

## Great Master 57

### Chapter 57 Spider's Claw

Arthur originally thought that this was a low-risk, high-reward collaboration.

But who could have foreseen such hidden danger!

Every time Arthur considered that this matter might have been orchestrated by the reclusive Earl of South Los, he felt a throbbing in his temples.

The Earl of South Los had not always favored reclusion.

The other had become reclusive after suddenly inheriting the rule of South Los upon the Old Earl's sudden death.

It seemed rather odd that a youth who became the ruler of a land would turn reclusive!

In fact, there had been whispers and rumors up to now.

Old Charlie had told his predecessor more than once, "The lion of Inner Bay will age one day, and the Mother Tigress of South Los will also grow up one day."

The predecessor didn't quite understand the meaning of these words.

But Arthur did!

"Caught in the struggle between the Duke of the Inner Bay and the Earl of South Los... This could be tricky!"

Arthur frowned privately.

He was well aware that there were immense opportunities here, chances to soar to the heavens, yet a single misstep could mean a death with nowhere to bury one's body.

Just like Coste and Emmond!

They might not have belonged to the Grand Duke, only slightly leaning towards him, and now they had been done away with by that Earl.

Even possibly, they just happened to appear before the Earl at the right time and were deemed the trigger for the whole affair.

And then?

The trading company they had established was crushed to dust!

And everything happening now was just the beginning of that Earl trying to break free from the Grand Duke's constraints.

That's why he was unable to receive the "mission" — with that Earl leading, even if the process might change, the outcome would remain utterly unchanged!

With thoughts like these in mind, Arthur remained impassive.

He looked at Marinda and resumed their earlier topic with the same seriousness.

"Compensation?"

I just helped you four times. Starting with my suggestion to head to the second-floor corridor, then lending you the firearm, getting rid of the troubles brought by Brody's death, and then those young men's provocations!

So, it's four compensations!"

Arthur calculated meticulously, which made Marinda laugh.

She didn't dislike this kind of nitpicking.

At least, it made her feel more at ease than misunderstandings born from evasiveness.

Therefore, Marinda immediately promised.

"I remember, not one will be missing!"

"No, no, no, what I mean is, can you combine the four compensations into one large one — and preferably, paid immediately. Otherwise, I always feel like I'm looking at a bad cheque."

Arthur corrected Marinda's words.

Cheques appeared along with the issuance of gold notes.

When large gold notes couldn't satisfy transactions, cheques were subsequently adopted.

However, in the early stages, due to vulnerabilities in cheques, there were several cases of bad cheques which caused several nobles and businessmen to lose face.

But to preserve the nobility's dignity, these cases were never publicized.

Therefore, no one knew who those nobles were.

However, there were rumors that the Duke of Yan Fort ended in gloom and doom because of this incident.

But everyone took it as a joke.

After all, Yan Fort was overseas, beyond the jurisdiction of South County, and it was common knowledge that the Duke of Yan Fort was in poor health; his sudden death from worsening illness seemed reasonable.

Marinda was of course aware of these rumors.

Even more so, she knew too much.

Therefore, seeing the sincere expression on Arthur's face, she felt a slight relief in her heart.

Without any hesitation, she immediately waved to Edwin to signal him.

Verbal promises are no match for tangible benefits.

She had always thought so!

Especially when Arthur played a critical role, if he simply accepted verbal promises, she might hesitate and consider replacing him.

Because, those who believe in empty promises are either fools or have ulterior motives.

And Arthur, no matter how one looked at him, did not seem like a fool.

In the lounge, Marinda picked up another egg tart while Arthur chose a flaky pastry.

The golden-brown pastry was dotted with nuts, and cream was sandwiched inside. At the first bite, the crispy milky flavor burst forth, and as he chewed, the nuts crackled uniquely in Arthur's mouth.

"Didn't you already eat?"

Marinda watched as Arthur prepared to pick up another slice of strawberry cream Napoleon cake.

She discovered that Arthur had a keen fondness for sweets.

Of course, she did too.

"This is a midnight snack!"

Arthur emphasized.

As his Physique strengthened, his appetite increased daily. He ate a lot and digested quickly, especially since thinking too much just now had sped up his digestion; he was truly hungry now.

Naturally, the cooking skills of the chef at Marinda's home were also truly excellent.

When Arthur ate another shell-shaped egg cake and drank a cup of water, Edwin came back, holding a long, narrow box in his arms.

Completely devoid of grace, Marinda sucked on her finger, then grabbed a tablecloth nearby to wipe her hands before taking the box from him.

Carefree as she was, her demeanor was no different from the rough sailors at sea.

Even though she was dressed in a very pretty, shiny skirt.

Arthur, on the other hand, took a bowl of warm water handed by Edwin to wash off the grease and cream on his palms. By the time he dried his hands, Marinda had already opened the box and pushed it in front of him.

Inside the box lay a longsword in its scabbard. The sword was a hand-and-a-half type with a black scabbard and hilt, while the pommel and guard were silver-white. Where the silver and black intertwined under the light, there was a shimmering yet silent contradiction.

When Arthur gripped the hilt and drew the sword, the feeling of sharpness prickled the sweat hairs on his face, yet the blade was dull and unremarkable, even under the light.

More text appeared before Arthur's eyes—

[Name: Spider's Claw]

[Type: Sword-type Weapon]

[Quality: Secret Technique]

[Attributes: 1. Sharpness; 2. Lightness; 3. Bloodthirsty; 4. Poison Sac]

[Remarks: During the Seven Years' War, there was an assassin who used this longsword to assassinate two Western Sea Generals. When he targeted a third person, in order to silence by murder, he aimed the longsword at a little girl. An Orange Cat unexpectedly disrupted everything, resulting in the assassin's severe injury and death.

His body was hung in front of the battle lines of both armies, but the longsword was lost, only to appear later at the auction of the Lady of the Eternal Night and be added to her private treasure trove.]

...

[Sharpness: Its sharpness can easily pierce and cut through steel armor.]

[Lightness: Much lighter than ordinary weapons, allowing the wielder to swing it effortlessly.]

[Bloodthirsty: A special blood groove helps it tear wounds more easily, and wounds are difficult to stitch up.]

[Poison Sac: Hidden within the pommel is poison that can be applied to the blade, making it envenomed.]

...

"I acquired it by accident!"

"Quite a nice weapon!"

"You can give it a try!"

Hum!

Before Marinda could finish, Arthur had already drawn the sword, lightly waving it around. His experience with Basic Swordsmanship allowed him to quickly adapt to this sword, making him realize it was very suitable for Swift Bird Swordsmanship. Pseudo.

In fact, simply by gripping the longsword in some of the ways suggested by Swift Bird Swordsmanship. Pseudo, he had the illusion that the sword had become an extension of his arm.

Undoubtedly, this was an excellent compensation.

"A very good sword."

Arthur praised, but did not thank excessively.

Because this was what he deserved.

Marinda didn't mind that either.

The lady simply cautioned him—

"Edwin will leave immediately, and you will depart shortly after. They will treat you as the primary target for pursuit, so... be careful!"

Arthur nodded, picked up the longsword, and intended to put it back in the long narrow box.

But on second thought, he decided to strap the sword at his waist, repulsed by the possibility of saliva on it.

Even though it looked very clean.

Marinda noticed this and curled her lip.

Nevertheless, she still stopped Arthur before he could leave.

"Let me show you something nice!"