants brought over from No. 6 White Bird Street to take up their positions. Mary, full of enthusiasm, shouted— "Two hours! We have two more hours to clean and decorate this place! Now, let's get moving!" After speaking, the housekeeper-cum-cook, officially appointed by Marinda, rolled up her sleeves and quickly sprang into action. 15 maids and 15 attendants promptly followed suit. Of course, the housekeeper hadn't forgotten to bring hot tea and pastries to those waiting at the door, offering her sincere apologies at the same time. Little Lisop and Fengter accepted with a smile, expressing not only their willingness to wait but also their desire to help. "Anything important to the Master is important to the Lisop Family; if you have any instructions, please do tell me," Little Lisop said earnestly. For Little Lisop, had it not been for the worry of exposing his true relationship with Arthur, he would have knelt down and shouted 'Kind Father' by now, and broadcasted the 'Kind Father's' greatness to everyone around. Fengter, however, frowned. Because... Little Lisop had stolen his line. It was the line prepared by the old butler for him. Fortunately, Fengter was adaptable. He said earnestly— "I feel the same way!" Having finished, the young noble bowed slightly. "Thank you both. If possible, please assist Edwin in patrolling the vicinity—even though we have 'cleared' it several times before, there always seem to be some who are undeterred." Lady Mary didn't reject this kind offer. Accepting goodwill is also an effortless way to close the distance between people. Lady Mary, fully aware of this point, immediately communicated with Edwin and got everyone moving. The cavalry from the Lisop Family started patrolling the surrounding roads. The firearm bearers from the Doyle family paced through the dense woods. And the guards brought by Brule and others? They didn't need Lady Mary's instructions to spontaneously start their duties. Therefore, when Lady Mary came with the tea and pastries, her face

bore a polite and etiquette-filled smile. "Will Lady Mary have less time to bake egg tarts in the future?" Watching this unfold, Arthur voiced his thoughts. "That won't happen. Cooking is Mary's greatest passion, just like... just like what we are passionate about." Marinda shook her head, then lowered her voice. After exchanging a glance with Arthur, they silently made their way towards a certain area inside the manor— There lay the true purpose of their visit!