

Great Master 441

Chapter 441: Secret Room!

Arthur and Marinda entered through the manor's main gate. They passed through the corridor and the living room, and walked up the spiral staircase to the second floor—this manor was filled with the style of the Silver Age, emphasizing opulence and splendor. Or, one might say, extravagance. Arthur could easily see the remnants of gilding on the stairs. However, these gildings, lacking the necessary maintenance, had long become mottled. Moreover, Arthur was certain that this had started not after Baron Kemir's death, but much earlier. Just like the similarly mottled oil paintings on the walls. "The decline during the 'Seven Years' War'?" Arthur murmured quietly to himself. "The Kemir Family had already shown signs of decline at the end of the Silver Age. At that time, the father of Baron Kemir, like his opponent's grandfather, had not experienced an Awakening. Baron Kemir was the same. Three generations had not experienced an Awakening, and the entire Kemir Family had started to become unstable. To ensure the long-term survival of the Kemir Family, the father of Baron Kemir had no choice but to engage in some 'resource exchanges' with other Nobles of South Los in exchange for the continuation of the Kemir Family. Even hoping that an 'alliance through marriage' could change the desperate situation of the Kemir Family. Unfortunately... Some things are unavoidable." Marinda, with a cigarette holder in her mouth, then exhaled a puff of smoke. The smoke drifted forward and swept past the oil paintings of the ancestors of the Kemir Family. A total of seven. The images depicted them as either valiant or elegant, a testament to their past vigor, but the damaged frames brought everything back to reality. What had passed was already gone. Irreversible, except for... replacement. "Do you think our portraits will have a day like this?" Marinda suddenly asked Arthur. Upon inheriting the title, as the founder of the Caesar Family, it was naturally necessary according to noble customs to hang a portrait of her own. And Arthur? As her nominal husband, it was naturally necessary for him too. Moreover, their portraits must hang side by side at the highest place of this manor's Great Hall. Arthur was indifferent to this. He was not only indifferent to where his own portrait was hung, but also indifferent to Marinda's concerns. "Then I'll make sure to add a line of text at the very bottom of the canvas—what are you looking at, haven't seen a handsome guy before?" The young 'Spirit Medium' said this. Marinda immediately rolled her eyes. However, she was somewhat moved by Arthur's suggestion. Subsequently, the lady also decided to add text at the very bottom of her canvas. It would say— What are you looking at, am I not handsomer than the jerk next to me? Yes! That's how it would be written! Marinda emphasized to herself internally, her lips curving up involuntarily, her exhaled smoke even carrying a hint of ease. This touch of ease corresponded to the completion of the current phase, with the nervousness and anticipation of the upcoming phase beginning. Normally, given this lady's personality, after reflecting, she would quickly adjust her mood and delve into the next phase, but Arthur's joke. This adjustment ended at this very moment. 'Hmph, this jerk is somewhat useful!' Marinda glanced at the smiling Arthur. Then, she again resumed walking toward the master's study. A Baron's title was not this lady's ultimate goal! Her ultimate goal? It remained a secret for now. Until she took that step, she wouldn't tell anyone. Arthur followed Marinda into the study—previously, where the Death Qi was most concentrated. Clearly, the traditional Kemir Family, when constructing a secret room, also chose tradition. Far less flexible and varied than the secret rooms constructed by the 'Spirit Medium'. The entrance to the secret room was located right behind the desk, opposite the bookshelf. Among a host of damaged books, that intact one was really conspicuous. "So adherent to rules that they lack adaptability, it's almost like putting up a sign saying 'welcome'." Arthur critiqued. "The existence of such

secret rooms is itself well-known. In my opinion, it's like a wardrobe that flaunts its owner's wealth," Marinda voiced a different opinion. At the same time, she reached out and pulled a book. Click! After a crisp sound, the spring mechanism began to move. Soon after, the bookcase slowly started to shift, sending dust accumulated on it into the air. "Your wardrobe needs cleaning." Arthur said, covering his nose and mouth as he stepped back. But Marinda, unfazed by the dust, blew at it— Whoosh! Suddenly, the light smoke mixed with the rising dust rolled back, later gathering into a cluster and settling in the corner of the study room. Applause! Arthur clapped and was just about to say something praiseworthy. However, Marinda humphed and interrupted him. "Shut up! Swallow what you were going to say next! Don't make me spit on you in my happiest moment!" "Huh? You know what I was about to say?" Arthur looked surprised. "Heh, nothing more than you could make a good housekeeper or something," Marinda gave him a knowing look. Arthur frowned, then seriously said, "Marinda, have you underestimated your importance to me? A mere housemaid? Impossible. At least a butler!" Marinda was caught off guard at first, but as he continued, she realized her mistake. A terrible mistake. Why overestimate a jerk? "Ah right, right, right! I'm the butler, and you? As the butler's lover, you're merely the First Order manservant—remember to turn on the light when the boss wakes up at night, or else it's you who'll need to clean up." Marinda gave Arthur the middle finger. In the Silver Age, being a First Order manservant was a job that ordinary people both loved and hated. They loved it for the high salary and close access to the boss. They hated it because it was too close for comfort. Not only did they know too many of the boss's secrets, but they also were privy to embarrassing incidents, often having to clean up messes. For example, Lord Eisenau of the West Berlin Territory once, unable to see clearly at night, kicked over the toilet and splashed his First Order manservant with the contents. Of course, the key point was that the splashed manservant had to clean the toilet and keep the incident hush-hush. As for why the story got out? It was because the dutiful manservant, splashed with feces and urine, cleaned so earnestly that what was originally a small puddle turned into a much larger mess... Eventually, as Lord Eisenau chastised the "idiot", the story became widely known. Arthur knew about this. Scott had told him as a joke. However, Arthur certainly did not want to become the joke himself. So— "I will embrace you." Arthur looked sentimentally at Marinda as they walked side by side. The lady immediately disdainfully waved her hand and widened the distance between them. "Stay away from me, revolting fellow!" Facing the disgusting image that popped into her mind, Marinda retreated once again. Arthur, however, continued down laughing. Their bickering and playful banter ended as their feet touched the floor of the secret room. They both looked seriously at the room filled with piles of books, their eyes simultaneously drawn to the large desk in the middle, more precisely, to what's on the desk— Notes! Marinda immediately strode forward. And Arthur? He quietly took a step back.

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Could there be other traps in a secret chamber? Yes! And the more crucial the item is, the higher the likelihood of traps. Just like now— As Marinda had just taken a step, not even one meter out, a soft breeze sounded within the chamber. Invisible poison gas leaked from the ventilation holes. And like before, Marinda opened her mouth and exhaled a puff of smoke. Immediately, the smoke split into two. One part swept towards the invisible poison gas. The other acted as a Force Field Shield, adhering to the bookshelves, desks in the chamber, and especially to the notes on the desk, which were layered twice. In fact, Marinda's caution proved to be utterly necessary. Two seconds after the poison gas dissipated, a blaze fell from above. The blaze originated from a ventilation hole disguised as a cone-shaped trap, engulfing most of the chamber but sparing the entrance where Arthur stood. Watching Marinda

unharmd by the blaze as she weaved through it and evaded six arrows with another leap, Arthur applauded again— "Graceful moves, Marinda, you must be strong at combat. That dodge just now had the speed of a cheetah and the delicacy of a hummingbird." After ensuring there was no danger, Arthur came out with praises. Marinda clenched her teeth. This lady had never seen such a shameless bastard. Her indignation and anger came from... the subconscious assumption that the two would walk side by side. Just like before. But who knew that Arthur, this bastard, would take a step back and retreat into the corridor they came from. "You are so shameless, does your family know?" Marinda scolded. "They know! That's what they taught me! Haven't I told you?" Arthur blinked, wearing an innocent look. Marinda simply didn't believe Arthur's words. She purely thought it was just an excuse Arthur was making, blaming it on his family's teachings, just a pretext. He must be a natural-born bastard! "Such a bastard you are, nothing like a cat—absolute more like those snakes hiding in the shadows! Not just sinister and ruthless, but also vigilant against any creature that approaches." Marinda flipped Arthur the bird and then turned to walk towards the desk. And Arthur's expression remained unfazed. The young 'Spirit Medium' wasn't at all rattled by any guesses at his identities, he just said very calmly. "Born a cat, I am cautious." Arthur spoke those words while glancing at the notes on the desk. Marinda didn't block him, instead, she stepped aside to let Arthur get a better view. There were two notebooks on the desk, stacked one on top of the other. The similarly colored notebooks, from a distance, could be mistaken for one. The one on top was written in the common tongue. The opening page went straight to the theme— 'Activation Ritual'. After flipping it open, both Arthur and Marinda frowned at the same time. Because there was something wrong with this ritual. This 'Activation Ritual' wasn't just made up; the procedure, the lost items, the Spell (in the common tongue), and the initial fixtures were all fine, but the 'focal point' for the key part was missing—simply put, even if the ritual were successfully completed, the item receiving the ritual would become random. As for the so-called 'activation of the Bloodline'? Impossible! Both Arthur and Marinda were very certain of this. To harbor hundreds of souls within one's Body and to consume their consciousness, there would only be one outcome— Spiritual disintegration! 'Malz's luck is truly remarkable!' Arthur sighed deeply in his heart. It was only at this moment that the young 'Spirit Medium' finally understood what was the deal with his friend's heavy matchlock gun, saber, and badge. To survive the 'Activation Ritual' was no easy feat. And to have one's own belongings be the target of the 'activation' after surviving was truly good fortune. As for the 30 years spent daily caressing and communicating with those three items, the heavy matchlock gun, the saber, and the badge, until they responded to his will as if an extension of his body? That really was the magic of destiny! Even if Arthur didn't believe in destiny, at this moment he couldn't help but exclaim just that. As for Baron Kemir? Emmm... Malz is grateful to big brother Baron Kemir for sending the huge rocket! Arthur silently thanked the Baron in his heart on behalf of his friend for his contribution. "Kemir, this guy, is really insane!" Marinda let out such an exclamation. The lady's gaze turned to a page of text in the notes— 'I feel there is something wrong with Glast, but do I have a choice? Maybe there is! But, if I can't awaken my bloodline and can't have offspring... I would rather die!' The words written in the common tongue, each letter forceful enough to penetrate the paper, and every stroke bearing a sense of sharpness. Arthur could fully imagine the resolve that Baron Kemir had when he wrote those words. Such a resolve was not surprising to Arthur. 'To wear the crown, one must bear its weight!' Enjoying all that comes with being a noble naturally meant bearing the pressures that nobility entails. There was nothing to debate here. Instead, Arthur was very curious about the full 'Activation Ritual' recorded in the notes left by Master Hercules. Clearly, Marinda felt the same. Without delay, the lady set aside the notes she had been reading and picked up another. However, just as the lady flipped the page, she froze on the spot.

Not just the lady, even Arthur, with his 'daily acting' skills, could not help but voice his surprise after seeing the content on the notes. "This is..." As he spoke, Arthur instinctively reached out to pick up the 'Herculean Notes'. Marinda did not stop him. And as Arthur turned the pages, more content was revealed— When roasting lamb, indeed, roasting with a hanging stove is the best choice, of course, onions must be used as 'side ingredients'. Barney's lamb is really delicious! Decided, I will have stewed lamb tonight with potatoes and carrots. The lamb can't be just lean, it must include some lamb shank bones, and the marrow that comes out after cooking will definitely be delicious! ... This small fishing village of South Los will surely become the focus of South County... no, the world's city! Its transportation is too convenient! Hmm, pan-fried fish cakes are also very tasty! ... After leaving South Los, I headed to Rainbow Island, known for its beautiful scenery, but it's been a month and I've not seen a single rainbow. However, the coconuts here are really tasty. Might as well just change the name of this place, to Coconut Island. Rainbow Island is just too misleading. ... The thick notebook was filled with similar content. It was nothing but a travel journal by Master Hercules. But Arthur was so excited he nearly cheered aloud. Because— Rainbow Island was actually Coconut Island! 'Found it! The key information to breaking through the limit of[Hand of Void]!' Arthur's heart leapt with joy, yet his face was furrowed with concern as he directly asked out loud— "Marinda, what do you think?"

Chapter 443: Acting as Someone Else!

In response to Arthur's inquiry, Marinda was silent for less than a second before she uttered the name of an organization— "The 'Pale Hand'! Apart from those bastards who are after the thrill of a 'Death Ritual,' I can't think of anyone else who'd spend so much effort to set up Kemir, only to watch him die with their own eyes. If they desired a ceremony accompanied by flowers and applause... Those bastards achieved it. And not just once." As she said this, the lady snorted. Her gaze upon the name 'Glast' in her notes steadily grew colder. Clearly, the lady reflected on the recent incident. Similarly, Arthur did too. And feeling used by the recent incident? Arthur wasn't angry. On the contrary, the young 'Spirit Medium's' lips curled into a slight smile. "You aren't angry?" Marinda asked in surprise. Then, without waiting for Arthur to reply, the lady realized something. "Could it be..." "As you've said, they love a sense of ritual, and such a sense of ceremony... How could those kinds of people not be watching from the sidelines? In a dense forest 300 meters south of the manor." Arthur stated as he reported an exact location. Without any fuss, Marinda immediately plunged into the forest after blowing out a ring of smoke and seizing Arthur's hand. This surprised Arthur. He had originally intended to let Marinda pursue first and then follow afterward. After all, he didn't fancy being covered in Marinda's vomit. But unexpectedly, it seemed that Marinda was... Fine? Surprise flashed in Arthur's eyes. However, as soon as Arthur and Marinda appeared in the dense forest— Blargh! Marinda vomited again. Arthur's shoes were once more tainted with the vomit. Yet, the young 'Spirit Medium' was not even slightly annoyed, instead offering support to Marinda with a concerned expression and gently asking her, "Are you alright? You don't need to push yourself, especially since the child..." "I understand. It's just that being used by the 'Pale Hand,' leaves a bitter taste in my mouth. I will find that man named Glast." Marinda spoke, then retched again. Arthur knelt beside Marinda with a look of distress, patting her back gently. Then, Marinda's retching intensified. Anyone witnessing this scene would think Marinda was experiencing strong pregnancy symptoms. After all, given Arthur's mention of a 'child,' many would jump to conclusions. For instance, the people of the 'Pale Hand,' The one who had been hiding there was startled by the sudden appearance of Arthur and Marinda. As they hastily hid, they felt relieved that the person they were following had been cautious and kind enough not only to warn them but also to

provide them with a prop for concealment. Seeing Arthur quickly scan the area and then leave with Marinda, the member of the 'Pale Hand' secretly let out a sigh of relief. 'Lucky!' The 'Pale Hand' member felt relieved at heart. He was sure that if it hadn't been for South Los's 'Spirit Medium' worrying about his unborn child, he wouldn't have skimmed on the job like he just did. However... 'The 'Spirit Medium' of South Los and Lady of the Eternal Night of South Los have a child! This is tremendous news! I must inform the Master!' With that thought, the 'Pale Hand' member departed. And just a few minutes after the 'Pale Hand' member left, Arthur and Marinda returned— "Although very cautious, still a novice." "Not only did he fail to cover his tracks when leaving." "The just-now anxious breathing was loud enough to be deafening." Arthur reviewed the footprints left by the other party and offered his comments. "Sending out a newcomer, then watching 'death' happen with all the ceremony, Mr. Glast really knows how to make full use of everything." Marinda, on the other hand, focused on a different point. "Perhaps, the existence of this newcomer has caused him unnecessary trouble?" Or could it be... "He inadvertently discovered something?" Arthur looked towards Marinda. Just then, the lady also looked towards Arthur. The two exchanged a smile. Clearly, they were just acting. When they appeared in this dense forest, the two had already determined that the person hiding aside was not the 'Glast' they were looking for— although they had never seen him, according to the notes from Baron Kemir, this so-called 'Mr. Glast' should be a veteran and very good at handling collaborators or opponents. Such a guy would not expose himself so 'easily' like a novice. Even if caught off guard, he would have at least 2 or 3 corresponding solutions. Instead of this rough and simple arrangement, plus some special characteristics of 'Pale Hand', Arthur and Marinda immediately knew what was going on. A chess piece thrown out. Watching someone else's death, that's possible. Watching one's own people die, naturally, is also possible. Right then and there, Arthur and Marinda got ready to go fishing. And more conveniently, Marinda threw up. Immediately, the two began to put on a show of acting skills for the 'Pale Hand' newcomer. And the newcomer? He was totally convinced. "After the 'Pale Hand' spreads the news of your pregnancy, it will be more convincing, and with Julie corroborating it, you will seem 'reliable' for the next 10 months." Arthur inquired. "After 10 months, I will make arrangements again. And during this period, it will be a rare opportunity." Marinda did not deny Arthur's statement. Just as she would not deny compensation to Arthur. "I will find Master Hercules's notes as compensation for you—that travel journal... was really quite unexpected." "Hmm, but it's not without gains. At least, now I know that Barny's mutton is very tasty." Arthur shrugged his shoulders. "So what you mean is, I don't need to compensate you?" Marinda blinked her eyes. "My friend, a debt to the 'Spirit Medium' should not go unpaid." Arthur likewise blinked his eyes. Then, the two simultaneously flipped each other off. But Arthur held his middle finger up longer. Because— "You will walk back on your own, don't let anyone spot you!" Leaving behind these words, Marinda disappeared with the smoke. Arthur could still faintly hear the woman's crisp laughter. 'I wonder if this woman could still laugh after finding out how significant Rainbow Island is to me? Most likely she'll curse my shamelessness, and then add a few more insults, calling me a bastard? Tsk, bearing such accusations, I'm really too innocent.' Arthur said with a helpless expression, hands folded behind his head, as he strode back towards the manor. Even as lines of text appeared directly before Arthur's eyes, the young 'Spirit Medium' didn't stop his steps, only muttering softly to himself— "Perfect timing!"

Chapter 444: Fierce like a Cat, Docile like a Tiger!

The morning fog had not yet lifted among the trees, but South Los was already bustling, as the working adults bade farewell to their families and left their homes. But they were not the earliest risers. The paperboys in South Los were the first up, their crisp calls echoing through the streets and alleys of the

town more than an hour earlier. Moreover, unlike before, this time, the paperboys had almost effortlessly sold out the newspapers in their backpacks. Because many people were keen on the results of yesterday's much-anticipated 'South Los Swordsmanship Competition' finals. Even knowing the outcome, many still wished to see how the newspapers described it. Of course, there were also quite a few who chose to collect them. For example, Owner Tate from Tate's Wand Store. This shop owner, with a cleanly shaven face and sparse hair revealing his scalp, wearing thick, black-framed glasses, had bought two newspapers from a paperboy — one to read and one to frame and hang on the wall by the entrance — he had missed yesterday's match due to the strict opening and closing hours of his store, arriving after the champion had already been decided. However, he had watched everything that followed closely. Especially upon the announcement that Arthur was the champion and had earned a 'Knighthood', this wand store owner was the loudest to cheer. "You truly deserved the championship," Owner Tate said with a smile. Suddenly, a bell rang by the door as an elderly lady entered. "Good morning, Lady Amanda." Tate greeted the aged lady and did not forget to wave at the small cat in her arms. "Hi, Coul." A black and white cow-patterned cat responded to Tate. Immediately, Tate showed a bright smile. The owner then turned around and took out a biscuit from behind the counter. Since he was keen on keeping the shop clean, Tate didn't feed the cat, but he really loved cats, which was why he was familiar with Lady Amanda. This time, when Lady Amanda needed a wand, not only did Tate use the best materials but also gave her a twenty percent discount. "You admire Arthur a lot?" The lady observed the framed newspaper and then glanced at the paper on the counter. "Yes, I would have been long dead without Lord Kledos. He saved me and asked for nothing in return. Furthermore, he guided me to have a normal life." Upon mentioning Arthur, Owner Tate became loquacious. The gratitude was palpable, even to a blind person. "Is that so?" Lady Amanda turned to look at the framed newspaper which featured Arthur's portrait, marvelously captured in a teaching moment — his infectious smile particularly striking. "You are close with Lord Kledos too?" Tate inquired. "His Pendragon was adopted from my store," Lady Amanda said proudly. "I see — so would you like me to change the wand tip to Coul's likeness? Lord Kledos changed his wand's tip to resemble Pendragon, one depicted as a cat's head and the other as a coiled shape." Seeing Lady Amanda's confusion, Tate quickly explained. Surprise spread across Lady Amanda's face. Then she nodded, smiling. "That would be nice. Is the process complicated?" "Not at all, I'll change it for free." As Tate pulled out his paints and started painting using Coul as a model, Lady Amanda sat down and quietly waited. 'Should I go through with it?' The elderly lady hesitated. Their way of life, once chosen, must inevitably change. And she could not be certain whether the change would be for better or worse. Thus, she hesitated. After all, it involved the lives of three hundred forty-six people. ... [You have successfully won the 'South Los Swordsmanship Competition', easing the minds of your supporters and infuriating your detractors, but regardless, your name will be widely discussed for a good while; XP+500] [Your teaching during the championship made more people remember the 'Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club' and sparked regret in many who missed 'personal instruction' from you, increasing curiosity about you and your club; XP+300] [More people have heard your name; XP+100] ... Arthur looked at the text before him. He wasn't surprised by the hefty XP gain following his victory in the 'Swordsmanship Competition'. What concerned him more was the third point. 'Will I gain 100 XP daily for the next few days? I wonder how long it will last. If it persists for another ten days, I'll have enough XP to level up to Swift Bird Swordsmanship Lv5!' Arthur thought to himself. At Swift Bird Swordsmanship Lv4, not only did it accelerate the restorative effects of his Bloodline, but it also introduced the 'Snake Wing' Bloodline effect. Thus, Arthur was greatly anticipating the changes that would come with Swift Bird Swordsmanship Lv5. Moreover, Arthur estimated that it

wouldn't take as troublesome as ten days. You see, he still had an uncompleted relic exploration pending. That relic would probably bring him plenty of surprises, right? Thinking thus, Arthur quickened his pace. Unnoticed by anyone, he made his way back inside the mansion. By this time, the courtyard had already been tidied up by Mary and her team, leaving two people to clean up the fallen leaves while most others began arranging the main building's hall, guest rooms, and so forth. Time ticked by, second by second. Guests arrived in waves. The first to arrive were naturally Arthur's friends. Malz, Bob, Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, and Haywood arrived together in a carriage. Then Linda Camille arrived in her family carriage, driven by the old butler Oer. After waving to Arthur as a greeting, Linda cheerfully headed upstairs—where Marinda was making final preparations. Lords Bern, Ernest, Dibwa, Bass, and Laurie's representatives arrived around ten-thirty in the morning. Barons Korol and Hausman arrived around eleven. Lords Dibwa and Bass naturally sent their own nephews, who were acquaintances of everyone. Lord Ernest also sent that nephew who had participated in the Swordsmanship Competition. Lord Bern's representation was his own old butler. The two barons sent their Swordsmanship Chiefs. Everything conformed to noble customs, even the order of arrival. According to the schedule, the host of South Los made his entrance at eleven-thirty. In the hall, musicians who had come with the guests began playing music. The chefs were busy serving up some delicious yet quick and convenient food. Although the banquet had not officially started, it was still imperative not to neglect the guests. Everyone sat according to their circles. Discussing matters pertaining to their own circles. However, what most concerned Arthur was Lord Laurie's representative—according to Marinda, this lord was loyal to the 'Selina' family. And now, Lord Laurie's representative was sitting alone on the side. Not in a corner, but in the most conspicuous position in the hall, sitting proudly as if he viewed everything and everyone as beneath him. It seemed he had noticed Arthur's gaze, for this tall, muscular man with a fierce face abruptly stood up, his intense aura of killing intent and death. Qi making everyone think they were seeing a tiger on the prowl. Especially Barons Korol and Hausman's Swordsmanship Chiefs, who felt like they were facing a formidable enemy. Arcana Level! At least Arcana Level! The two Swordsmanship Chiefs broke into a slight sweat on their foreheads, but the next moment, they both breathed a sigh of relief. Because the representative of Lord Laurie was making his way directly towards Arthur. Everyone knew this was not a man to trifle with. Especially as they watched him head straight for Arthur, many shifted their gazes toward them. Some worried, some indifferent, some schadenfreudic. Sitting next to Arthur, Malz, Bob, Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, and Haywood stood up in unison, especially Bob, who narrowed his eyes and flashed a fierce grin. Picking a fight with their boss on a day like this surely meant the person was an enemy. And for enemies, Bob believed that a dead one was the best kind. Malz, as an old friend of Bob's, shared this sentiment. Unlike Bob's fierce demeanor, the old sheriff simply had a hole emerge in the palm of his hand—it was the muzzle of a heavy firearm. Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, and Haywood kept it simple, Kuke's dagger, Scott's poisonous pen, Wiggins' cane sword, and Haywood's two firearms appeared in their hands. The four slowly shuffled their feet, subtly surrounding the approaching figure. This wasn't messy positioning, but a military formation directed by Bob. The four looked simple, but their formation integrated offense and defense. Seeing this, Lord Laurie's representative's eyes flickered with excitement—he was all too familiar and fond of military formations, having been born into the military. Although the four were slightly lacking, his hands itched for a fight. Particularly Malz and Bob, whose presence made him almost unable to resist shouting for a hearty battle. However, recalling the young lady's orders, Desa immediately calmed down. If he dared to act today, once back in Barny, the young lady would break his legs and throw him into the stables to gnaw on horse dung for a month. Then what? And then he would be ridiculed daily by those fellows for not being able to handle

such a minor affair. He wasn't that foolish! Hey, what had the young lady asked me to say? Just seeing two worthy opponents, how did he forget the words Lady Selina had instructed him to say? Desa thought hard but couldn't recall the exact words Lady Selina had given him. However, he remembered the gist quite clearly. So, the next moment— Thump! Desa, with a tiger-like momentum, knelt on one knee before Arthur, and called out with full vigor— "Greetings, Young Master Arthur!" Suddenly, the hall fell silent.

Chapter 445: The Bloodline of the Barbarian!

Desa's act of kneeling on one knee had everyone in the hall bewildered. Desa's respectful greeting made the already bewildered people in the hall start to buzz. What was going on? What had happened? Why would that barbarian woman's servant pay homage and give a servant's bow to the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los? Confusion arose in everyone's minds. Baron Korol and Baron Hausman's Swordsmanship Chief looked at Arthur with an added hint of apprehension in their eyes; no one understood Desa's strength better than they did, nor did anyone grasp the terror of that barbarian woman more clearly. If it wasn't for their earlier missteps, opting to give up titles and honors, even the Old Earl of South Los wouldn't have been able to shake the family's prestige in Barny. Even after renouncing titles and honors, the current Lord Laurie still remained a servant to that family. This strategy, akin to changing the soup but not the medicine, had initially gained everyone's approval. Because everyone understood this was the best outcome. After all, the nickname 'Barbarian' for the Selina Clan was not a jest — it was real, with barbarian bloodline in their veins, no one wanted to witness an enemy leap forward only to land and let out a terrifying scream, followed by an inciting dance of death. That could indeed end in actual death! And not just one person's demise—several! Lord Bern's elderly butler wore a troubled expression. Just moments before, this butler had been feeling somewhat *schadenfreude*, well aware of where the 'accidents' involving his family's three young masters stemmed from; hence, he harbored animosity towards Marinda, and naturally, towards her lover Arthur as well. He had been ready to witness a bloody spectacle. Given the Selina Clan's way of acting, it would certainly have occurred. Who could have predicted that the other party would suddenly kneel and address him as young master! This, this... What should be done? The elderly butler was plunged into thought, unsure of what to do next. Lords Ernest, Dibwa, and Bass—his three nephews—were caught by surprise. Being nobles of South Los, they of course understood the weight of the Selina Clan; had it not been for their voluntary relinquishment of titles and glory, the other would have been the rightful replacement for 'Viscount Primo'. 'The Kledos Family, huh?' The three muttered to themselves in their hearts. Meanwhile, Little Lisop appeared completely nonchalant, as if expecting such behavior. In Little Lisop's heart, the 'Kind Father' should naturally behave this way, and the Kledos Family that had the 'Kind Father' should naturally be of this stature. Fengter felt a sudden realization in his heart. The young man couldn't help but glance at his elderly butler. It was not until now that the young man truly admired his elderly butler's foresight. 'My elder brother, indeed, possesses such power! Is this the Kledos Family that has been concealing itself in South Los for so many years? It is indeed formidable! Lucky for me, I got to know elder brother beforehand!' A wave of relief washed over the young man. Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, and Haywood, upon seeing Desa kneeling on one knee, exchanged a knowing look before sitting back down in unison. Maltz even sported a smile as he clapped his friend Bob on the shoulder. This Police Chief conveyed a message with his eyes to his friend— 'Do you understand now? This is the power Arthur holds.' Bob nodded subtly. Although his friend had always spoken of Arthur's miracles and the strength of the Kledos Family, this former Daredevil Team leader still harbored doubts. Even as Arthur

demonstrated his power, these doubts lingered— throughout the long history of South County, there were not without instances of someone unexpectedly gaining immense power through a fortuitous event. Though rare, it did occur. This Daredevil Team leader had similar doubts about Arthur. However, seeing Desa kneeling, this Daredevil Team leader's doubts completely dissipated. To make a noble with a long history perform a servant's bow wasn't just the work of sudden power, it required a long history and interactions to prompt such an effect. 'It's really quite thrilling!' Bob couldn't help but look at the figure sitting there, maintaining a calm smile from beginning to end. He could palpably sense the hidden ambition behind that façade. Because of this, he remained vigilant. It wasn't that he despised ambition, but he was wary of the ambition harbored by the ignorant. He certainly did not want himself and his old friend to be dragged into the Abyss. But now it seemed... it might be worth trying a bit more. Thinking this, the captain of the Daredevil Team sat back down next to Arthur with his old friend. On the second floor, through that narrow door crack, Marinda and Linda saw everything. In fact, when Desa stood up, Marinda had already been watching him closely. Marinda was certainly aware of the reputation of the Selina Clan. However, just as importantly, this lady was also well aware of how crucial the current inheritance ceremony was for her. Therefore, the lady had resolved that if Desa really dared to cause trouble, she would eliminate him and then declare war directly against the Selina Clan. Barbarians are frightful, prompting people to avoid them by a wide margin. But her sword was also exceptionally sharp. What happened afterward, however, was somewhat unexpected. Watching Desa kneel on one knee, calling out "Young Master Arthur," the lady was initially stunned, but then she immediately understood what was happening. "This bastard is showing off, declaring to everyone in South Los that I, Arthur Kledos, am officially taking the stage! This guy actually used my inheritance ceremony as his stage, hmm." Marinda muttered to herself, even snorting several times to express her dissatisfaction. However, her eyes were filled with amusement. She and Arthur were now in the same boat, and the stronger the power Arthur displayed, the more advantageous it was for her. Stealing the spotlight? Absent. As per their plan, no one could steal her spotlight. "Wait, hold on! Could this guy be laying the groundwork for that plan?" Marinda frowned as she thought about it. The lady thought it over carefully and it did indeed seem to be the case. To make the Swordsmanship Chief, representing the Countess, believe her "proactiveness," Arthur's prior performance was definitely sufficient, but adding this current scene would make it utterly flawless. "So many tricks up his sleeve!" The lady curled her lip. She even suspected that Arthur was the reincarnation of a wasp's nest, with eyes all over his heart. Seeing Marinda curl her lip, Linda, who was beside her, was terrified. Ever since Marinda started humming coldly, and then to her frowning, Linda had been extremely anxious. Now, she even thought Marinda was truly angry. Thus, the young girl whispered immediately— "Sister Marinda, don't be angry. Arthur definitely didn't do it on purpose. He must really like you, that's why he chose to do this. We can wait and see how things unfold." Like me? Hmm, he definitely likes my money, collections, fleets, companies, islands! Marinda complained inwardly, but she showed a smile to the "Little Angel" in front of her, who obviously grew up outside and had not fully embraced the Kledos family's education. "I'm not angry. These titles are just a little secret between the two of us. And what comes next will definitely be exciting. Arthur, that naughty fellow, will not waste such a good stage." Marinda said with a light laugh. Linda, however, was completely flustered. Rude titles? Secrets! Would she get physical when excited? Is this what adults call "spice"? Linda was greatly shocked. But immediately, Linda's attention was caught by something happening below. Desa stood up at a smile from Arthur. Then, he shouted to the outside— "Bring it up!"

Chapter 466 Reasonable and Legal... Extortion!

With Desa's shout, the courtyard immediately came to life. Two strapping men, over 2 meters tall and robust in build, with fierce faces, carried a carriage into the courtyard. Yes! A carriage! Except for the absence of horses to pull it, it was a complete four-wheeled carriage. The guests watched the scene with their mouths agape. Especially the merchants, who stared intently at the carriage as it was effortlessly lifted and carried from the gate to the front of Arthur. Watching as the carriage was set down— Bang! The carriage made a dull sound as it contacted the floor of the hall. It wasn't intentional! The two strong men had been as gentle as they could, but the carriage was just too heavy. Heavier than one could imagine. Because it contained... Books! Although the carriage door was closed, none of the subtle noises inside escaped the sharp ears and eyes present. For example, the Swordsmanship Chiefs of both Baron Korol and Baron Hausman. Their faces had already started to twitch. They knew what that barbarian woman had sent. And because they knew, they cursed inwardly. Meanwhile, they started to think about what to do next. But Desa didn't pay attention to all this, this servant of the Selina Clan directly opened the carriage door, revealing all the books inside— "Here are the transcribed copies of all the secret books of the Selina Clan's vaults, especially presented to Young Master Arthur in celebration of Miss Caesar inheriting the title," Desa said. Clearly, this servant once again forgot Miss Selina's specific instructions, remembering only the gist. After all, the meaning was roughly the same! And besides, the gift had been delivered! Who could say he hadn't completed the task? He had delivered it! And none of the people there paid any attention to the servant's mixed-up words of 'congratulating Miss Caesar yet giving the gift to Arthur'; they were astounded by the carriage-load of books. Those merchants might not fully understand the value of a carriage full of books. But the Bern Family, Ernest Family, Dibwa Family, and Bass Family, being nobles, knew. Vaulted books were sure to contain Mystical Knowledge! And all the vaulted books represented the essence of a family! And they were just given away like that? Arthur is your son, huh? Even one's own son shouldn't be treated so decisively! He should be tested again and again, proving his capability to inherit before being given such gifts! At that moment, they began to understand why the Swordsmanship Chiefs for Baron Korol and Baron Hausman were twitching. Because they were twitching too. With Selina Clan's 'jewels' leading the way, unquestionably, the gifts they brought had turned into 'rubble'. They couldn't present theirs anymore! It was just too shabby in comparison! If this were to spread, their families would not only become a laughing stock in South Los, but once it reached other territories, they would be mocked even more. Thinking this, they shifted their gaze, stealthily reaching for their 'Messenger Stones'. This matter required consultation with the true leaders behind them. They couldn't make these decisions on their own! And just as Lord Bern's old steward, the nephews of Lord Ernest, Lord Dibwa, and Lord Bass were preparing to contact the real heads of their families, Desa suddenly slapped his forehead. "Oh, Young Master Arthur, this is the 'Core Mystical Arts of the Selina Clan' that the young lady asked me to hand over to you!" The young lady said, 'The Selina Clan will forever stand unconditionally behind you, Barney is your forever home!'" Desa pulled out an exquisite small box from his bosom and handed it to Arthur, then exclaimed loudly. Damn it! The Swordsmanship Chief of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman, the old butler of Lord Bern, and the three nephews of Lord Ernest, Lord Dibwa, and Lord Bass were completely stunned. Six people stood there dumbfounded, staring at Arthur with disbelief on their faces. They could not imagine what charm Arthur possessed to gain such favor from that female barbarian. The family heritage had been given. The Core Mystical Arts of the family had been given. Why don't you just give the Selina Clan as well! Oh, you're already unconditionally behind Arthur, and Barney is his home now, so no worries, your favoritism towards Arthur is known to all. These six nobles muttered to themselves in their hearts. Because the gift they had estimated now needed further enhancements. Not only because Desa had brought out the

Core Mystical Arts of the Selina Clan. But also because of the attitude of the Selina Clan. None of those present wanted to provoke that female barbarian. While these six nobles were individually contacting the heads of their families, Arthur had a moment of confusion in his heart— What have I been working so hard for? It seems I could just cling to my grandfather's coattails and coast through life? I wonder if my granddad, the Sea King, has any connections with the female members of the South Los House and the Golden Lion Family? If so... I really could just coast through life! Sorry! I was wrong before; I shouldn't have called you a scumbag, you are just the Sea King among gentlemen! So, my grandfather, please keep it up! Arthur's silent blessings were sent in an instant, yet his face remained solemn as he accepted the secret technique from Desa. "Thank you, Miss Selina, for your support. Arthur Kredos will remember this in his heart," said the young 'Spirit Medium' formally. This formality was not just out of mutual respect or simply knowing his grandfather's relation with the other party, but more so... Trust! Yes, trust! Only now did Arthur snap back to reality, understanding why his grandfather explicitly said "go to Barny". Clearly, he was secretly informing him that this was his fallback. When facing danger in South Los or lacking a place to belong, he could go there. This was the ace up Old Charlie's sleeve for him. With such a card at hand, Arthur's attitude was absolutely proper, inviting Desa to sit by his side, as well as the two strongmen. This scene made the Swordsmanship Chief of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman, the old butler of Lord Bern, and the three nephews of Lord Ernest, Lord Dibwa, and Lord Bass even more restless. Little Lisop saw this scene. Fengter saw it as well. The two young men, who had just enjoyed a pleasant chat, exchanged glances and decided to intensify the lesson for these six, so they both gestured towards the courtyard simultaneously. Immediately, servants from both families entered carrying chests. The chests from the two families were not as large or outrageous as a carriage. But... Many! Each family had five chests large enough to contain an adult, and each chest was carried by two strongmen into the hall. Bang, bang, bang! The heavy sounds merged into one. Then, Little Lisop and Fengter stood on either side of a row of chests and opened them simultaneously. The next moment— Golden light shone brilliantly, dazzlingly bright.

Chapter 447 Arthur: Facing the Curse, I Have Expert Solutions!

Ten boxes were lined up in a row, Little Lisop and Fengter stood to the left and right, opening the boxes one by one. Gold coins! Full boxes of gold coins shone with the unique luster of gold. Hiss! The sight made the merchants inhale sharply in surprise. Previously, the value represented by the books was something they couldn't gauge, but in front of them now were solid gold coins, whose value they knew all too well. They fixed their gaze on the coins, quickly estimating their number. At least 2000 gold coins in each box. Ten boxes meant that was... 20000?! Upon reaching this conclusion, many merchants had envy and jealousy flashing in their eyes. But not greed. Perhaps they felt it inside, but they would never show it. They had already heard of the 'Lady of the Eternal Night's' methods, and now they understood that there was also a 'Spirit Medium' from South Los behind her. 'It seems that the rumors of being 'kept' could be true!' Many merchants thought to themselves. Meanwhile, they began shuffling further into the corners. In the current setting, this was not the place for them to 'assert themselves'. Hadn't they seen Brule cowering there like a quail? Seeing Brule's figure, some merchants squinted their eyes, a different idea brewing in their minds. And Brule? He was certainly aware of these gazes. But now, the wealthy merchant had no time to care about them. He was so regretful he wanted to slap himself. He wanted to question why he had become momentarily complacent and shortsighted. Look at the situation now! He and the 'Lady of the Eternal Night' were worlds apart; how did he dare to entertain the thought of replacing her? 'Damn it! Damn it!' The wealthy merchant cursed himself repeatedly,

sweat breaking out on his forehead. He was looking for a way to keep himself 'safe'. This merchant was no fool, now seeing the 'embarrassment' of the Nobles of South Los, he finally found his place. Baron Korol's and Baron Hausman's Swordsmanship Chiefs, Lord Bern's old butler, and the three nephews of Lords Ernest, Dibwa, and Bass were in no mood to pay attention to the cornered merchants, not even the famed Brule meant much in the eyes of these six. The intensity that Little Lisop and Fengter imposed upon the six was keenly felt. Each of them felt their throats going dry. Particularly, the old butler from the Bern Family felt the world spinning around him. Because he was fully aware of the financial state of the Bern Family. If this continues... The Bern Family might be finished! While the other five Noble families were not in such dire straits, they too were sorely grieved—Baron Korol's and Baron Hausman's Swordsmanship Chiefs were quietly discussing the situation with their loyal followers through Messenger Stones. But the three nephews of Lords Ernest, Dibwa, and Bass looked at each other in dismay. Because they had already gotten their answer from their uncles. In short, their uncles believed the gifts given were sufficient but also demanded the preservation of the family's dignity. If they failed to do so, they would face the family's punishment! This kind of demanding requirement left all three young men bewildered. They vaguely felt that someone was playing tricks, but the arrow was already on the bow... Suddenly, Lord Dibwa's nephew thought of something and boldly said, "We have not formally thanked Lord Kledos for saving our lives." Lord Bass's nephew immediately nodded. "That's right, saving a life is like being reborn to new parents, and such a debt of gratitude must be formally and grandly acknowledged." After speaking, the two exchanged a glance and took a step forward. Lord Ernest's nephew then protested, "Hold on for me, the three of us have sworn to become sworn brothers of different surnames. Your reborn parents are my own birth parents, so—we go together." Lord Ernest's nephew shouted loudly. Without delay, Lord Dibwa's and Lord Bass's nephews turned to look at Lord Ernest's nephew. 'Have you no shame at all!' 'Does shame fill your stomach? My uncle told me to figure it out on my own, wanting to maintain the Otester Family's dignity without wanting to give more! And if I can't do it, I'll probably be exiled. What can I do? Isn't it the same for you?' Lord Ernest's nephew shrugged. Lord Dibwa's and Lord Bass's nephews displayed a look of helplessness in their eyes. All three were in the same boat. All three felt that even though they were far down the line of succession and would likely never inherit the family estates, and they had declared that they would become 'Wanderer Knights' in half a year, someone still didn't trust them and wanted to use this opportunity to completely remove them from the list of heirs. Of course, what mattered most was that their uncles had silently permitted this. Grief surged in their hearts. Eventually, it turned into helplessness. And then... A hint of hatred as well. After all, their fathers had contributed to their titles, and their uncles had promised to take care of them. Even if they became "Wanderer Knights," they should at least receive an "Initial Startup Fund," even if it's just a suit of armor. But their uncle clearly wasn't willing to give even that suit of armor. The three glanced at each other, and then, they all saw that touch of unwillingness to accept this. Afterward, without any hesitation, the three of them approached Arthur— "I thank you for saving my life, and I am willing to follow you, Lord Kledos." "Having been saved by you, with no way to repay this debt, I am willing to join your ranks and charge into battle for you." "These two are my sworn brothers; by saving them, you saved me. I will swear loyalty to you, and this loyalty shall never waver for as long as I live." The three young nobles knelt on one knee, drew their swords, and raised them high over their heads as they chanted in unison— "I, Goodrian Ernest, do swear by 'my own name,' taking pride in my bloodline, to the man before me, Arthur Kredos, I shall remain loyal, fearless, and fight until death—Glory is my life!" "I, Erwin Dibwa, do swear by 'my own name,' taking pride in my bloodline, to the man before me, Arthur Kredos, I shall remain loyal, fearless, and fight until death—Glory is my life!"

"I, Zhukov Bass, do swear by 'my own name,' taking pride in my bloodline, to the man before me, Arthur Kledos, I shall remain loyal, fearless, and fight until death—Glory is my life!" The Lionheart Ceremony! Chanting the "Lionheart Ceremony" in Glyphic Language immediately triggered the radiance of their spirituality. Arthur stepped in front of the three, looking down at their young faces, he felt their resentment and also their expectation. 'Do they want to borrow my "power"? Then... This "power," I lend to you!' Arthur responded to them with his gaze while verbally expressing it directly. "I am looking forward to it!" Having said that, he took each of their swords in turn, touched them to their shoulders, and then flipped the hilt upward. When the three received their longswords again, the glow representing their spirituality melded into Arthur's body. The ceremony is complete! Edwin immediately brought over chairs, allowing the three young men, along with Little Lisop and Fengter, to sit around Arthur. Next, everyone's gaze turned toward the old steward of the Bern Family. They looked at the Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman. Under everyone's watchful eyes, the Swordsmanship Chief of Baron Korol took off one of his rings, and the Swordsmanship Chief of Baron Hausman removed a bracelet from his wrist. One could tell that the Swordsmanship Chiefs were noticeably pained by this. The corners of their eyes twitched slightly. And what about that old steward of the Bern Family? His eyes rolled back, and he fainted to the ground. Thud! With a dull sound, the old steward collapsed. It was clear to everyone that the old steward intended to "renege on his debts." Instantly, the Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman were taken aback, and then they wished they had thought of this tactic themselves. As for the old steward of the Bern Family lying on the ground, he was inwardly smug. Even, inadvertently, the corners of his mouth curved upwards. Arthur saw that smug smile. So, very soon, the old steward could no longer smile. Because— "This old steward is possessed, Edwin, go to the washroom and fetch two pounds of faeces, and pour it into him, that will cure him," Arthur said directly. Immediately, the hall went quiet. And the old steward sprang up from the ground. "No! I'm not possessed!" "How could a person who's possessed claim they're possessed? Little Lisop, Fengter, go hold him down. If he keeps spouting nonsense, Wiggins, you smack him with the sole of your shoe." Arthur commanded thus, and then with a kind expression, he softly spoke to the old steward— "Please rest assured, I am the best Spirit Medium in South Los! I will surely relieve you of your possession!" Having said this, Arthur gestured with his hand. Little Lisop, Fengter, and Wiggins rushed forward, dragging the old steward, who was howling like a ghost, into the washroom. Hearing the miserable cries of the old steward, the Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman who had just breathed a sigh of relief, felt their hairs stand on end. If they were to be force-fed faeces, they'd rather choose death. When they saw Arthur's seemingly amused glance turn their way, both men hurriedly held the removed items in their palms and respectfully presented them. As Arthur picked up these two items, his gaze turned to the corner belonging to the merchants. Among the merchants... One person was missing! These merchants, together with their families and servants, totaled 231 people, he remembered very clearly. The servants were all outside, with only 42 inside the hall. And now, there were only 41 people remaining. Aside from the person who disappeared, among those 42 just now, there were 4 who had secretly used 'Messenger Stones.' 'Tsk, what a lively affair,' Arthur thought to himself, as a black crow at the highest point of the manor spread its wings. Passing messages, he could understand. But this kind of fleeing? Now that was interesting. Arthur suddenly grew curious. Then, as the vision from Fujin came back— The eyes of the young 'Spirit Medium' narrowed suddenly.

Chapter 448: Backstab!

Walsh carefully made his way towards the location he had arranged to meet with that Noble. The spot was a dense forest on the side of the road between Kemir Manor and South Los, which appeared no different from the other dense forests from the outside—utterly ordinary. Only those who had entered this forest before, with guidance from someone familiar, could discover the hidden mechanism—

"Death is as common and as special as breathing." Remembering the Noble's words and guidance, Walsh climbed towards the thickest tree. Once he reached a tree hollow concealed by branches, he didn't immediately reach inside, but instead gently tapped one side of the trunk. Thud! Thud thud! One tap followed by two more. Each tap was very heavy. Suddenly— Hiss, hiss! In the hissing unique to snakes, a camouflaged poisonous snake that blended with the color of the tree bark and branches emerged from the tree hollow and coiled around a branch. The snake flicked its tongue, its cold eyes fixed intently on Walsh. Under the watchful gaze of the snake, however, Walsh calmly reached into the tree hollow and began to search. When his fingers found an indentation, he immediately flipped it upward. Click! Amidst the sound of the machinery, the obstructing plank completely moved aside, revealing the hidden Messenger Stone inside. Walsh took out the Messenger Stone, verified it was correct, and quickly climbed down from the tree. Throughout the process, there wasn't a trace of trembling, nor any hint of fear. Because, the Noble had told him there was no need to fear. He firmly believed that the Noble would not harm him. And indeed, this proved true. The snake seemed to have no desire to attack. After Walsh took the Messenger Stone, it returned to the tree hollow. "Mr. Glast, this is Walsh!" Beneath the tree, concealed within the tree's shadow, the young member of the Pale Hand reached out to the Noble. The Messenger Stone quickly started to flicker. "Walsh, did anything unexpected happen over there?" The deep voice carried a hint of concern. "No! Everything is normal! Moreover, I have made a significant discovery!" The young member of the Pale Hand felt moved, then quickly recounted the situation he had witnessed firsthand. "The Lady of the Eternal Night is pregnant with the child of South Los's 'Spirit Medium'?" Clearly, the member of the Pale Hand on the other end of the Messenger Stone was also taken aback by this news, so much so that the tone involuntarily rose, adding a sharpness to it. However, Walsh did not notice these subtleties. The young member of the Pale Hand simply continued affirmatively. "Yes, sir. The Lady of the Eternal Night's morning sickness is quite severe." "Is that so?" The voice on the other side lowered again. Then, it directly commanded— "Walsh, go to location number 2 now. There you will meet someone. No need for any conversation, just give the Messenger Stone to them, then return to South Los and continue to stay undercover." "Yes, sir." The young member of the Pale Hand immediately set into motion. Unlike location number 1, location number 2 was beside a small river between South Los and Kemir Manor. When the young member of the Pale Hand arrived, someone was already standing there. The person had an ordinary appearance and wore the distinct attire of a servant, even though the bowtie at the collar was long gone, Walsh could still confirm this detail. "A noble's servant? A merchant's attendant?" The young member of the 'Pale Hand' subconsciously guessed, but his actions were swift. He remembered Mr. Glast's words, exchanged no words, and simply handed the Messenger Stone to the other person before turning away. But the next moment— Puff! The young 'Pale Hand' member looked down at the Longsword piercing through his chest, his face a mask of shock and confusion. Walsh wanted to turn around to see the person behind him. He wanted to ask why they had attacked him. Were they not afraid of Mr. Glast holding them accountable? But the person behind him didn't give the young 'Pale Hand' member a chance, pulled out the Longsword, and kicked Walsh in the lower back. Bang! Walsh's body flew up and then fell into the river, quickly disappearing from sight. Soon after, the Messenger Stone flickered again. "It truly is 'Bloody John' indeed. Even against an unsuspecting child, there is no mercy shown. Are all

pirates that terrifying?" The voice from within the Messenger Stone grew sharper, carrying an unmistakable hint of laughter. "Heh, compared to you, a freak who harms his own followers, every pirate would seem like a kind-hearted saint," dressed in servant's attire and just having slipped away from the grand hall of Kemir Manor, 'Bloody John' chuckled coldly. "You will never understand the allure of death. Just as you do not comprehend the ceremony that death requires—Walsh was a fine young man, who was loyal to me, appreciated me, and even wished to die for me. So... I chose to let him die for me. Isn't that a kindness?" the member of the 'Pale Hand' on the other side of the Messenger Stone retorted. 'Bloody John' clearly didn't appreciate such twisted words. The pirate leader chuckled coldly once more and decided not to linger on this topic, saying directly— "The item you wanted has been presented as a gift to the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los by the Swordsmanship Chief of Baron Haus, so let us cancel our arrangement. I am not confident in retrieving that item from the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los." "Oh? Is the famed 'Bloody John' giving up just like that? This is the clue to the 'Key' of the Pirate King's Treasure you've been obsessed about." The voice on the other side of the Messenger Stone was full of amusement. "Do you know why I am so renowned?" 'Bloody John' curved his lips into a smirk. "Why?" The voice on the other side of the Messenger Stone was curious. "Because I have lived long enough—the sea is never short of rising stars, but most of the time, they are just short-lived spirits. I, on the other hand, am long-lived. Because I am cautious, I avoid any unnecessary risks. Even if... it is the treasure I have long chased." Having said that, 'Bloody John' did not waste further words with the person on the other side of the Messenger Stone, raised his hand to crush the Messenger Stone, and then turned into a puddle of water merging into the little river, disappearing from sight. He had already delayed too much time. Though he didn't believe that anyone would notice one missing person among so many in such chaotic circumstances, a lingering unease still made the pirate leader exceedingly cautious. Just as the pirate leader disappeared, a Crow flew across the sky, and from the bushes emerged the head of a dog. Shortly thereafter, the Crow flew off, while the dog burrowed deeper into the bushes. Only leaving behind— A Swordsman wrapped in bandages, slowly emerging.

Chapter 449 Fishing!

With heavy and somewhat sluggish steps, the Bandage Swordsman searched along the riverbank. "Wait for me! Big bro, wait for me!" Eli, nimble with a lively gaze and dressed in hunting attire, sported a small mustache. He suddenly sprang out, holding a rabbit in his hand. "This rabbit is really plump! Add some potatoes, and we can feast again! However, compared to rabbit meat, beef or mutton would be tastier for stew, what a pity we don't have more money. By the way, big bro, do you need to change your bandages? They're getting a bit dirty." Eli rambled on. It was hard to imagine him as a stalker. The Bandage Swordsman completely ignored the other. Not just out of habit, but also because he knew why his follower had come—to dig up more information from him. Moreover, the strength he demonstrated made the other feel secure. Similarly, he was happy to glean some information from his follower's mouth. Thus, a mutually beneficial, odd partnership was born. "Eh?!" Eli suddenly stopped his babble. His ears kept moving, and soon after, the eyes of the stalker with a part-time job as an intelligence trafficker locked onto the source of the sound. On a riverbank around a corner, a person lay prone, his back covered in fresh blood, continuously groaning. Eli normally wouldn't bother with such 'dying people.' Because such people were very likely not going to survive. And... Such people inevitably carried trouble. Maybe even big trouble. He had no interest in getting himself tangled in big troubles. He was just a part-time 'intelligence trafficker,' not some big shot. Making a bit of money to spend was fine, but he would never dare to risk his life if something really happened... "Hey, hey, big bro! Don't do it! You

can't save that kind of person!" While Eli was thinking, he saw that the Bandage Swordsman had already started walking towards that person, and immediately, the stalker-cum-intelligence trafficker started shouting repeatedly. However, while his mouth shouted, his mind began to scheme. Obviously, the Bandage Swordsman was here for this person. Who was this person? Did they carry any valuable information? Almost instantly, driven by professional instinct, the stalker's eyes gleamed. He didn't dare take risks. But the Bandage Swordsman was different. His boss not only had a mysterious background but also possessed great strength. Simply put, hiding under the tall man, even if the sky fell, there would be someone to hold it up. The Bandage Swordsman knew the thoughts of the man behind him. But he didn't care. What he cared more about was whether Walsh could be saved. He was very interested in the news about 'Pale Hand' and that person named Glast. However, when the Bandage Swordsman examined Walsh's wound, he was surprised to find— 'Stabbed off target?' Immediately, the Bandage Swordsman silently frowned. With the strength of an 'Entrant' like 'Bloody John,' would his longsword stab off target? Impossible! Unless it was... Intentional! 'Tsk tsk, this just got interesting!' After considering something in his mind, the Bandage Swordsman pretended to be unaware and asked Eli for some ointment. After applying it, watching Walsh who was starting to regain consciousness, the Bandage Swordsman's raspy voice rose— "Have you been betrayed too?" ... "Bloody John"? Ha, more like an old mudfish in the sea! Truly slippery as an eel!" Arthur lamented in his heart. The opponent not only fled when the situation turned awry, but also casually 'planted a pin'. Walsh didn't die. What would happen? Not to mention the larger implications, at the very least, it would be quite uncomfortable for that Glast there, and even under the deliberate provocation of the other party, it would become a piece to be used against Glast. Whether used or not, it's necessary to have it! Arthur was very clear about this 'Bloody John's' psychology. At the same time, he slightly adjusted the plan in his mind. The reason the Bandage Swordsman appeared again was to attract the 'Pale Hand'—the Bandage Swordsman was attractive to the 'Death Poetry Society', and naturally to the similarly death-longing 'Pale Hand'. So, after Arthur deduced that the Baron Kemir's notes on Glast might indicate a member of the 'Pale Hand', and after spotting the stalker, he immediately arranged for the Bandage Swordsman to set out. The Spirit Medium of South Los intended to fish. As for the just-appeared Kuliqi? Of course, to follow the fool, Walsh. However, circumstances have changed now. It's not that Arthur doesn't plan to fish anymore, but that Arthur plans to bait two fish with one worm. Glast, he intended to fish. 'Bloody John', he also intended to fish. The former just needed to be interested in the Bandage Swordsman, and smelling the scent would rush over. The latter? Arthur didn't believe the other would let Walsh simply fend for himself. Recollecting how the other kicked Walsh into the river water and then turned into a pool of water to leave, Arthur was quite certain that the opponent had left some contingency on Walsh. Regarding this, Arthur was full of anticipation. But that was later. Now? Arthur looked toward the ring sent by Baron Korol's Swordsmanship Chief and the bracelet sent by Baron Hausman's Swordsmanship Chief. Especially the latter, Arthur was quite curious about what it could be that made Glast so concerned that he would even swap it for a clue to the Pirate King's treasure with 'Bloody John'. However, despite his anticipation, Arthur wouldn't show a tiny bit of it on the surface. He first picked up the ring— [Name: Fiery Ring] [Type: Jewelry Item] [Quality: Secret Technique] [Attributes: 1, Flame Arrows; 2, Fireball Technique] [Remarks: At the start of the Seven Years' War, the Earl of South Los had these rings crafted to demonstrate his power and strengthen the unity among his nobles. However, due to a miscalculation in the materials required, instead of crafting 27 rings, only 11 were made, but you cannot deny, these are high-quality items among the secret techniques] ... [Flame Arrows: Stores 6 flame arrows; 6/6] [Fireball Technique: Stores 1 fireball; 1/1] (Note: Once the Flame Arrows and Fireball

Technique are used up, they can be recharged with gold coins or sunlight) ... 'This Old Earl of South Los really does embody the noble's style!' After muttering to himself, Arthur directly picked up the second item. A bracelet made of leather and metal. [Name: Islan's Leap] [Type: Jewelry Item] [Quality: Secret Technique] [Attributes: 1, Agility; 2, Jump] [Remarks: Islan was a swordsman who emerged during the mass conscription of the Seven Years' War, with humble beginnings, but exceptional talent. He got recognized by the Old Lion soon after entering the battlefield and subsequently learned the soldier version of 'Swift Bird Swordsmanship'. Later, he took on the role of training new recruits, but during a raid on the West Coast, he perished in a sea of fire, leaving only this bracelet behind...] ... [Agility: You will become more agile] [Jump: You will jump higher and farther] ... Looking at the bracelet, Arthur's brows furrowed in thought.

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“ The bracelet before her was undoubtedly a prop of secret technique caliber. For members of the Mystic Side, it was valuable enough. But for a member of 'Pale Hand' lurking in the shadows, it was somewhat unimpressive. Therefore— 'Does the name Islan hold any special meaning? Or... Is it a trap?' Arthur thought to himself, his gaze lingering on the nickname 'Old Lion' for a second before putting himself in the perspective of Glast. The latter had sent out a rookie like Walsh. Clearly unafraid of any exposure. Or rather... Welcoming Walsh's exposure was precisely what he had wanted. They knew that if Walsh were exposed, he and Marinda, in their quest to root out the one behind the scenes, would certainly play the long game and not move against Walsh. And that would be walking right into Walsh's trap! The purpose was to use Walsh to draw his and Marinda's attention to 'Bloody John', and it would be even better if they acted against 'Bloody John'. A 'Grand Funeral' would surely follow. Clearly, 'Bloody John' had realized this, hence that slight deviation, and prepared for a counterattack. 'What a bunch of old silver coins! To plot against a young man like me, completely lacking in martial virtues!' Arthur thought to himself, yet showed no sign of it. He had decided that after spotting the stalker, he wouldn't give away even the slightest hint; after all, as a young man, his lack of experience meant his full attention was on the safety within the manor and on Marinda who was pregnant. Glast's strategy? 'Bloody John's countermeasures? He didn't know! He wasn't even clear on what was happening. This young, upright, naive, and kind 'Spirit Medium' was entirely focused on Marinda! Therefore... With the reminder from him, Marinda could quietly investigate behind the scenes. More? All were Marinda's own decisions, what did they have to do with Arthur Kredos? With this in mind, Arthur raised his head to look upstairs. Between the door crevices, Linda, feeling guilty, retracted her figure as Arthur looked up. But Marinda did not move, watching Arthur's seemingly smiling expression, instinctively feeling that Arthur was plotting something mischievous. However, she did not have time to inquire further. Because— Julie had arrived. Representing the host of South Los, the Countess was here. Today, the Female Swordmaster was still dressed in her Swordsman's Outfit, but adorned with a pure black overcoat. The overcoat, made of wool, bore embroidery of thunder and storm at its cuffs. The left cuff featured a white lightning bolt. The right cuff had a grey swirl representing a storm. The two symbols intertwined as the Swordsmanship Chief moved forward. Thunder, Storm! The family crest of the South Los House. Some called it 'Thunder Storm', others 'Storm Thunder', but members of the South Los Family preferred to refer to themselves as 'Descendant of the Thunder God' or 'Child of the Storm'. Which title to use? That depended on which branch of the South Los Family you were dealing with. However, this was a question to ponder only during the Silver Age. Following the end of the Seven Years' War, the 'Storm' branch of the South Los family had already suffered heavy casualties on the battlefield, leaving only the

'Thunder' branch. In fact, many in the current South Los Family consider the 'Storm' to merely be an extension of 'Thunder'. Dressed in an exquisite pure white Swordsman's Outfit, Marinda descended from the upstairs with a smile, greeting the Swordsmanship Chief who represented the Earl of South Los; golden wheat sheaves dangled from the red ribbon on her chest, bouncing up and down with each step of the noble lady, attracting everyone's attention to Marinda at that moment. Her delicate features and unique presence became even more pronounced when donned in that pure white Swordsman's Outfit. Especially those deep blue eyes, which effortlessly drew people in. But no one present dared to let their thoughts wander, Because— `` A pitch-black figure appeared beside the white figure. All of Arthur's attention was directed at Marinda, with a tenderness in his eyes that let everyone know what to do. If they did not know? Then Malz, Bob, Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, Haywood, Little Lisop, Fengter, Goodrian Ernest, Erwin Dibwa, Zhukov Bas, and Desa from Barny would let them know. The Countess's Female Swordmaster glanced inconspicuously over her shoulder at the person behind Arthur before her gaze settled on Marinda— "Marinda, today you are a breath of fresh air to everyone here and will surely be remembered for a lifetime!" With that, the Female Swordmaster's gaze shifted to Arthur. It was obviously meaningful. It served as a joke to lighten the mood. Arthur responded with a smile and a nod, signaling his acknowledgment. Marinda, on the other hand, warmly took the Female Swordmaster's hand and said, "Sister Julie, the ceremony will not start for a while; let's go upstairs and rest a bit first." The Female Swordmaster did not refuse. It was not only proper etiquette but also because she felt Marinda gently squeeze her hand several times. Clearly, there was something afoot. Subsequently, the Female Swordmaster ascended the stairs alongside Marinda. Thanks to the considerable fortune invested in constructing Kemir Manor, otherwise, with the Female Swordmaster's physique, it would have been impossible to walk shoulder to shoulder with Marinda. At a usual height of 2.5 meters and a robust build, this lady always seemed like a wall at any given time. Walking? That would be a moving wall. Linda, evidently seeing such a tall and sturdy Female Swordmaster for the first time, could not conceal her surprise but didn't panic. Instead, she greeted her very politely. "Hello, my name is Linda Camille." Camille? In an instant, the Female Swordmaster knew the origin of the young girl before her and immediately a smile appeared on her face. "I have met Ms. Camille several times, and she indeed left a deep impression on me. Whether it's her abilities or her demeanor, she is truly exceptional. At that time, the 'Staff Group' hoped Ms. Camille would join, but regrettably, she turned them down." As she spoke, a look of regret crossed the Female Swordmaster's face. "Mother has too much to deal with. She's even reducing her sleeping hours every day. Recently, she has been away on business trips all the time." Linda looked at the Female Swordmaster apologetically, feeling sorry for her mother's absence. This caused the Female Swordmaster to wave her hands repeatedly, indicating she meant no harm and was merely asking out of curiosity. Meanwhile, Marinda whispered to Linda— "Dear, could you get me a glass of orange juice?" "Of course." Linda nodded with a smile. She clearly understood that she couldn't be part of the upcoming conversation. And Linda was not bothered by that. After all, Arthur was downstairs. If possible, she would prefer to spend more time with Arthur, as... Family. Once the room was left to just Marinda and the Female Swordmaster, Marinda looked at her with a serious expression and sincere eyes. The Female Swordmaster immediately tensed up. She knew Marinda's way of doing things; if Marinda showed such an expression, it had to be a matter of great importance. And indeed, it was— "I hope I can bear Arthur's child. No! To be precise, I hope to carry Arthur's child right now!" Her straightforward declaration left the Female Swordmaster frozen in place. After a good ten seconds, the Female Swordmaster finally scratched her head and asked in bewilderment— "Do you want me to drug Arthur? That doesn't seem right." While saying it wasn't right, the Female Swordmaster's eyes gleamed

with excitement, and her lips curled into a grin she couldn't suppress. Moreover, the next moment, she pulled out a potion from her belt pouch and whispered— "Potion Master Quin's masterpiece, drink this and you'll be successful on the first try!"