

Great Master 481

Chapter 484: 481

Old Hunter was the eldest in Gel Town of Sebins in North County, and he was highly respected by everyone.

Of course, it wasn't just because of Old Hunter's age and charming personality, nor because he was amiable, but also because the mayor of Gel Town was his adopted son, the sheriff was another of his adopted sons, and the tax officer was yet another adopted son.

And today, the three adopted sons had gathered together, preparing to celebrate their foster father's 70th birthday.

Food and drinks were not a problem for the three important figures of Gel Town.

Even the fresh fruits and vegetables, rarely seen during winter in North County, were easily obtainable for these three figures, but their old father had 'run away from home.'

'Dear sons, your old dad has gone to the Red Rose Restaurant in South Los to eat casu marzu cheese.'

Reading the note, Gel Town's three dignitaries looked at each other, each showing a bitter smile.

The fact that their old dad knew about a restaurant in South Los did not surprise the three adopted sons.

Ever since their old dad had retired, all he did was eat; he would gather information daily on where there was delicious food and would set off with his servants.

But this time he didn't bring along any servants, and they wondered if he might have wandered too far off.

"Don't worry, Dad is fine," said the mayor of Gel Town, the eldest of them.

"He is wiser than us.

And you don't think that just because Dad is 70, you can let others take advantage of him, right?"

The mayor of Gel Town, being the eldest, said with a smile.

"Of course not.

It's just that I'm still a bit worried when Dad goes out alone.

I think I should send a team to discreetly follow him."

The Gel Town sheriff, the second son, did not disagree with his older brother but was still worried.

"We can't use anyone officially, the Earl of Sebins has been eyeing us intently."

The youngest, the Gel Town tax officer, reminded in a soft voice, then pulled out an oddly shaped gold coin.

Upon seeing this gold coin, the eldest brother hesitated.

However, he eventually nodded.

The banquet started as planned, and the fact that their old dad had run off alone to the Red Rose Restaurant in South County, South Los, to eat casu marzu cheese was not hidden.

Instead, it was spread around as an amusing tale.

But in secret, one person—

No!

More precisely, the person who was contacted quietly set off.

In the winter chill of North County, his Swift Sword emitted a pleasant humming sound.

...

At the docks of Yan Fort, although Kate was now a middle-aged man, the efficiency with which the robust Kate worked was still unmatched by many younger men.

Today was no exception.

Watching Kate work better alone than three men combined, the people around him continually cheered and clapped.

"Well done, Kate!"

"Amazing, Kate!"

The praises were unceasing, and the foreman did not stop them.

In fact, he was pleased to see such a scene.

Because Kate alone was stronger than three men.

But...

He only received the pay of one person.

This foreman wished all the dockworkers were like this.

So, seeing the approaching Kate, the foreman immediately smiled.

"Boss, I need to resign."

"I've received a message from my hometown in South Los.

They say my father is very sick.

I must go back."

Kate's words made the foreman's smile vanish as he frowned and said directly.

"If you leave now, you'll lose this month's pay."

Kate, still looking simple and honest, scratched his head and said.

"I'm resigning suddenly, so it's only right."

Having said that, Kate turned and walked away.

The foreman watched Kate's retreating figure, slapping his thigh.

He regretted not having deducted two months' worth of pay earlier.

Everyone watched as Kate boarded the ship heading to South Los.

But when people turned around, they suddenly found the foreman clutching his chest and collapsing, not moving. When someone went to check on him, they discovered the foreman had long since stopped breathing.

"The foreman is dead!"

"The foreman is dead!"

A commotion broke out on the docks of Yan Fort.

Meanwhile, the ship carrying Kate was moving further and further away.

...

In Sidon Fortress, at the Nightingale Club, Aaron woke up from under the lady and felt suffocated.

"Jasmine, you truly make me see the beauty in life."

Looking at the lady who also woke up, the young Aaron showed a handsome smile.

The lady before him couldn't help but be enticed by such a smile, but she still emphasized,

"I'm not Jasmine."

"Ah, sorry, Irene."

"I'm not Irene."

"Hill, right, Hill."

"I'm not Hill."

The lady's disappointment was evident, while Aaron, after a series of guesses, finally confirmed the lady's name and immediately wrapped his arms around her, gently kissing her forehead, continuing to talk without stopping.

"Sorry, Emily.

I was just joking with you.

I didn't mean to hurt you."

The young Aaron said, a melancholic expression in his eyes.

The lady immediately hugged Aaron.

"It's okay, I'm not hurt."

This lady said so.

Then, she asked softly.

"Molly, Irene, Hill, where are they?"

She originally did not want to ask, but these three were her best friends, and she really cared about them.

"They are all my dear sisters."

Aaron said as he got out of bed and stood up, searching for his underwear while he spoke.

"Emily, can I ask you for a favor?"

"What is it?"

"A distant relative of mine has run into some trouble in South Los, I must take a trip there—you know, despite being a distant relative, it's hard to refuse as part of the family.

So, if Molly, Irene, and Hill ask about my whereabouts, please make sure to tell them that I will be back soon."

Saying this, Aaron got dressed, picked up his pants, and jumped straight out the window.

By the time Miss Emily ran to the window, Aaron had already disappeared.

Leaving her to mutter absentmindedly—

"Aaron, Aaron."

...

"Hey, Aaron!

Long time no see.

You haven't been killed by those ladies yet, it really is fate's irony."

Old Hunter, sitting cross-legged on a rock, watched as Aaron arrived as promised and couldn't help but curl his lip—this gentleman was dressed impeccably, especially the black-framed glasses on the bridge of his nose, and his neatly groomed white hair, creating an image of a serious old man, but his casual movements and the frequent smile on his lips made it clear to those who knew him that he was a playful old man at heart.

The middle-aged man standing beside him was burly. Upon seeing Aaron, he immediately flashed a naive smile.

"Long time no see, Aaron."

Confronted with the kind-hearted Kate, young Aaron immediately stepped back, retreating to Old Hunter's side before he relaxed slightly.

"Long time no see, Kate.

But please, don't come too close.

I don't want to be contaminated with some unclear toxin."

Young Aaron's words made Kate look helpless.

"I don't poison just anyone."

"But Aaron is definitely on your list—this guy is too infuriating, I'm starting to miss that... um, what's his name?

Charlie!

Yes, Charlie!

I'm now missing Mr. Charlie.

He is the only one who can make you lose face."

Old Hunter thought for a few seconds before he remembered that name.

Instantly, Aaron sighed helplessly.

"Could we not mention that name, although I love all the ladies, I really can't risk my life gambling on this love—you know this guy, right?

He is convinced that the love he receives is true love.

He always dares to gamble his life on it.

I remember asking him once what he would do if he gambled and lost, if he died?

You guess what he answered?"

Aaron's words piqued the interest of Old Hunter and Kate.

Under their gaze, Aaron said word by word—

"He said—

'Next life, I'd still do the same!'"

Old Hunter and Kate were initially stunned.

Then, they burst out laughing.

Especially Old Hunter, who laughed until tears came out.

"You're really lucky to have met such an interesting person. Unlike my three adopted sons, they were all fun when they were young, but as they grew up, they became rigid, always terrified of upsetting me, and trying their best to make me happy—what they don't understand is that the happiest moments for me were when they were being mischievous."

Old Hunter lamented.

Kate, on the other hand, looked at Aaron with a frown.

"Don't worry, even if Charlie is interesting, I won't tell him more.

Plus, do you think anyone could trick any information out of me?"

Aaron said confidently.

Kate believed him.

The middle-aged man immediately nodded, then his naive face turned serious—

"You've all sensed it, right?"

"Yes, we've sensed it," Aaron nodded.

"Indeed, casting the bait was the right choice... Tsk, those high-and-mighty guys always can't help but interfere, always trying to assert their status.

That 'Death sensation,' heh, what do you guys think we should do?"

Old Hunter shrugged his shoulders, his face showing a deep disdain.

"It's just taking advantage of the situation.

I think they should pay a price."

Aaron's words carried a hint of grievance.

Old Hunter and Kate sensed this air of grievance.

But they were not surprised.

Because they both felt the same.

The three exchanged glances and smiled together.

"If It's provoking us, then we certainly can't just sit back and do nothing."

Finishing their words, the three laughed again.

Old Hunter raised his hand, and a door, already prepared, appeared in front of the three of them.

The three of them walked through side by side and disappeared.

At the moment the three disappeared, the Countess of South Los, who was in her study reviewing official documents, suddenly looked up.

The one-meter-four tall woman jumped down from her chair.

In a flash of light, the Countess appeared at that rocky area.

After sensing carefully, her face became solemn.

Chapter 482: When you open your eyes, welcome to this world filled with filth and yet with radiance!

...

Ascend Step!

And it was not the Ascend Step she knew.

But the level was extremely high!

What was more important was that there wasn't just one.

There were three!

'Who are they?

Who are these three?'

The Countess of South Los's expression turned solemn, and suddenly, the night skies over South Los were shrouded with dense clouds, with streaks of lightning shuttling through them like silver snakes.

Boom!

Thunder began to strike.

Winter thunder, rain follows the sound.

The downpour fell, and South Los was immediately enveloped in mist, blurring the figure of the Countess of South Los.

"Indeed, I was too hasty.

Secrecy! Continue in secrecy!"

The Countess of South Los murmured to herself.

Then, amidst the thunder, she vanished from the spot.

...

A white warhorse pulled a pure white carriage through this land of deathly stillness.

The old gentleman sitting inside rested his hands on a scepter crowned with a king's crown, while the pure silver ring inlaid with white bone on his right ring finger flickered incessantly with the tapping of his palm.

As 'Death,' the old gentleman was pondering.

It wasn't about Old Charlie's matters.

Although Old Charlie had deceived Him, He had taken His revenge.

He knew Old Charlie was very fond of his grandson.

Thus, He was waiting for the moment the other would weep and beg for His forgiveness before Him.

In the meantime, He was supposed to patiently wait.

But an inexplicable restlessness made Him confront this matter.

"What has happened?"

The old gentleman muttered to himself, then a hint of anger appeared in his eyes.

If it wasn't for that bastard Old Charlie deceiving Him, how could He possibly have failed to notice what was happening?

"You bastard!

I've changed my mind!

I'm going to take your grandson back now, make you repent before me, I want to... Hm?"

The angry old gentleman suddenly paused.

Because He noticed three people who shouldn't have been there.

"Hunter, Kate, Aaron?"

A look of astonishment appeared on the face of the old gentleman.

Then, He frowned and pondered.

...

A single monocle shone with a hint of brilliance on Old Charlie's face.

Old Charlie, who seemed to have become like Them already, had an imperceptible upturn at the corner of his mouth.

He then quickly returned to normal.

The white carriage, carrying the soul of the New King, continued on its way.

The stage was unexpectedly set.

To such a surprise, Old Charlie was immensely delighted at heart.

This was originally a tough situation.

He had even planned to sacrifice half of his body as a bargaining chip.

Now?

It was no longer needed.

Even though he would still be himself after sacrificing half of his body, with chances of winning,

if he could avoid sacrificing half of his body and maintain his original self, it was naturally better.

It wasn't just that the odds were greater.

But also because, he could face his son, daughter, and...grandson with a clear conscience.

He was still himself.

Still that 'Spirit Medium' Old Charlie.

Thinking of his grandson, who had now grasped a portion of the 'Death' power and understood everything, Old Charlie took off his monocle and no longer hid the smile at the corner of his mouth.

'Good job, my dear grandson!'

...

Next...

"It's up to Grandpa now!"

As one of the actors, he of course had to take the stage.

However, he had to make his appearance in the finale.

As for why not take the stage last?

Because that was the choice of those guys.

And him?

He chose to fish in troubled waters.

After all, the profession of a Spirit Medium was anything but arbitrary.

...

After Glast's soul was completely lost in the endless Death Qi, Arthur didn't hesitate to perform "Soul Tailoring."

It was similar to reading through previous memories.

Like watching a movie.

Only this time, the movie was chaotically edited.

One moment it showed Glast claiming to be the Witch Cleaver; the next, it switched to Glast looking longingly at a member of Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association while licking toes—an act that led Arthur to deduce, from Glast's memory images, that the member probably had athlete's foot.

In light of this, Arthur couldn't help but admire Glast.

You see, by then, the individual had completed the Pale Hand ritual and had considerable self-defense power.

Yet, for a higher order of secret techniques, they immediately humbled themselves without hesitation.

If they hadn't become arrogant later on...

It would have been an unimaginable foe.

Thinking this, Arthur frowned again.

Because he saw Glast tasting the saltiness of his first Mystic Side teacher's excrement to help cure his teacher's illness.

Arthur's frown was not only due to Glast's taste test.

It was also because of the time!

According to Glast's memory images, it was the year 108 of the Silver Era, and Glast was already 28 years old at the time.

And now, it was the winter of the year 35 in the Pioneer Era.

It's common knowledge that the Silver Age commenced in 1552 and concluded in 1755 with the start of the Seven Years' War. If you add the time of the Seven Years' War to the 35 years of the Pioneer Era, it's now the winter of 1797.

Based on this timeline, Glast was at least 157 years old.

"Jeez, this guy really lives long!"

Arthur marveled inwardly.

Then, he became even more focused.

To truly organize and subdivide 157 years of memories was no simple task, especially since these memories were disrupted and confused. Even if some were discarded, the task would still be daunting for an ordinary person, and Arthur, too, concentrated fully.

And just before dawn, Arthur finally managed to sort out some clues—

First, Glast, apart from using the name Witch Cleaver, had also gone by the name Gillgick and had once been a male Knight who had served the Golden Lion Family.

Second, Glast had stolen the secret techniques of the Pale Hand and Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association.

Third, Glast's secret base was Baron Harold's Manor, a Noble of South Los who was also considered a dud with no descendants and had been distorted by Glast.

Fourth, Glast was interested in "Islan's Leap" because the young Swordsman Islan was related to the Golden Lion Family.

These were what Arthur managed to sort out.

Of course, there were many secret technique details in between.

However, Arthur didn't even dare to touch them.

Learning secret techniques was inherently dangerous; disjointed and disorderly arcane knowledge like this was something Arthur definitely wanted to avoid. Without a prompt, he didn't wish to walk on his hands in the future.

Of course, Arthur wasn't the least bit discouraged.

Because he still had a chance: Perhaps there were some notes or something at Glast's secret base.

And where was Glast's secret base?

Arthur had a guess.

It was most likely Baron Harold's Manor.

Beyond that, Arthur could think of nowhere else.

And verifying it was also simple, after all, he had seen that mill.

But that was a matter for later!

Now?

Arthur used "Soul Charging" on Glast's residual soul.

Immediately, Glast's residual soul turned into a ping-pong ball-sized Soul Sphere.

Afterward, this Soul Sphere floated towards...

"Anna."

Chapter 483 Anxiety Thunder, Puppet Reincarnation!

...

The soul sphere, the size of a ping-pong ball, emitted a faint glow that was not obscured even in the brightly lit basement three-level laboratory at No. 2 Cork Street.

After all, it was the color of a soul.

At any time, it was special.

And when it merged into the body of 'Anna,' the terrifyingly shaped puppet immediately began to tremble.

It started subtly, a slight movement every few seconds, as if it were a heartbeat.

But then it quickly intensified, pulsing several times a second, dozens of times a second; the body of the 'Anna' puppet even began to crack under the violent shaking.

'Has it failed?'

A deep sigh rose from the bottom of Arthur's heart.

In the skills he had received, "Soul Charging" and "Soul Tailoring," "Note 7" provided a detailed explanation: A tailored soul, when attached to an object, would retain no memories, and no matter what object it attached to, the success rate was significantly reduced.

Arthur had thought that with the strength of 'Glast,' proficiency in the rituals and secret techniques of 'The Pale Hand' and 'Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association,' his soul would surely be special and perhaps could improve the success rate.

But now it seemed that he had been too optimistic.

Looking at the soulful radiance spilling from the body of 'Lady Anna,' Arthur knew that to resurrect 'Lady Anna,' he would have to find another soul.

Of course, he would also need to find a master skilled in repairing dolls to mend the damage that 'Lady Anna' had sustained from the violent vibrations.

'Tate seems to know someone like that.'

A natural thought of the owner of 'Tate's Wand Store' floated up in Arthur's mind.

And what about Fengter?

This heir of a lord, who had a fondness for puppets, was naturally proficient in puppet repair.

But Arthur wouldn't bring the shattered 'Lady Anna' to him; given his obsession with dolls, he would probably demand to know who the 'murderer' was.

Arthur could not answer that.

He surely couldn't say it was himself, could he?

No!

How could it be him.

It was all 'Glast's' fault.

He had already contributed his spoils of war, corpse, memories—why wouldn't his soul let him take advantage of it completely?

He didn't have any plans like turning it into 'biokinetic, perpetually laboring' creatures.

He had been merciful enough, hadn't he?

Yet it didn't show any gratitude.

'Hmph, the young, upright, innocent, and kind me is always getting hurt.'

Arthur grumbled to himself.

And it was at that moment—

Boom!

A thunderclap in winter suddenly sounded.

This thunder was exceptionally abrupt and very loud, so much so that Arthur could hear it clearly even three stories underground.

Similarly, the dispersing soulful glow that was about to vanish suddenly retracted completely back into the body of 'Lady Anna.'

In her eyes, which had been dull, there now appeared a spark of life.

As Arthur watched in surprise, 'Lady Anna' opened her eyes and slowly sat up.

At the same time, lines of text began to appear—

[Name: Anna Kledos]

[Type: Puppet]

[Quality: Hero]

[Attributes: 1. Puppet Body; 2. Bone Fracture; 3. Distortion; 4. Death Qi Absorption]

[Requirement: Arthur Kledos]

[Remarks: Anna was originally crafted by Old Charlie as a 'decoration.' She performed the tasks set by Old Charlie time and again with remarkable efficiency, always managing to incite terror in those under

her 'gaze.' Once you began interacting with her, her 'reputation' grew even further; nearly everyone who knew you, knew of her existence.

Fame made her different.

The infusion of 'Glast's' memory-less soul awakened her uniqueness in full.

She now possessed a soul, she acknowledged her name, and she adopted the surname 'Kledos.' Moreover, she believed that you, Old Charlie, Cassandra, Drake, Winters, and Linda Camille were all family, but she favored you most and was very willing to help you.]

...

...

...

[Puppet Body: Possessing extremely special doll traits, it can move silently, wield weapons for attack, and use some secret technique artifacts. Moreover, due to others' perception of 'Anna,' she can also perform short-distance instantaneous movement, flight, and telekinesis. Additionally, she is capable of self-repair using wood, but when facing thunder, she will move sluggishly and suffer threefold damage.]

[Bone Fracture: A residual trait from 'Glast's' soul, letting 'Anna' shatter the bones of a creature with mere touch.]

[Distortion: A residual trait from 'Glast's' soul, enabling 'Anna' to twist the perception of nearby creatures and even plunge them into illusions.]

[Death Qi Absorption: 'Glast's' soul was shrouded by the 'Death' you wield; the fear of death in others turns into primal fear. However, for 'Anna,' the 'Death' you hold is akin to familial love. After killing hostile creatures, 'Anna' can absorb their death qi filled with fear, allowing herself to grow slowly.]

(Note 1: Because of you, Anna has a fondness for swords and has mastery-level proficiency. She can also use other weapons but only at a skilled level.)

(Note 2: Anna is currently unable to understand artifacts above the Arcane Level.)

(Note 3: Instantaneous movement doesn't exceed a radius of 5 meters, flight distance doesn't exceed 50 meters, and telekinesis is similar to a common [Hand of Void].)

(Note 4: Anna's body is only at the defense level of regular walnut wood; absorbing other woods can repair her but can't change this effect - the existing level must be raised.)

(Note 5: The Bone Fracture effect is fully effective against 'Arcana Level' enemies, 90% less effective against 'Great Arcana Level' enemies, and ineffective against 'Entrants'.)

(Note 6: The range of the Distortion effect is a radius of 25 meters.)

(Note 7: Death Qi filled with fear (0/100).)

...

Arthur examined the text before him.

Meanwhile, 'Anna' stood up. She absorbed the experimental table beneath her to restore herself fully before she carefully straightened her skirt and looked towards Arthur, saying in an extremely polite and gentle voice—

"Good evening, Arthur."

That gentle voice...

No!

One should say the intonation was identical to Arthur's.

And the demeanor and conduct were brimming with the Kledos family style.

'Anna Kledos?'

Arthur silently recited the added surname in his heart, a smile surfacing on his face.

"Good evening, Anna!"

With those words, Arthur gave a slight bow.

Then, there were no more words.

'Lady Anna' stood there quietly, like a well-bred young lady, while Arthur's gaze flitted over the [Remarks] section—

'Reputation makes her different.'

Reading this sentence, Arthur felt a surge of toothache.

'I knew it, in this world full of mysteries, one is bound to encounter all sorts of odd things!

'Reputation'?

Tsk, the incense of worship... no, should it be 'faith'?

Apart from Fengter, that guy, there are actually others who keep Anna in mind?

Ugh, those guys wouldn't really be so frightened by Anna that they dare not sleep at night, too scared to go to the lavatory alone?

And there's...

Death imbued with fear!

Arthur focused on the [0/100] value, looking forward to what 'Anna' might look like after leveling up.

As if sensing some of Arthur's thoughts.

The demure 'Anna' suddenly cloaked herself in shadows, and her gentle voice turned sinister.

"Is there a bad guy who wants to make a move on our family?

Let me go eradicate their whole family!

I'll make them regret why they were ever born into this world!"

Almost instantly, the demure girl transformed into a ferocious and terrifying puppet doll.

But, Arthur was not the least bit afraid.

On the contrary, he picked up Anna and placed her on his shoulder.

"Don't worry, the Kledos family is not to be trifled with—and besides, we now have a rather important task to complete.

'Anna,' are you ready to continue making a 'big splash'?"

...

Chapter 484: My Anna Can't Be This Scary!

Arthur returned to Caesar Manor with 'Miss Anna' just before dawn.

Marinda hadn't slept.

The lady had changed into everyday clothes and was sitting there browsing through notes and books left by Geppetto.

Previously, she had only skimmed through them, hoping to assimilate them into her own knowledge; naturally, it wasn't enough just to read them hastily.

In fact, to catch up with Arthur, the lady had already reorganized her time, planning an additional two months of intense reading and extending her daily reading time from three hours to four.

Knowledge is power!

This maxim holds true especially on the Mystic Side.

It wasn't false at all.

Moreover, Marinda was reflecting on the path she had previously chosen—

Developing power wasn't wrong, but prioritizing it over enhancing her own strength was putting the cart before the horse.

It was much like the Kledos Family in South Los.

They hadn't just refrained from expanding power but had also concealed and disbanded their existing power; however, when needed, they quickly rallied their forces.

Why?

Because of strength.

True strength, totally their own.

'Originally, I only wanted to enhance my own strength, and to facilitate obtaining the materials needed for rituals, I formed what is known as the 'Lady of the Long Night Salon.'

But when did the 'Lady of the Long Night Salon' become more important than enhancing my strength?

Why would I make such a basic error?'

The lady questioned herself.

Then, quite naturally, thoughts of others respecting her almost fearfully, and the satisfaction that surged from her heart, surfaced in her mind.

Such satisfaction led her astray.

Fortunately, she had awakened.

She knew how she ought to adjust and change.

'Am I really just 20 years old after all?'

Marinda mocked herself internally.

Then, the lady suddenly got a bit upset.

Because—

Arthur was only 17!

At 17, Arthur acted much more maturely than she did.

And she, three years his senior, behaved like a childish little girl.

This filled Marinda with a strong sense of frustration.

Of course, the frustration inside didn't affect the lady's thought of 'diverting her attention, resting for a moment.' She was ready to discuss life philosophies with Arthur, starting by giving each other the middle finger.

However, before the lady could speak, the scene before her left her dumbfounded—

When Arthur entered the room, following Arthur's command, Pendragon, who had been guarding all night, immediately came over, constantly rubbing against Arthur's pant legs.

"Good kitty, well-behaved kitty, well done!"

Arthur did not skimp on his praises and even pulled out a small dried fish to give to Pendragon.

Gulugulu.

Pendragon, with the dried fish in his mouth, emitted a pleased sound from his belly.

But, the next moment, the dried fish fell from Pendragon's mouth onto the ground.

Because—

Pendragon saw 'Miss Anna,' slowly climbing up from behind Arthur with a terrifying and ferocious face, enveloped in shadows.

Meow? Meow? Meow?

Pendragon let out a rapid series of meows, his chubby face showing rare signs of fright.

It wasn't that Pendragon was particularly cowardly.

It was simply too frightening how 'Miss Anna' suddenly climbed up from behind Arthur.

Let alone a cat, anyone who suddenly saw a terrifying puppet climb up from behind someone else to greet them would be scared enough to pee themselves.

The big orange cat's eyes bulged like brass bells, staring at 'Miss Anna' as if the air were about to solidify.

Arthur immediately 'comforted' his cat.

"Pendragon, this is 'Anna,' didn't you play around her just before?

Why suddenly act like she's a stranger today?

Come on, say hello to 'Miss Anna.'

Arthur said smilingly.

Pendragon clearly saw the teasing in his owner's eyes.

His owner was doing it on purpose!

Immediately, the cat came to that conclusion.

Meow! Meow!

Pendragon kept meowing repeatedly.

The intention couldn't be clearer.

Even those who did not understand the 'meow language' could feel that Pendragon was swearing quite profusely.

And Arthur just laughed heartily.

Arthur had been running full speed to get back to Caesar Manor before dawn had broken, even using the 'Cat Hole' technique 'Silent Successive Steps.'

The speed was indeed fast.

But 'Miss Anna,' who had originally been sitting on Arthur's shoulder, now lay on his back.

Only in this way, she could avoid being blown off by the wind coming head-on.

Late>r, Miss Anna climbing up onto Arthur's shoulder?

Purely accidental!

Yes, just an accident!

How could Arthur possibly scare his own little kitten?

The young 'Spirit Medium' bent down and picked up Pendragon.

"Trial!

Pendragon, this is your trial to become the 'Cat Warrior'!

Only in this way can you pull the Sword in the Stone and claim the title of king!"

Arthur, with eyes wide open, was spouting nonsense, while Pendragon looked at his master with confusion.

Warrior's trial?

Claim the title of king?

And what is this Sword in the Stone?

Pendragon's mind was filled with doubts.

But Arthur was laughing heartily on the inside once again.

Bought it! It bought it!

Pendragon actually believed it!

The satisfaction of deceiving a kitten made Arthur's mood even more relaxed and joyful—everyone has their own way to decompress, some drink and sing, others take baths and saunas.

Arthur is different.

He, pets cats.

Perhaps the way he does it is a bit unusual, but it really is just petting cats, with no malice.

As for the warrior's trial, claiming the title of king?

Wasn't that just made up by him?

And the Sword in the Stone?

Worst case scenario, he could find Pendragon a cement block with a steel bar inserted to play with later.

If that fails, he could also make a longsword with a special scabbard.

After all, there were plenty of ways.

The most important thing was: he was happy now.

However, soon, Arthur noticed Marinda looking at 'Miss Anna' in astonishment.

Arthur noticed.

'Miss Anna' had noticed long ago.

Ever since she appeared in this room, Marinda had been staring at her nonstop.

Facing this lady's stare, 'Miss Anna' jumped off Arthur's shoulder and bowed gracefully in greeting—

"Miss Caesar, nice to meet you for the first time, I am Anna Kledos."

Hearing such a greeting and introduction, Marinda became even more bewildered.

The lady even forgot to return the gesture, just staring blankly at Arthur.

"Soul Charging—you learned it?"

Disbelief flooded the lady's words.

"Of course.

Learned it after watching just once.

Nothing difficult."

Arthur spoke calmly, as though discussing how the breakfast eggs should be dipped in soy sauce.

But in Marinda's heart, a storm was brewing.

The lady knew Arthur was exceptionally talented.

But she did not believe Arthur's previous statement to 'Glast' that he 'learned it after watching just once,' thinking it was a psychological tactic.

But now?

It was true!

Marinda found it hard to breathe.

Especially when she noticed the displeasure on 'Miss Anna's' face due to her lack of timely response, her heart was deeply shocked.

'This isn't the original Soul Charging!

This is Arthur's optimized version of Soul Charging!'

Marinda exclaimed in her mind.

She had read Geppetto's notes before, and naturally knew what the real 'Soul Charging' looked like.

'It's true!

Everything is true!

Arthur really learns swordsmanship and secret techniques after just one glance, and he can even innovate and improve them!

Such talent...

What a monster!'

Thinking this, Marinda regained her composure.

The lady first bowed to 'Miss Anna,' then turned to Arthur and said—

"Don't follow me, I'm in a bad mood and need some sweets."

"Bring me back some egg tarts."

Arthur immediately called out.

Bang!

The response Arthur got was the loud sound of the door slamming.

'Did I really shock her?

No way, my Marinda isn't that fragile, right?'

Arthur amused himself with these thoughts when his gaze turned back to the direction of the door.

The next moment, the door was knocked—

Thump, thump thump!

Chapter 485: The Knife That Doesn't Draw Blood, Is the Cruellest!

After the banquet, Brule returned to his room early.

Agitated, he waved away the maid he had once dearly loved, and the second businessman of South Los began pacing around the room.

But the more he paced, the more agitated Brule became and...

Fear!

Yes, fear!

After discovering that he had become the "Year Pig," the second businessman of South Los panicked.

Especially when he thought of the bloody methods of the "Lady of the Eternal Night," his whole body couldn't help but tremble.

It was only at this moment that Brule realized how foolish he had been before.

He had almost lost his life because of his greed!

Once his mind started to understand, the second businessman of South Los made a decision.

He was going to confront someone.

Of course, not the "Lady of the Eternal Night."

She was too ruthless and bloody.

The second businessman of South Los chose Arthur as the person to confront.

Compared to the ruthless and bloody "Lady of the Eternal Night," the gentle South Los "Spirit Medium" seemed easier to deal with—at least in Brule's eyes.

So, the second businessman of South Los had been waiting.

Waiting for the opportunity to meet with Arthur alone.

And now, the opportunity had come.

The "Lady of the Eternal Night" had gone to the kitchen.

Apparently, she was hungry.

Do "Pregnant Women" really get hungry that easily?

The news of the "Lady of the Eternal Night" being pregnant had already spread unknowingly.

Although it was still a private circulation, those who needed to know had already known.

And those who shouldn't know?

They would never know.

Because of this, Brule chose to confront Arthur.

The second businessman of South Los believed that Arthur had enough influence in front of the "Lady of the Eternal Night."

After knocking, the second businessman of South Los anxiously waited.

"Please come in."

The voice of the South Los "Spirit Medium" rang out.

Soon after, the door was opened.

And the moment the door opened, the second businessman of South Los saw Ms. Anna opening the door and couldn't help but scream out loud—

"Aaaaah!"

Such a scream naturally drew onlookers.

Observers of the title inheritance ceremony were awakened and walked out of their rooms.

The manor's servants and guards were immediately on the scene.

Edwin, acting as the coachman, rushed over with a gun in one hand and a sword in the other.

When he saw Ms. Anna, Edwin narrowed his eyes and gave Brule a disdainful look.

Among all the people, only Fengter was the most direct—

"As a guest of the host, you don't recognize Ms. Anna? That's really rude."

With Fengter's remark, the doubtful looks of the people around immediately changed.

They all looked at Brule with contempt.

Regardless of whether they were scared by Ms. Anna just now, at this moment, they definitely needed to appear calm. And how to show calm?

Naturally, by giving Brule disdainful looks.

Fengter did not join them, the young heir moved next to Ms. Anna.

"Good morning, Ms. Anna."

Although the day had not completely dawned, greeting her with a good morning was not out of place.

Then, the young heir was ready to tentatively ask Ms. Anna's opinion about the other puppets—as he usually did.

But today was different—

"Good morning, Fengter."

The gentle female voice made the young heir freeze.

The young heir stared blankly at Ms. Anna.

Then, ecstasy.

The feeling of joy was almost tangible.

Ms. Anna felt offended, and a faint displeasure appeared on the puppet's face.

At that moment, Arthur's voice came from behind.

"Anna, pour two cups of clear tea for Mr. Brule and me."

"And bring me some sweet snacks too," Arthur instructed.

"Yes, Arthur."

Ms. Anna headed straight to the kitchen, as the people around parted way for her as if avoiding a venomous snake.

The previously hidden unease resurfaced at this moment, now accompanied by an undeniable sense of fear.

Fengter was different though.

The heir of the Doyle family was shaking with excitement by now.

He then chased after Ms. Anna.

"Wait for me, Ms. Anna!"

Hearing such a call, Ms. Anna's pace involuntarily quickened.

And the looks Fengter received from those around him became quite strange.

It was a bizarre mix of admiration.

In any case, it was complicated.

Arthur was much more straightforward—

"Pervert, huh!

Fengter, you're a pervert, aren't you!"

The young "spirit medium" muttered in his heart as he looked towards Brule.

Now, Brule looked stiff-faced and upset.

Why did he have to scream?

How could he forget about the "Puppet" from the South Los spirit medium?

"Damn it!

Damn it!

You stupid pig!" Brule cursed himself.

If possible, the second merchant of South Los wished he could slap himself.

Because—

This second merchant of South Los had just severed his own, possibly sole, escape route.

The reason he had confronted Arthur was that he thought Arthur appeared more amiable and would not take immediate action like Marinda would.

This gave the second merchant of South Los time.

Time to swear allegiance to Inner Bay.

It wasn't he who sought out Inner Bay, but someone from Inner Bay who contacted him.

To achieve the former, Brule knew he wasn't qualified.

So when the latter happened, Brule meticulously seized it.

He seized it.

Not seized it.

Because of greed.

Brule wanted more.

But now, all that was gone.

Brule knew, once his midnight visit to the South Los spirit medium was exposed, the envoy from Inner Bay would immediately abandon him.

And such exposure...

Was inevitable!

The scoundrels present would definitely spread the news.

Especially those who had come to Caesar Manor with him, those who were utterly respectful, they were surely the most enthusiastic about spreading it.

These rascals coveted his position.

Just as he had once coveted the Bernice family, Coste Commerce, and Emmond Commerce.

He had waited for years, for that opportunity to pounce viciously and tear into that sweet flesh.

Was he now to become the next Bernice family, Coste Commerce, or Emmond Commerce?

No!

Never!

My life cannot end like this!

With this thought, the second merchant of South Los collapsed to the floor, shouting.

"Lord Kledos, someone from Inner Bay has contacted me, intending to harm Miss Caesar!"

Arthur, sitting there playing with Pendragon, didn't even look up but casually asked—

"What else?"

Chapter 486: When It's Utterly Dark, Brilliance is Bound to Shine!

Anything else?

What else is there?

Brule was taken aback for a moment.

But soon, this second-ranked merchant from South Los thought of something.

The 'Spirit Medium' before him didn't want to act himself—he wanted Brule to do it!

This cautious second-ranked merchant from South Los carefully raised his head, looking at the South Los 'Spirit Medium' who was playing with an Orange Cat, feeling a chill run down his spine.

So much for being kind, gentle.

The bastard in front of him was even more ruthless than the 'Lady of the Eternal Night'!

The 'Lady of the Eternal Night' used direct, violent, and bloody methods.

And this one?

He killed without shedding blood!

And more...

He left no way out!

He intended to kill them all!

Ruthless!

Too ruthless!

The chill on the back of this South Los merchant had begun to seep into the depths of his heart, so cold that it seemed to freeze even his blood.

Meanwhile, this merchant's brain rapidly recalled the chambers of commerce that had complaints against the 'Lady of the Eternal Night'.

This South Los merchant didn't want to die, so others would have to die in his place.

"There's also Byers Chamber of Commerce, Xerac Chamber of Commerce, and Holt Chamber of Commerce... They are also actively preparing for clandestine meetings with the envoy from Inner Bay," he blurted out more than a dozen chambers of commerce in one breath.

Some were big, some small.

Some were present, some were not.

The ones not present were unaware, and those present all turned pale, their eyes filled with resentment as they looked at Brule.

This second-ranked South Los merchant felt their resentment.

This made his heart grow even colder.

The man was well aware that he had completely lost any way out. Other than seeking refuge under this man and that woman, he was now entirely isolated from all the other merchants of South Los.

With this realization, the South Los merchant clenched his teeth fiercely.

"My lord, there are also Poly Chamber of Commerce, Qiao Xu Chamber of Commerce..." he quickly reported another seven or eight chambers of commerce.

If he was already isolated, there was no reason to show mercy anymore.

If you live, I might die!

To keep myself alive, then please, all of you go die!

After all, under the watchful eyes of this man and woman, you would have to die sooner or later!

With these thoughts in mind, the South Los merchant respectfully bowed his head to Arthur.

At that moment, Arthur finally set Pendragon aside and did not immediately look at Brule, but instead turned to Edwin.

Just one glance was enough for the coachman to know what to do.

Then, without waiting for Arthur's command, Wiggins also began to move.

At times, the people of Rat Street cannot be seen in daylight.

But it is precisely because they must stay in the Shadows that they can get things done.

Especially with the cooperation of those who must stay in the light.

Thus, Malz and Kuke promptly followed suit.

After them came Scott.

In this morning's 'Horn Report,' there would inevitably be a special edition telling the stories of some unscrupulous merchants and illegal businessmen from South Los who exploited the people of South Los. It must highlight Byers Chamber of Commerce, Xerac Chamber of Commerce, Holt Chamber of Commerce, Poly Chamber of Commerce, Qiao Xu Chamber of Commerce, and other businesses.

Haywood followed suit. As the head of Arthur's South Los real estate, he needed to see how these chambers of commerce's immovable properties and other assets were doing.

If possible, Haywood would acquire them for a 'fair price.'

Although Bob and Little Lisop were initially a step behind, they quickly caught up with Wiggins.

They believed that some of these fellows were quite suitable for the mines in South Town, where they could further test the Death Soldier Potion and also serve as decent labor.

Goodrian Ernest, Erwin Dibwa, and Zhukov Bas scratched their heads before quickly following.

As retainers to Lord Arthur Kledos, they absolutely would not allow the likes of Ernest, Dibwa, and the Bass Family to annex territory that belonged to the Kledos Family.

"You said it wasn't theirs before, it belonged to those chambers of commerce?"

Yes, that's right, it wasn't before.

But, from this moment on, they all belong to the Kledos Family.

The owners of those chambers will certainly sign the contract.

And for those who don't sign?

The new owners of those chambers will certainly sign.

Still not signing?

Naturally, there will be new owners.

The people by Arthur's side quietly dispersed.

They all went to do what they must.

Only Desa, from Barny, stayed behind staring blankly, unsure of what he should do, but at this moment, Arthur spoke up with a smile.

"Desa, go check the kitchen to see if there is any fried fish for breakfast.

I fancy some fish."

"Understood, young master Arthur."

Desa smiled and headed towards the kitchen.

Those who remained watched in silence as Arthur once again picked up the cat.

There was no trace of aura, no overwhelming presence, but those remaining felt an intangible pressure weighing on their hearts as they looked at Arthur.

The Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman felt as though a shadow had completely enveloped them as they watched Arthur seated before them.

The shadow was dark and dense.

It shrouded everyone present.

It brought terror to all those enshrouded.

It obscured the figure seated there from everyone enshrouded.

Then, the terror turned into admiration and envy.

Because—

At its most intense, the shadow had already turned dazzlingly bright.

It had become power.

Unnoticed when still, as natural as air, yet when it emerged, it was tumultuous and overwhelming, like a towering wave.

It was omnipresent.

It encompassed everything.

At any moment, it could...

Crush me!

This thought uncontrollably surfaced in the minds of the Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman.

Immediately, both men bowed their heads.

No longer daring to look directly at the 'Spirit Medium' who was petting the cat.

And the old steward of the Bern Family?

He was already pale, shaking all over, wishing he could kneel there and beg for forgiveness.

In the back of the crowd, Marinda, carrying egg tarts and sugar-sweetened warm milk, quietly watched this scene. Her blue eyes, moving between the silent crowd and the composed Arthur, revealed a hint of a smile.

Arthur, who was petting the cat, noticed Marinda and immediately stood up.

Suddenly, the crowd parted in two.

Finally, people took notice of Marinda.

Without hesitation, this time, everyone bowed in unison—

"Miss Caesar."

At this moment, the crowd was far more respectful than before, their faces humbly ingratiating and their voices pleasant to the ear, especially the Swordsmanship Chiefs of Baron Korol and Baron Hausman, who had lost some of their sharpness.

'This guy!' The lady thought to herself quietly, the smile in her eyes growing deeper.

Arthur, holding Pendragon, approached Marinda. With his back to the crowd, Arthur gestured with his lips—

'What about her?'

Chapter 487: Lotus Leaf Hotel

Arthur silently mouthed, asking who it was, and of course, Marinda knew.

Julie, the Swordsmanship Chief of the Countess.

Beyond that individual, Marinda could think of no one else.

After all, it was precisely because the individual was "not returning on time" that Arthur had a better opportunity to "slaughter a pig"—slaying one pig was planned, but having one pig kill more pigs was an unexpected delight.

The former was legitimate.

The latter?

Even more so.

Because—

It had nothing to do with her and Arthur, and they had simply come to learn about all this by accident, even the Countess herself would not inquire further.

All they needed to do was not cross the line.

Moreover, compared to this matter, Marinda was even more concerned about why the Swordsmanship Chief was late.

Although the person was usually carefree, they would absolutely not be tardy without reason.

Unless, something unavoidable had happened.

And the only thing that could force such a predicament...

The Countess herself!

Beyond that, there was no other possibility.

After exchanging glances with Arthur, he took over the tray filled with egg tarts and hot milk, while Marinda stepped forward and offered an apologetic smile toward everyone.

"Sorry for the disturbance.

Breakfast will be served promptly at seven thirty; everyone can catch some more sleep, as Arthur once said, 'Nothing beats a second sleep,' a sentiment I wholeheartedly share.

Of course, a morning stroll in the courtyard is also a fine choice.

The garden of Caesar Manor has been cleared out, and the surrounding area is clean too, so everyone can play with ease."

Marinda spoke with easy grace.

The surrounding people immediately responded with understanding.

Catch more sleep?

Of course not.

After what had just happened, how could they possibly sleep?

Thus, those who were not involved gathered in small groups and headed toward the garden.

Certainly, the area surrounding the manor was also a popular choice.

Under Fujin's watchful eye, these people began to pass messages by various means.

Arthur was confident that the Inner Bay Envoy would soon receive the news.

Therefore, upon returning to his room, Arthur directly asked Brule—

"Tell me about the person from Inner Bay."

"The envoy calls himself 'Dorn.' He told me to decide and then to find him at Lotus Leaf Hotel in Shire District, staying in room 202," Brule informed Arthur of everything he knew.

"Hmm."

Arthur nodded slightly and then gave Marinda a look that meant: Leave this place in your hands for now.

In response, Marinda returned a reassuring gaze.

Afterward, Arthur disappeared from the room.

This lady of course knew what Arthur was off to do.

Given their positions, the people of the Old Lion of Inner Bay required attention at any time.

Moreover, the Swordsmanship Competition in Inner Bay was about to begin.

Arthur needed to head to Inner Bay to participate in the Swordsmanship Competition of the entire South County.

With such a premise, no amount of caution was excessive.

Perhaps he could pry some information from the envoy's lips.

Marinda had absolute confidence in Arthur.

...

Shire District, Lotus Leaf Hotel.

...

This was an inn with a legacy of 30 years.

It was founded by Lady Garda right after the end of the 'Seven Years' War'. In the early stages, this kind-hearted lady adopted many wandering and orphaned children left homeless by the war, plunging the once economically affluent Lady Garda into a state of economic hardship. Out of necessity, she had to pick lotus leaves and seed pods from the lake behind the inn to get by.

Hard times always pass.

When the hardest times were over, Lady Garda's inn was known as the 'Lotus Leaf Hotel', because during that period, children often sold lotus leaves nearby, and the original 'Garda Inn' sign also hung at the entrance to the inn, only now it featured the image of a lotus leaf underneath.

The colored kind.

Repainted every year.

For 30 years, it had always been this way.

And Lady Garda had aged from thirty to sixty years old.

But the lady was still vigorous and continued to run the inn's business, and those grown-up wandering and orphaned children would return to the inn during holidays to visit their mother.

In their hearts, Lady Garda was their mother.

Of course, the inn's four servants and two chefs were also children from those days, now grown up, unlike their brothers who had spread their wings and flown away.

They preferred to stay by their mother's side.

Among them, Sapir was the most robust, standing at 2.2 meters tall, with arms thicker than the average person's thighs. As one of the four servants of the inn, he spent most of his time on the night shift with his sister 'Didian' and handled unnecessary troubles because of his strength.

But the recent 'trouble' had caused Sapir to frown.

Even the clever Didian could not solve it.

Watching Wil Koss muttering 'beer, just bring me some' as he placed a 10 gold note on the table.

Sapir's brow was tightly knotted.

If facing those who refused to pay or deliberately caused trouble, his fists would teach them what regret meant.

But he really didn't know what to do with young people like Wil Koss who always paid their bills honestly, asked for help to be carried to their room when drunk, cleaned up their own vomit after sobering up, and still repeatedly apologized.

Of course, what was more important was his mother.

Once, when Wil Koss was drunkenly crying alone, his mother went over and gently comforted the young man.

After which the young man burst into loud sobs, incessantly asking his 'mother' why the one he loved wasn't him, why, when they had grown up together, had known each other for so much longer...

And the mother just gently touched the top of the young man's head—

'Love doesn't make sense.'

Sapir clearly saw the helplessness on his mother's face when she said those words.

It was clear that she was thinking of that jerk again.

Indeed, had it not been for his mother's intervention, he would have definitely taught that bastard called 'Aaron' a lesson for daring to toy with his mother's feelings.

If he didn't break at least thirty of the man's bones, it would mean he was too soft-hearted.

It was also because of his mother that Sapir let Wil Koss be.

From time to time, he would even chat with the young man.

This had allowed Sapir to learn that the girl Wil Koss couldn't forget was named Linda Camille, and the man who appeared out of nowhere was called Arthur Kredos.

For the former, Sapir had no impression.

But the latter, Arthur Kredos, was a name resounding like thunder.

In fact, in South Los, you couldn't not know of the 'Spirit Medium' in recent times.

Bizarre and shadowy murder cases.

Ruthless and life-stealing Evil Spirits.

The ability to foresee events.

Extraordinary swordsmanship.

Many terms were associated with this 'Spirit Medium'.

More importantly, after numerous probes, all these terms had been confirmed.

If he wasn't needed to look after the inn, Sapir too would have liked to witness the prowess of the 'Spirit Medium'.

Just as Sapir was waiting with crossed arms for Wil Koss to pass out and be carried back to his room, the bell at the door rang. Sapir looked towards the entrance, somewhat surprised.

After all, at this time, it was rare for someone to seek lodging or to come in for a drink or meal.

Then, the robust inn servant saw a young man with a walking stick, standing there with a smiling face.

Before the young man could speak, the half-drunk Wil Koss had already jumped up, shouting—

"Arthur Kredos, you bastard, why won't you leave me alone, even appearing in my dreams!"

...

Chapter 488: Stealing the Nation!

Arthur looked at Wil Koss with considerable surprise.

He had quite an impression of this wealthy yet honest, timid, and hemophobic fallen noble, although it was all because of Linda Camille.

But being willing to pretend to be the 'murderer' in the 'Human Chair' incident to win favor with Linda Camille was something that Arthur could not help but give a thumbs-up for, and to sigh—

What an idiot.

Yes, just an idiot.

Not a moron.

Calling him stupid would somehow sully that love.

Even if unrequited, Arthur was willing to give that 'love' its due respect.

Idiot was just about right.

After all, happy is the fool who is too silly to worry.

It was just like Wil Koss at the moment, probably getting caught in the self-pity of 'I was here first,' 'We were childhood sweethearts,' 'Why did this newcomer break our love.'

Unfortunately...

He wasn't blond.

Otherwise, the next words out of his mouth would be, "I kicked with all my might."

Sapir looked at the suddenly appearing Arthur, with surprise in his eyes, too.

This robust servant from Lotus Leaf Hotel had never expected to encounter the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los here—though the Lotus Leaf Hotel is in Shire District, it isn't the wealthiest place but a fringe area of the district. While it does have a fair number of 'new middle-class,' the real big shots wouldn't come here.

In Sapir's eyes, the up-and-coming 'Spirit Medium' of South Los is definitely a big shot.

It's just that this big shot is somewhat different from those in his impression.

He is not so rigid, not so serious.

Rather, he is quite amiable, and even could be said to be...

Good-tempered!

After all, if it were any other big shot who had been cursed by Wil Koss like that, they would have already taught Koss a good lesson.

As for Wil Koss being drunk?

The big shots wouldn't care about that at all.

They would only concern themselves with their own face.

Otherwise, a sneeze in a theater wouldn't kill anyone.

The measures those big shots take always exceed the common person's imagination.

And the small-time folks who get scared to death?

They die because they know the means of these big shots.

But Sapir was surprised to see Arthur smiling and sitting in front of Wil Koss, speaking in a calm and gentle voice.

"This isn't a dream, Mr. Koss."

"Ah?"

The drunken Wil Koss was taken aback.

Then, the young man sharply pinched his own thigh.

And then...

"Ah!"

The young man screamed in pain and jumped up from the chair.

Afterwards, the young man frantically apologized.

"I'm sorry, Arthur..."

No, sorry, Mr. Kledos!

I didn't mean it, I thought I was dreaming.

I..."

Wil Koss was at a loss for words, his speech disjointed and incoherent, appearing both comical and a tad pitiful.

Arthur certainly had no intention of making fun of such a person.

The young 'Spirit Medium' looked at him, his gaze growing serious.

"Linda Camille is my aunt by marriage."

Arthur stated frankly.

"Ah!"

Wil Koss let out another exclamation, his face beaming with boundless joy.

Forthwith, the young man was about to express his gratitude to Arthur.

The young man naively thought that Arthur was here, finding him, just to comfort him in this manner.

But before the young man could speak, Arthur had already opened his mouth.

"Linda Camille is my aunt by marriage, but I will not make any decisions on Linda's behalf. Linda has a completely independent and autonomous will.

As a member of the Kledos Family, she would not change her mind just because of what others say.

Also...

You will never know what Linda really wants.

And you will never know what the Kledos Family has to take on."

Arthur's words left Wil Koss stunned.

And Arthur didn't continue the conversation with the other man, instead he signaled a sturdy servant to take the young man, who had not yet sobered up from his drunkenness, back to his room.

As for more?

There was none.

As for helping the other chase after Linda Camille?

Even less likely.

He wasn't some extraordinary Saint Mother of sending daughters off, uncomfortable if he didn't give away girls.

He was just standing on his family's standpoint, believing he should inform Wil Koss of the truth, and this family standpoint wasn't Wil Koss's.

It was Linda Camille's.

As for Wil Koss?

If Linda Camille weren't there, Arthur would definitely have sent him to sober up in a pigsty.

Wil Koss was picked up by Sapir and walked upstairs.

Shortly after the two ascended the stairs, a person came down from above.

Gray trousers, a white shirt, a black vest with a gold chain dangling from the pocket, most likely leading to a pocket watch.

His pale golden hair was neatly combed backward, not a strand out of place, slicked with some hair oil.

His face was young and clean, with pale golden eyes looking at Arthur, full of slight puzzlement.

Because—

At that moment, Arthur's face bore an undeniable disappointment.

Disappointment?

Why would he be disappointed?

The puzzle in the eyes of Alvis Hamlet, who went by the alias Dorn, was evident.

Just a few minutes ago, Alvis had received information.

That despicable wretch had sold him out.

Alvis wasn't surprised by this.

That wretch, if the price was right, would sell even his biological parents, let alone an outsider like him.

But Alvis wasn't panicked.

As a young member of the Golden Lion Family, he had made substantial preparations to come to South Los quietly, confident he could safely escape South Los.

That's why he wasn't in a hurry to leave.

He wanted to toy with the 'pursuers' who came here.

What the young member of the Golden Lion Family didn't expect was that the pursuer would be Arthur.

He was even more surprised that Arthur wasn't in a hurry to see him but was dealing with some private matters, as if he wasn't important at all.

That drunken wretch definitely wasn't arranged by him.

Alvis was sure of that.

He had inquired about it, and the other party had been drinking for nearly half a month already before he arrived.

Just a wreck, depressed over a woman, not worth paying any attention to.

What he truly cared about was Arthur Kledos.

He cared about the neglect from the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los.

He cared about the disappointment of the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los.

With so many thoughts in his heart, the young member of the Golden Lion Family sat directly opposite Arthur, wanting to ask.

But Arthur didn't give the young member of the Golden Lion Family the opportunity to ask first and went straight to the point—

"Is this what Uncle Gillgick talked about, the Golden Lion Family?"

Truly disappointing!"

Arthur said, lowering his head with a sigh.

In the moment he lowered his head, Alvis's eyes involuntarily widened in shock.

Because—

The young member of the Golden Lion Family caught sight of a glint of gold.

A gold that was even more intense than the gold of his eyes.

As everyone knows, the Hamlet Family, also known as the Golden Lion Family, is named for their golden hair and golden eyes; the more golden the color, the purer the bloodline.

And Gillgick!

Alvis knew this name.

It was once a knight of his family, who later vanished without a trace. There were rumors that he disappeared to protect an offspring of the family lost to the outside world...

Pondering this, Alvis's mouth dropped open, taken aback as he stood up. The member of the Golden Lion Family looked at Arthur and began to stammer—

"You, you..."

Chapter 489: The Wind Rises in South Los!

At this moment, Arthur's "Bluff" was flickering like a searchlight.

After learning from Glast's memory about Gillgick and the young swordsman, Islan, both related to the Golden Lion Family, Arthur had been pondering how to use these two pieces of information.

Conveniently, Alvis Hamlet, disguised as Dorn, appeared.

The man was a young member of the Golden Lion Family.

When Arthur learned this information from Brule, his mind started racing.

The instinct of the Spirit Medium told him then that there was a significant opportunity within.

Even...

Someone had pre-arranged things!

Glast!

Even though her memory had become fragmentary and somewhat chaotic after "Soul Tailoring," Arthur knew very clearly about this lady's style of action: She plans first before acting!

This meant that when the person used the identity of Gillgick to pledge loyalty to the Golden Lion Family, she might have started plotting then.

Why did it take so long?

Perhaps the right moment had yet to come.

Perhaps something unexpected occurred.

But considering that Glast searched for "Isan's Leap," it appeared she had not abandoned her original plan.

What did this imply?

It implied an opportunity was at hand!

It implied that Glast had considerable confidence in her original plan.

So...

Could they replace someone?

Isan was dead, killed in a raid on the West Coast, but Isan had already had an offspring. Ten years after the Seven Years' War ended, this offspring had grown into a distinctive lady who met a free-spirited man in South Los and gave birth to her own child: Arthur Kredos.

Why was she a distinctive lady?

Because her father died early in battle, this lady did not undergo the so-called "Noble Baptism" nor did she leave behind a "Noble Mark"!

But the power of the bloodline...

was carried forward.

Moreover, by the time it reached Arthur's generation, the bloodline was even richer.

The golden eyes had already explained everything.

A snake's eyes?

What snake's eyes, who saw them?

All that overflowed was gold, and that alone was enough.

Of course, Arthur knew that he still needed to consider some crucial parts and make careful arrangements, but that was for later.

Simply put, he still had enough time to solve any corresponding troubles.

And now?

He was just dealing with an immature member of the Golden Lion Family.

For Arthur, this was just too easy.

In fact, after a brief flash of golden eyes, Alvis Hamlet had already fallen into Arthur's scheme.

Arthur held absolute initiative.

Watching the young member of the Golden Lion Family struggling to speak clearly, a look of mockery appeared on Arthur's face.

"I thought I was targeted because you knew of my existence,

but from what I see now...

I'm nobody to you," Arthur said, not giving Alvis a chance to speak. He then stood up, towering above the young member of the Golden Lion Family, and said —

"Out of respect for my mother, I'll spare you this once.

But only once, so leave South Los immediately, right now.

Don't let me see you again!"

Arthur spoke, then walked away without looking back.

Anything more would have been overkill; fooling such young men was something Arthur had much experience in.

Once he began, this young member of the Golden Lion Family would fulfill everything Arthur wanted.

After all, the zeal and vigor of youth were still very much present.

Or to put it another way?

Bloodline and honor?

Of course, calling it idealism works too.

With a playfully malicious smile, Arthur walked out of Lotus Leaf Hotel.

Behind him, Alvis subconsciously raised his hand to stop Arthur, but as he lifted it, this young member of the Golden Lion Family felt his hand drop helplessly.

At this moment, the mind of this member of the Golden Lion Family was already a complete mess.

The 'Spirit Medium' Arthur Kredos, who had been noticed by the family, was actually a lost bloodline of the family?!

The emergence of this news left Alvis completely unable to think about anything else.

It wasn't just shocking anymore.

It was earth-shattering!

Because—

The initial person targeting 'Spirit Medium' Arthur Kredos was Gleisa!

Gleisa Hamlet!

The eldest son of the Grand Duke of the Inner Bay, the leader of the Golden Lion Family...

The eldest son!

Did the other party know about this?

Or, did they cover up some information precisely because they knew about it?

Moreover, did they take some extreme actions?

Because of Arthur's Talent!

That exceptional Talent!

A Talent so enviable, so jealous... to the point of hatred!

Involuntarily, this young member of the Golden Lion Family, just as Arthur had anticipated, started to overthink.

Moreover, just as Arthur had anticipated, this young member of the Golden Lion Family valued bloodline and honor, and carried with him a hint of an idealist's romance.

Alvis hurriedly ran towards his own room.

Sapir, who had just thrown Wil Koss onto the bed in the room, happened to brush past Alvis.

"Mr. Dorn, do you need help?"

Sapir asked.

This was the basic duty of a hotel servant.

Of course, it was also because Alvis was generous enough.

"No need."

The desperate Alvis had no intention of making small talk with this hotel servant, although initially, he had thought of recruiting this talented individual to join his side. But now?

To hell with it!

What was most important to him now was to return to the Inner Bay!

He had to return to the Inner Bay immediately!

Moreover, this young member of the Golden Lion Family, before leaving the 'Lotus Leaf Hotel,' issued a command for all the spies who came with him to continue their mission to go into complete hiding.

Of course, this was just the first step.

The second step...

Contact the most trustworthy person within his family.

His father: Baro Hamlet.

"Is this guy sick?"

Sapir muttered as he watched Alvis rush out of the hotel.

However, Sapir didn't think too much about it.

As a hotel owner, he had seen plenty of strange things. As long as the lodging fee was settled, it was none of his business.

Stretching lazily, Sapir prepared to return to his room to catch up on some sleep.

Of course, he needed to inform his sister first.

After pushing open the door, Sapir unexpectedly found his sister sitting there, lost in thought.

It was well known that the usually intelligent and shrewd Didian was always brisk and efficient, and would never show such a sluggish demeanor.

"What's wrong, sister?"

Sapir's expression became serious.

For his family, Sapir would stop at nothing.

If anyone dared to harm his family, he would strangle them.

Could it be that bastard who called himself Garcia?

Thinking this, Sapir clenched his fists.

"It has nothing to do with Garcia, he's just one of my drinking buddies."

Didian said this and urged her brother to rest quickly.

She then started to tidy up the hotel.

Meanwhile, she placed a pot of white flowers on the windowsill of the hotel facing outside.

Soon, the white flowers all began to sway in unison.

The wind had picked up.

Chapter 490: Butterfly and Lizard!

With the aid of Fujin's vision, Arthur clearly saw what had happened at the Lotus Leaf Hotel and subconsciously, the young "Spirit Medium" stroked his chin.

"To think there's a connection with Garcia!

If that's the case...

the room for maneuver just got bigger!"

Arthur thought to himself, and hastened his steps.

According to the schedule, the guests at Caesar Manor would finish breakfast and leave in the morning.

At this moment, breakfast was about to begin.

Thinking of the delicious food, Arthur sprinted at full speed.

It wasn't gluttony.

It was just a habit of having three meals and snacks every day.

Skipping one could affect his mood for the entire day.

To ensure a pleasant mood, Arthur used "Silent Successive Steps" as his mode of advance, moving almost in a straight line.

Finally, he returned to Caesar Manor just as breakfast was starting.

In the room, Marinda was sitting in a chair, continuing to read the books brought from the ruins, and when she heard the door open, she didn't even lift her head.

She was too familiar with the intentionally loud footsteps of Arthur.

"Has that person not arrived yet?"

Arthur asked while picking up Pendragon, speaking to the Female Swordmaster Countess.

Before returning to the room, he had glanced around the hall and had not seen the tall figure.

"Something must have happened!"

The lady said, picking up a wooden bookmark beside her to place it within the pages of her book, then turned to look at Arthur with a questioning look in her eyes.

Clearly, the lady's intelligence system hadn't received any news.

Therefore, she hoped to get some information from Arthur.

"It's costly."

Arthur sighed.

The young "Spirit Medium" of course didn't know what had happened. Initially, he had planned to coax some information out of Marinda, but now?

He had to once again use a gentle approach to 'dissuade' Marinda to maintain his position.

"Extorting money!"

Marinda snorted coldly, indicating her displeasure.

However, Arthur was able to catch the fleeting indifference in the lady's eyes.

'Has she gotten used to this?

Completely like hitting the rod whether there are dates or not?

Moreover, not only does she firmly believe that she will eventually find out everything, but she also firmly believes that I will 'cover' everything!

Arthur was utterly astonished.

Because he realized from Marinda's unconscious behavior that this woman might be starting to depend on him.

Not good!

This won't do!

As the "Lady of the Eternal Night" of South Los, you have to get up and strive!

Otherwise, what will I eat or drink?

Upon this thought, Arthur said softly.

"The rule of 'Spirit Mediums' is always that you get what you pay for, we believe in fair trade.

If possible...

Marinda, could you stay in Caesar Manor a while longer?"

Arthur inquired.

Immediately, the lady frowned.

"Is it that serious?"

"More serious than you can imagine.

In fact, I was already prepared to give up going to Inner Bay for the South County Swordsmanship Competition—I didn't expect such a thing to happen."

To arouse Marinda's curiosity and ambition, Arthur began to act mysteriously.

However, 'preparing to give up going to Inner Bay for the South County Swordsmanship Competition' was somewhat true.

If possible, Arthur really didn't want to go to Inner Bay.

Even though he had prepared so much, Arthur still felt that Inner Bay was a dragon's den and a tiger's den, making him feel very insecure.

Beyond that truth, there was even more planning involved.

First, Arthur wanted to use this as an excuse to continue establishing his identity as part of the Golden Lion Family, by taking a step back to make the members of the Golden Lion Family uneasy, hence buying himself more time.

Second, it was aimed at the Countess of South Los.

He didn't know what had happened, but the countess surely knew, which was why her Swordsmanship Chief had still not returned.

Therefore, Arthur planned to learn more from her.

Or rather...

He intended to extract some benefits if possible.

After all, he had a perfectly valid reason and excuse.

Arthur glanced at Marinda's abdomen nonchalantly before she noticed, and picked up the sugared hot milk that was kept warm by the fireplace, just like the egg tarts.

"Mary's craftsmanship amazes every single time."

With just one bite, Arthur was certain that the egg tart was made by the cook who worked for Marinda.

"Hmm."

Marinda nodded, her brows furrowed.

Clearly, the lady had been fooled by Arthur once again.

A moment later, the lady picked up an egg tart, and couldn't help saying,

"I don't know why, but ever since I met you, I feel like things keep happening—one thing after another, and it makes me feel breathless, like a butterfly caught in a spider's web, getting deeper the more it struggles."

"Tsk, playing the victim won't help!

I've already said, a fair trade!"

Facing Marinda's sudden outburst, Arthur simply rolled his eyes.

Marinda then lifted her leg and took a swing at him.

Watching Arthur easily dodge, the lady huffed again.

Kicking Arthur was just a pretense. She wouldn't telegraph her kick so obviously if she truly wanted to hit him.

But she was indeed angry, angry that Arthur had once again guessed her intentions.

Not the first time he had done so, yet it still infuriated her.

Purely infuriated.

"So, how could someone like you possibly be a butterfly?

Even if you are, you'd be more like Mothra."

Arthur said softly.

"Mothra?

What's that?"

Upon hearing a new term, Marinda immediately became curious.

"A butterfly!

Of course, sometimes, some prefer to call it...

Monster Queen!"

Arthur said, ready to dodge at any moment, but to his surprise, Marinda didn't raise her leg to kick but continued to inquire with curiosity,

"If the butterfly is the Monster Queen, what is the Monster King?"

"It's a type of black iguana, looks fierce, but is actually very timid. It's mostly herbivorous, and even small fish can scare it into hiding,"

Arthur said straightforwardly.

Marinda then laughed.

"That doesn't sound much like you. You're not one to scare easily."

"Me?"

I had no choice.

Actually, I'm quite timid myself,"

Arthur pointed at himself and said softly, but Marinda clearly didn't believe him, not just about him being timid, but also about the Monster Queen and Monster King.

Since when did butterflies turn into the Monster Queen.

And a timid black iguana?

That's even more unlikely!

Unless it had taken some Magic Potion and mutated.

But who would administer such a precious potion to a creature like a black iguana?

Magic potions aren't so cheap that they're dumped into the sea?

After eating the last egg tart, Arthur clapped his hands lightly, and Marinda stood up too.

Both heard the heavy footsteps.

The Female Swordmaster had returned.

