

Great Master 47

Chapter 47 The Faker Painter Creates Real Miracles!

Five young couples, holding their children, stood in front of No. 2 Cork Street.

The mothers held their children, faces brimming with loving smiles.

The fathers stood in front, the one at the forefront was the cleanest dressed of them all, but even so, patches were still visible on his elbows and knees. In the basket he carried were eggs and bread.

These were all gifts of gratitude.

They were also the most precious things that they could offer.

And they?

They were the parents from yesterday's baby theft case.

Looking at the people before him, Arthur felt his palms begin to sweat slightly.

He, was nervous.

Faced with people harboring malice, he could be ruthless, showing no mercy as he took them down.

But when faced with people filled with good intentions, coming to express their thanks, he seemed a bit at a loss.

People are just that contradictory.

Arthur, even more so.

At this moment, he somewhat regretted the 'publicity' in front of No. 14 Cork Street yesterday.

It must have been there that these parents got wind of him.

As for the newspapers?

Given the economic state of these five families, they couldn't read or write.

"Thank you for all that you've done for us!"

The father, acting as a representative, handed over the basket to Arthur, then with all the others, bowed deeply before leaving with their families.

There were no further pleasantries, no opportunistic sycophants hanging around.

What remained was a simple and unadorned thanks.

They were not good with words.

They were not adaptable.

They only knew to work hard.

The fathers worked hard to earn wages for their children, the mothers tried their best to contribute to the household while caring for the children. They looked forward to their children's growth and did everything they could to provide them with the best possible living conditions.

Arthur's gaze turned to the infants quietly sleeping in their mothers' arms, to the smiles overflowing on the faces of the five mothers, to the faces of the five fathers, not sharply dressed, but still full of vigor.

He watched the backs of the five couples holding their children under the morning sun.

That morning sun seemed, at that moment, to spread its warm glow, turning into...

The truest form of hope!

A hope entirely bestowed upon the family by the children.

Even with its ups and downs, even with difficulties, for their children, the parents' hope was always there.

Perhaps the parents of these five families could not read.

But perhaps their children might have the chance.

One day in the future, their children might read the newspapers to their parents, recounting the amusing events happening in South Los.

After dinner, they would support their parents on a walk outside.

They too would become unadaptable.

Because, they were not articulate, they only knew hard work.

But,

Everything would get better, right?

"Wishing you all peace and prosperity."

Arthur, holding the basket, bowed slightly to the departing figures then nodded to the curious neighbors around, who watched with goodwill as he returned inside No. 2 Cork Street.

Arthur, with the basket in hand, headed straight for the kitchen.

He did not refuse the gift, because it represented the heartfelt gratitude of everyone involved.

What might seem like a kind refusal would only hurt the self-esteem of the five families and could lead to gossip. Arthur did not want to see that happen.

And further...

Food is a necessity of life.

And breakfast is the start of a pleasant day.

Underneath the basket of eggs and whole wheat bread, Arthur discovered a pack of cornmeal.

After a moment of thought, he boiled the water and then added the cornmeal,

Continuously stirring, it quickly became thick and aromatic.

The forearm-thick, one-kilogram whole wheat bread, as plain as the families who had come to give thanks, was cut into six pieces using a knife and heated in a skillet before being placed on plates.

Then came the fried eggs and sausages.

The six fried eggs also came from the basket.

The half-pound sausage was a gift from the butcher's shop yesterday.

These were naturally all for Arthur alone.

With his "Physique" increased by 0.1, Arthur felt his appetite had gotten even better.

Once the food was plated, he served it to the dining table nearby.

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Honey syrup was poured over the corn mush and as Arthur stirred it, the sweetness immediately wafted out. Arthur took a sip.

Sweet, not hot.

Straight away, it brought a contented squint to Arthur's eyes.

Without realizing it, his mouth began humming a tune, "Hear your slurp, just like eating young snails. The blue fish are tough, don't chop feet when marinating, with one straw, your sudden hunger..."

He picked up a piece of bread and dipped it straight into the corn porridge, mingling with the honey syrup on top. Once in his mouth, it was another flavor altogether.

The sweetness did not mask the flavor of the wheat, and on the contrary, the crispy sensation of the bread's crust, just fried in the pan, truly whetted Arthur's appetite.

Arthur ate heartily, slurping away.

Every so often, he took a bite of sausage, swallowed a fried egg.

Arthur finished his breakfast at a rapid pace and was about to grab a cup of water for a break when suddenly text appeared before him—

[A simple breakfast made with grateful ingredients has made you feel joyful; XP+5]

...

"Food!"

"So it's this kind of food!"

Arthur looked at the text before him, his face showing a slight shock.

Then, he let out a sigh of relief, as if both relieved and a bit moved.

He simply couldn't accept 'delicacies' akin to maggots.

But if food was like this...

It seemed there was much room for maneuver!

Arthur thought it was time to meet with Scott and discuss this additional method of gaining XP, which still required Scott's cooperation—he would have Scott post an 'advertisement' in The Horn Report.

Not an overt one, but one subtly embedded in the regular 'Spirit Medium Case Investigation' reports, introducing subtly anyone looking for consultation with 'Spirit Medium' Arthur Kredos must, aside from the necessary consulting fee, bring a serving of their homemade food.

As for the excuse?

Naturally, it's about sensing goodwill or a necessity for exorcism.

While thinking, Arthur headed towards the basement—The Cork Street No. 2's hallway machinery hadn't been repaired, and he intended to spend the whole day fixing it completely.

Otherwise, Arthur always felt like something was missing in terms of security.

He moved a shelf piled with clutter on the basement level and behind it was a secret room.

Or rather, the real weapon storage of No. 2 Cork Street.

Here, a large amount of gunpowder, bullets, and firearms were stored.

Beginning with the handgun Arthur often used, to the Thunder Gun, rifles, and more, there was everything one could need.

Even, Arthur saw two small Emperor Cannons, next to which was a box of six-pound cannonballs and various artillery tools.

Beyond these firearms, there were the melee weapons, with the style of the Holy Empire Era's knight swords, lances, infantry spears, short swords, and a hand-and-a-half sword that combined the styles of a two-handed sword and a war sword—Of course, even now, there are those who stubbornly call it a bastard sword.

After selecting an appropriate lance, he left 'Old Charlie's Armory' and took a pack of flintstones directly from the rack outside, picked up the kerosene in the corner, and returned to the ground level.

Preparing the lance, flintstones, and kerosene was the simplest part.

Carpentry and lacquer work, for a No. 2 Cork Street that wasn't truly broken, were not difficult either.
Discover stories with empire

In fact, the Crimson Painting was what took Arthur most of the time.

Arthur possessed the skill [Basic Drawing].

Even if it is a skill that cannot be leveled, being at Lv1, it still meant Arthur had his own ideas.

He felt the simple crimson was too monotonous for creating an atmosphere of horror, lacking depth. A knight being dragged into the crimson would better exemplify this.

So, within the crimson, he spent a whole day drawing a knight in full armor.

But [Basic Drawing] was just that, basic, and at only Lv1, he didn't bring the envisioned knight to life—it looked more like... Zaku.

"My knight can't possibly be Zaku!"

Arthur immediately made changes.

After wasting another whole day, Arthur looked at the blue can on the canvas, and oddly enough, he seemed to hear a cry echoing in his ears—

'Loyalty! Emperor!'

Expressionless, Arthur picked up the paintbrush, dipped it liberally in red paint and smeared the entire painting red.

The original, after all, was best, wasn't it?

"How could a person possibly be omniscient?"

"This is quite alright."

Arthur shrugged, comforting himself for not having the talent for painting, and then prepared to head to the washroom—today was Saturday, the day of the 'Lady of the Long Night Salon.'

To show the proper respect for the salon's hostess, he had to groom himself.

But at this moment, text began to appear before him.

[A painting with a soul will always bring about miracles!]

[Basic Drawing Lv1→Painting Lv1]

...

When Arthur saw the text, he felt a tingling sensation on his scalp, an unexplained intuition surged within him, telling him what he needed to do and that he must act fast!

Without any hesitation, he set the recently completed painting ablaze.

In the raging fire, Arthur sighed in relief, but then his brow furrowed again.