

Great Master 631

Chapter 631: Fight Back!

Marinda was taken aback.

Suddenly appearing, those shouting "God of the Inland River" had clearly come prepared.

Simply put, according to their plan, they were supposed to use the just now 13 ships to attack the "Oriental," or even simply ram the "Oriental" and sink it.

Then, to have the "God of the Inland River" judge South Los's "Spirit Medium."

Of course, it had to be under the guise of a charlatan, someone who offended the Divine Spirits.

Marinda was all too familiar with these guys' tactics.

But unexpectedly, the 13 ships were swallowed up by a whirlpool that had formed suddenly.

This scene was clearly beyond the expectations of those guys.

But what was more unexpected to those guys were the actions of their subordinates.

No!

To be precise, the Believers.

Some Believers who, because of too many misfortunes, had been deceived into it, believing they had found a spiritual reliance, only to see their destinies become even more miserable after witnessing the miraculous scene just now, directly believed that the "God of the Inland River" they worshipped had shown a miracle.

And the result?

Naturally, faith was unbeatable.

They just ran out carelessly, exposing themselves.

Almost instantly, Marinda figured out the other party's arrangements.

And, having figured out these guys' arrangements, Marinda had a good idea of why Arthur did what he did.

Arthur, that bad guy, was no Mr. Nice Guy. He had been bullied all the way to his doorstep, so of course, he wanted revenge. And what better way to retaliate than to off those guys?

That would naturally be...

Insulting the "God of the Inland River" those guys had crafted!

You all want the "God of the Inland River" to judge South Los's "Spirit Medium."

Then, be prepared for South Los's "Spirit Medium" to step over the "God of the Inland River" and rise up a level.

"Not only to insult the other party, but also to kill and dishearten them.

And by the way, lure the snake out of its hole.

Indeed...

What a bad guy!"

Marinda's azure eyes sparkled with a hint of brightness.

The words at the bottom of her heart were almost like a compliment.

Without any hesitation, Marinda did as Arthur had said.

Of course, Marinda slightly adjusted the wording.

The next moment, those among the crowd who were Marinda's subordinates started to shout out—

"The 'God of the Inland River' has hosted a unique farewell ceremony for the departure of its master, South Los's 'Spirit Medium'!"

"The 'God of the Inland River' has hosted a unique farewell ceremony for the departure of its master, South Los's 'Spirit Medium'!"

...

Once, twice.

One call followed another.

One call outdid another.

Compared with those obviously inexperienced 'God of the Inland River' believers, Marinda's subordinates were professionals.

Also, while shouting, they were looking around under the indication of their leader Urs, staring down anyone who had dissent on their face.

Then?

Naturally, they took advantage of the chaos to bag them.

As the Head Hunter personally selected by Marinda, Urs might have been a bit frank, but his vision was definitely outstanding. So, when he saw the younger brother of the boss's confidant, Wiggins, shuttling through the crowd with a group of young lads, he was completely stunned—

Hughes was moving through the crowd with a group of youths, but as they passed a man who was quietly cursing the boss, a cold gleam began to shimmer in the youths' eyes.

As they brushed past, an arm was raised, and a blade swept across the man's neck.

The man looked on in shock, his eyes widening as he instinctively clutched his neck.

But before the Fresh Blood could spray out, a youth rushed over, supporting the man.

"Father, the Doctor told you before, you can't get worked up in crowded places, I will take you away from here right now."

The words spoken dispelled the doubts of the surrounding people.

Especially since someone else chimed in to help.

"Your father fainted from excitement at the 'Swordsmanship Competition' last time. Why didn't you persuade him more?"

The young companion, incessantly babbling, then shielded more of the view with his body.

Urs had seen plenty of murders.

But slitting throats with a blade hidden between fingers was not common.

To use that tiny blade to slit someone's throat required skills not acquired in just three or five days, and what concerned Urs most was not this murder technique, but the ruthlessness of these youngsters.

And...

...their seamless coordination.

One slit the throat.

One dragged the body.

One concealed the act.

Their method, their speed, it was all done in one fluid motion.

Clearly, this wasn't their first time doing this.

Especially when Hughes sharply sensed someone observing, he casually looked them over, quickly locked onto the target, and the indifference and intent to kill that appeared in his eyes made even Urs's scalp tingle.

'This guy...'

Urs felt a surge of alarm inside him.

But when Hughes realized it was one of his own, he immediately retracted the killing intent, and a smile characteristic of youth sprang to his face.

Innocent and bright.

He nodded slightly at Urs and then slipped back into the crowd, vanishing from sight.

'Are all the boss's subordinates such monsters?'

Urs inwardly exclaimed.

Then, he quickly adjusted himself.

If the boss's subordinates were performing so remarkably, he, as the boss's trusted aide, couldn't fall behind.

Right away, the Head Hunter selected by Marinda herself began locking onto targets with even greater speed.

His methods became slightly more aggressive than before.

Marinda saw this.

But Marinda didn't care.

Arthur was her intimate and seamless partner, so if anyone wished to climb over Arthur to rise up, they'd better be prepared to be crushed by her.

So, the lady gently exhaled a puff of smoke, and with a lifted hand, she wrote down —

Kill!

For these believers to be present at the docks was proof enough of their fanaticism.

And to interrogate religious fanatics?

That was a joke.

No one could extract any information from the mouth of a fanatic unless...

... their worshipped Divine Spirits came personally.

But how is that possible?

The gods had long departed before the Golden Age.

So, Marinda boldly adjusted her rhetoric.

As for whether it would disrupt Arthur's plan to draw the snake out of its hole?

No, it won't.

The believers in the 'God of the Inland River' would jump out even more crazily.

Of course, Marinda knew that Arthur's target was definitely not these small fries; what Arthur wanted was the puppeteer behind this 'God of the Inland River'.

And as long as she slaughtered enough believers of the 'God of the Inland River', those people would certainly reveal flaws.

After all, even cannon fodder couldn't be wasted like this

Thinking this, Marinda glanced at the Crow in front of her.

The black Crow spoke the human language —

"Well killed!"

Marinda's lips curled into a smile as she picked up her pipe.

The Smoke then rose, enveloping and deepening the black Crow feathers beneath it, as if indeed like the Child of Misfortune of legend.

When the Crow caws, the time of foreboding omen and Calamity is upon us.

Priest Toran of the 'God of the Inland River', hiding in the crowd, felt as though he had plunged into an ice cellar.

Chapter 632: Target!

It's not the same!

It's not the same!

The High Priest's plan was not like this!

Toran's figure wavered, as he watched one member and believer of the church after another disappear, forcing himself not to show any unusual expression.

Toran knew well that if his expression were off, he would hardly escape the fate of death.

As a 'God of the Inland River's' believer, he was not afraid of death.

He only feared dying without worth.

He had to go back and report everything that happened here to the High Priest.

He didn't know why the carefully arranged thirteen ships were swallowed by the river, nor did he understand why that South Los 'Spirit Medium' seemed to have prophesied and arranged so many people in advance.

But he knew the High Priest certainly would.

The 'God of the Inland River's' priest quietly walked toward a small food stand on the side.

There, small vendors eager to earn a bit extra during the bustle had set up shop.

And that was his best disguise.

"Give me a glass of orange juice,"

Toran called out to the vendor from afar.

"Right away, sir!"

The busy vendor called out instinctively,

knowing well that Thirsty people weren't just Toran.

By the time Toran walked over, a wooden cup held half a glass of orange juice.

"Two Zeroes!

One Zero for the cup deposit!"

The small vendor said while handing over the orange juice.

"What?"

Toran was startled.

He remembered that orange juice at Shire District's snack stands was only one Zero, right?

And this deposit!

Why had it become so expensive?

Toran's hesitation immediately brought about the displeasure of the food stand owner.

"Do you want it or not? If not, put it down!"

The food stand owner shouted.

Such a shout naturally drew the attention of people nearby; when a young boy's gaze swept over, Toran did not hesitate to drop one Zero and two Zeroes and walked to the side.

Toran didn't want to create unnecessary complications.

But still, he frowned at the half glass of orange juice.

When he took a sip, he couldn't help but curse silently.

Because—

The orange juice was watered down!

'Swindler!

Damned swindler!

Just as the High Priest said, South Los was a city with no bottom line, filled with deceit and greed, and it indeed deserved to be purified!

Thinking so, the resolve of this 'God of the Inland River's' priest grew even firmer.

Upon noticing no one was following him, his steps quickened instantly.

In fact, no one noticed this priest.

But although people did not notice, it doesn't mean dogs didn't.

A cream-colored Labrador, with a cute smile, followed him at a leisurely pace.

Meanwhile, on the 'Oriental', in a separate cabin above the Inland River, Arthur was 'watching' the small cabin inside, where terror, deceit, and hatred intermingled, and 'watching' the covert battle and bloodshed on the dock unfold simultaneously, making Arthur almost feel like applauding.

Both for that Yula's acting skills and for these 'God of the Inland River's' followers.

'Splendid!

Truly splendid!'

Especially the latter, Arthur could hardly resist praising.

He never imagined that someone would eliminate him in such an "open and aboveboard" manner, which was just... ridiculously stupid.

So, was it likely that some confused folks were trying to please the higher-ups with such an act?

There had just been over 30 people at the dock, each one deeply brainwashed, and this was probably just a small, easily overlooked part of it.

The big shot probably wouldn't notice.

Only then could they surprise that big shot when the task was completed and gain even greater rewards.

And the big shots capable of supporting such a large cult were not scarce in South County.

At least every major noble family could easily do it.

In fact, only the wealth of those nobles could possibly support such a large congregation, and only their identity and military power could keep those in control of such large congregations submissive, while also using "supernatural power" to bewitch the common people, distorting their beliefs.

Of course, the most important thing was that only insiders could develop such a cult.

Not an insider?

They would have been branded as remnants of The Holy Court and burned a long time ago.

During the Silver Age, the pursuit of remnants of The Holy Court by the nobles never stopped.

Even now, in the Pioneer Era, any form of cult had no place to survive in South County—unless it was "permitted".

And although there were many major nobles in South County, only one had a direct "interest relationship" with him...

Inner Bay, the Golden Lion Family!

And the "closely related" person was just one: the eldest son of the Old Lion—Gleisa Hamlet!

'Cousin, are you so eager already?

Then I have even more reason to inherit the Golden Lion Family.

Because, a small-minded and underhanded person like you really tarnishes the honor of the Golden Lion Family!'

Arthur thought quietly to himself.

He was looking forward even more to the rewards to come.

Yes, rewards!

Whether it was Joe, Yula, and Lucius locked in the ship's cabin, or the "God of the Inland River".

Arthur was doing it all for XP.

But at that moment, Arthur felt he could get even more!

He could at least accelerate the slowing growth speed of his XP once again!

After all, the shipwrecks and the name of the master of the "God of the Inland River" had just been witnessed by everyone; he could regain his previous daily growth rate while gaining a large amount of XP—as time passed and the real end of the Cold Winter Festival neared, the novelty of the South Los citizens waned, and Arthur's daily XP increase had quickly dropped back to 100 XP over the past week.

Although 100 XP wasn't little for Arthur, after experiencing the thrill of gaining 5 or 600 XP daily, this 100 XP obviously could no longer satisfy Arthur.

Arthur glanced at his current XP—

3800!

Apart from the original 1600 points, the remaining 2200 points had all been added in the last week.

And the rate had started at 600 points and gradually dropped to 500, 400, and so on.

Today, it had been 100 points for two consecutive days.

And, quite obviously, if he didn't stir up a bit of turmoil today, even 100 points would be hard to maintain.

Fortunately, someone was cooperating with Arthur.

At that moment, Arthur started looking forward to tomorrow's South Los newspaper.

Of course, he wouldn't let the three people in the cabin go either.

Even a mosquito is meat after all!

Worried about the events on the ship being discovered?

As a qualified "Spirit Medium", Arthur had arranged for the first passengers of the "Oriental" to include journalists, hadn't he?

Of course, the tickets had been obtained through a "lottery", all above board and able to withstand scrutiny.

Now, he was just waiting for Marinda's investigation report.

About this, Arthur was not worried.

He had absolute faith in Marinda's abilities.

In fact, it was true.

About an hour later, Marinda handed a stack of files to Fujin, who was preening his feathers.

With Fujin's vision, Arthur clearly looked over those files.

Suddenly, surprise appeared in Arthur's eyes—

'It turned out to be like this!'

Chapter 633: Avenger!

Under Fujin's gaze, Arthur quickly learned the origins of Joe, Yula, and Lucius—

Among them, Joe was the fourteenth son of the president of the Reepra. Qiao Commerce Guild, with no hope of inheriting the family business, nor did he possess a diligent spirit, epitomizing the typical prodigal son.

Yula's background, however, was much richer.

Born in Old Town, Yula had eleven names and initially seduced others, engaging in minor extortion before, with age, she grew bolder, setting her sights on the middle class.

After three successful exploits, Ms. Yula's ambitions expanded further as she began collaborating with the 'Inland River Cult.'

Or, to put it accurately...

Back then, it was called 'Inland Waterway Mutual Aid Association'!

Initially, it was a small organization founded by commoners living along the Inland River to better survive together.

Similar organizations were plentiful everywhere and went completely unnoticed.

Because these kinds of organizations were very loosely structured, essentially breaking at the first blow.

As for when it transformed from 'Inland Waterway Mutual Aid Association' to 'Inland River Cult'?

The records didn't specify.

Clearly, it was a covert transformation.

About this, Arthur was a bit curious.

But what made Arthur more curious, was Lucius.

Lucius came from a middle-class family, both of his parents were tutors, his father excelled in literature and his mother in music and was proficient in playing the violin. Initially, Lucius should have had a promising future, but it changed when his father met with an accident—being a tutor for the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth sons of the president of Reepra. Qiao Commerce Guild, Lucius's father drowned by accident.

The sudden misfortune rendered Lucius's mother unable to accept the reality, turning her into a daze and continuously going to the shores of the Inland River.

And then...

She became a member of the 'Inland River Cult.'

Moreover, she donated her house and savings entirely to the 'Inland River Cult.'

Of course, it was still officially a 'trade.'

Then, Lucius's mother also drowned to death.

In less than half a year, Lucius lost his parents, house, and became penniless, only able to rely on his knowledge to teach children literacy as a way to make a living.

However, these weren't important.

What was important was that Lucius became Joe's friend.

And also, he joined the 'Inland River Cult.'

'Avenger, huh?'

Arthur thought to himself, his fingers lightly tapping the armrest of the chair.

Tap, tap!

In the distinctive sound of the solid wood handle, Arthur's mouth slightly curled upwards, he lifted his hand and embraced Pendragon into his arms, whispering—

"Pendragon, never become an Avenger.

Otherwise...

You will definitely be exploited."

After saying this, Pendragon was tossed by the "Hand of Void" onto the walking deck, and Pendragon looked bewildered.

Meow meow meow?

...

Lucius was washing his face in the public restroom.

The first-class cabins had private restrooms.

However, those were currently occupied by Joe and Yula, so Lucius thoughtfully chose to go to the public restroom—a space within the same first-class level that was completely deserted due to the existence of private restrooms, which slightly relieved Lucius.

When alone, this young man's face revealed sadness.

"Father, Mother."

The young man murmured softly.

Almost instantly, the young man plunged into memories of the past.

Back then, every Sunday, his father would take him and his mother to a small theater in Shire District to watch performances, afterwards they would dine at a restaurant on West Mok Avenue, and in the afternoon, the family of three would go to the library in Shire District to participate in reading salons.

Back then, the world was colorful.

Back then, what he felt was love.

But then...

Lucius thought about his father's body being brought back.

In that moment, the world dimmed.

And when his mother's body was brought back as well, his whole world shattered.

Standing in front of the washstand, the young man stared at himself in the mirror.

His face was pale, his eyes no longer held their usual warmth, and his lips were tightly pursed.

'So ugly!'

Lucius thought silently to himself.

At that time—

"So handsome!

Although I have said this more than once, do you know, Lucius? Right now, your appearance truly gives me an unprecedented shiver.

I really want to hold you and sink into the water with you!"

In her crisp voice, Yula suddenly appeared in the bathroom and then, just like that, hugged Lucius, greedily sniffing the scent on his body.

Tobacco mixed with a scent unique to a man after washing up.

This scent made Yula addicted.

Without realizing it, Yula hugged Lucius tighter.

As for Lucius, his already tense body resisted even more, his arms tensed up, and he crouched down to break free from Yula.

But...

It was futile.

Before Lucius could fully crouch down, Yula tightly imprisoned him, pressing her face against the back of Lucius's head.

An adult man's strength was unable to break free from a seemingly weaker woman.

Moreover, this man had even utilized some combat techniques.

This was unbelievable to anyone.

But for Lucius himself, it was commonplace.

However, being accustomed to it did not stop Lucius from struggling.

Clang!

The heel of Lucius's shoe lightly tapped the side, and a blade the size of a dagger sprang from the tip of his shoe, and then Lucius turned his head and kicked backwards.

But this sudden attack still missed.

Yula not only dodged it easily, but she also buried her face even deeper into the back of Lucius's hair, inhaling deeply. Compared to her earlier greed, the excitement in Yula's eyes almost reached its peak now.

It was a hunger.

However, the woman was still holding back.

The unripe fruit wasn't ready.

She must endure.

Yula reminded herself while giggling lightly—

"The combat techniques are what I taught you, and those little tricks you also learned from me. Thinking you can defeat me with these is absolutely impossible.

However, if you agree to my terms...

I can teach you some special skills."

In the crisp tone of her voice, there was a full sense of temptation.

Lucius's face showed his struggle.

He needed power.

Only with power could he avenge his father and mother.

But the woman behind him made him wary.

There was no tangible evidence.

It was just an instinct.

The moment she appeared, he instinctively felt she was dangerous.

Even if she brought the true facts about the death of his father and mother, it was the same.

Yula relished Lucius's struggle.

She felt pleased.

However, the next moment, the woman slightly furrowed her brow—

"You woke up so soon?"

Chapter 634: Avenger. Down!

Joe woke up a few minutes faster than Yula had anticipated.

At this, the lady shrugged her shoulders.

"Happy times are always short-lived!"

"I'm going to deal with our 'wallet' now."

"Or should I say..."

"Would you like to have a deep conversation with me tonight?"

Gently poking Lucius with her finger, the lady left the public washroom with a series of light chuckles only when she saw his expression growing ever so ugly.

Once alone again, Lucius clenched his fist.

Then...

The Avenger knelt helplessly in front of the washroom's sink, his fists pounding forcefully against the basin.

Pain shot up from his palms!

And that made him pound even harder!

The more it hurt!

The better he felt!

After well over a dozen blows, Lucius's fists had become bloody and blurred, and he was gasping for air, with his whole body spread out over the sink.

He could sense the danger from that woman.

He could also discern her ulterior motives.

He certainly knew that self-harming his body was wrong.

But the inner torment left him no other choice.

Because—

He truly wanted to avenge his parents.

'Maybe...

if this happens a few more times, I will compromise?'

Lucius thought to himself as he got up from the ground and began to wash his wounds in the sink, then he tidied up his appearance as much as possible before leaving the washroom.

The young Avenger had already concocted a lie about accidentally falling in the washroom.

Even so, upon leaving the washroom, the young man had deliberately scattered plenty of water on the floor.

In the past, the young man would have never done such a thing.

But now?

For the sake of revenge.

The young Avenger had long broken through his former boundaries.

Emerging from behind the door, Lucius headed back to his cabin—the first-class cabin booked by Joe was a suite with a living room aside from the bedroom, which was where Lucius could stay.

However, just as he left the cabin, the young Avenger saw a hint of orange glow—

A cat!

The Orange Cat of the South Los Spirit Medium.

Lucius swore he couldn't be mistaken.

After all, the Orange Cat was not only large in size but also fat.

Seeing the cat squatting by the side of the promenade deck in a daze, Lucius instinctively called out softly.

"Be careful!

Don't move!

I will save you right away!"

Saying this, Lucius began to carefully approach Pendragon, making soft rustling sounds and lowering his body to show he meant no harm.

At this moment, Pendragon was still bewildered.

Who am I?

Where am I?

I am Pendragon.

I am on Arthur's boat.

No, that's wrong!

I was just in Arthur's arms, so why have I appeared on the deck?

Pendragon, with a confused cat face, squatted there dully, looking extremely adorable to anyone who saw him.

Lucius was no exception.

Although the Orange Cat was large and quite fat, it was not at all disgusting.

On the contrary, the chubby Pendragon seemed endearingly simple.

"Mimi, don't be afraid!

I'm coming over now!"

Lucius was speaking as he cradled Pendragon, who was about 10 centimeters from the edge of the deck, in his arms, feeling the hefty weight. Lucius couldn't help but exclaim,

"What a fat cat you are!

Have you wandered off and gotten lost after sneaking out of Lord Kledos's room?

Come, let me take you back to your owner."

As he said these words, Lucius carried Pendragon towards the only cabin on the promenade deck.

The oakwood planks, polished with linseed oil, gave an extremely solid sensation underfoot, even through the soles of his boots, while the white railings and oak handrails provided protection for those ascending this staircase.

Lucius was no exception.

The young man climbing this staircase felt an uncommon sense of tranquility.

Even so, this young man couldn't help but slow his pace unconsciously.

However, no matter how much he slowed his steps, the young man soon reached the true top tier of the 'Oriental'.

A small open space, akin to a terrace, was adorned with green plants and flowers on either side of the door, with dense vines hanging from above. The interplay of green and white added a vibrant liveliness to the area.

On one side of the solid wood door, there was a round, cross-gridded window, with a string of wind chimes hanging along the sill.

From Lucius's perspective, he could see through the window the silhouette of someone reading inside the room.

It was the 'Spirit Medium' from South Los.

And it was in the moment of catching sight of Arthur's silhouette that the young Avenger's heart stirred suddenly.

An audacious idea began to rise irrepressibly from the depths of his heart.

Perhaps...

While he was contemplating, Pendragon had already escaped the clutches of the young Avenger and jumped onto the deck, slipping into the room from beside the door.

It was only at that moment that the young Avenger noticed a cat flap beside the solid wood door, which had been concealed by the plants until then.

With this discovery, the young Avenger's bold idea became even clearer.

Meanwhile—

"Pan?"

The distinctive noise of the opening and closing of the cat flap drew the attention of the 'Spirit Medium' from South Los.

The 'Spirit Medium' first petted the head of his own cat.

Then, he saw Lucius standing outside the door.

Without any hesitation, the cat-loving Spirit Medium from South Los opened the door immediately and issued a cordial invitation to the young Avenger—

"Your name is Lucius, isn't it?"

Thank you for bringing Pendragon back to me.

This guy is out at sea for the first time, so he's a bit overexcited.

I distinctly told him not to run off!

Come in, please.

Have a cup of orange tea, at least, to allow me to express my gratitude."

Saying this, Arthur stepped aside to make way, gesturing behind him.

Lucius, with a plan already in mind, did not refuse.

"Thank you for the invitation.

I shall not be a bother then."

As he spoke, Lucius entered the cabin.

The young Avenger immediately surmised that Arthur was definitely a lover of the finer things in life.

Not only was the area of this cabin several times larger than a first-class cabin, but it was also divided into a bedroom, study, drawing room, game room, wine cellar, cigar room, and interestingly, Lucius spotted an inner terrace—inside the 'Oriental' was a small theater, but from here, one could watch the plays from above and keep all the guests within view without entering the theater itself.

Beyond that, there was food and drink.

A silver three-tier pastry stand held tarts, biscuits, and puff cakes, while another silver fruit dish contained oranges, pears, grapes, apples, and peaches.

Being able to place fruits of different seasons together once again showcased the 'Spirit Medium's' luxurious taste.

Of course, what left Lucius most astonished was a golden peacock figurine on the bookshelf, completely carved out of pure gold and embedded with gems.

The peacock was made of gold, and each feather in its fanned tail was adorned with a gemstone.

Not ostentatious, just perfect.

Treasure!

Lucius appraised it, and then mentally estimated the value of the Golden Peacock figurine, immediately drawing a sharp breath.

Amid Lucius's amazement, Arthur, however, exclaimed—

"Your hand?!"

"It's nothing serious, just a little accident..."

Lucius began, ready with his fabricated lie.

But at that moment, the young Avenger's speech abruptly stopped.

And not only was he at a loss for words, but his eyes also widened in shock.

Chapter 635: Testing!

Under Lucius' watchful gaze, a 20ml test tube appeared out of nowhere in the hand of "Spirit Medium" South Los, containing a blue-green potion that shone with a luminous glow.

Of course, that was not the point.

The point was, as the stopper was pulled out and the potion poured onto his injured palm, the scarred flesh began to heal at a visible rate.

This, this...

What kind of power is this!

Amazement filled Lucius' heart.

The young Avenger had not witnessed such power for the first time.

He had seen it once in Yula.

In the "Inland River Cult," he had also seen it in that High Priest.

And this was the third time!

But no matter which time, they all shocked Lucius, and... ignited his desire.

Lucius craved this power.

Not just because it was formidable, but also because with this power, he could take his revenge.

He had sought such power before, but aside from the two known instances, he had found nothing.

Even the two known sources were fraught with danger.

Yula seemed very willing to teach him, but instinctively he felt danger, his body even resisted contact with Yula, and so far, he suspected Yula's purpose in approaching him was not simple.

As for the "Inland River Cult"?

He did not mind learning the power mastered by his enemies to take revenge, but he was well aware that hatred prevented him from facing the High Priest; he feared he would show a flaw.

Once a flaw was revealed, it would mean death.

Death was not something Lucius feared.

What he feared was not having his revenge.

And now!

Another opportunity had presented itself before him.

The young Avenger began to rapidly spin his thoughts.

Arthur had been quietly observing Lucius' expression all the while, noting the contemplation in his eyes. The young "Spirit Medium" chuckled and said, "It seems your guide, your teacher, did not inform you about potions. This is the 'Healing Potion' of the Talin Faction, a gift from a friend of mine, but its effects are really quite impressive."

With that, the young "Spirit Medium" motioned for Lucius to sit down before handing him a cup of orange tea.

"Try it, it's essential for sailing," Arthur said with a smile.

"Thank you," Lucius immediately nodded and expressed his gratitude, while his mind was racing even faster.

He wanted to learn this power.

But knowledge is expensive!

Lucius, whose parents were both tutors, knew all too well the high cost of knowledge—especially after his fruitless search and eighteen years of life without ever encountering such power. He understood just how precious the power he wished to learn truly was.

He could not afford the "tuition."

Beyond that, another concern troubled the young Avenger.

It was the calling from the dock just now—

The owner of the "God of the Inland River" was none other than "Spirit Medium" South Los!

And the "God of the Inland River" was the core of the "Inland River Cult"!

The person before him might also be an enemy!

This concern caused pain and struggle to surface in the eyes of the young Avenger.

Pain from his inadequacy.

Struggle over whether to compromise with Yula.

In Lucius' eyes, it seemed that besides Yula, he had no other options.

Arthur, who was sitting opposite and amusing Pendragon, was now quite certain that Lucius before him was a rookie among rookies.

Although somewhat talented in "Spirituality," he had never actually been in contact with the "Mystic Side."

However, what Arthur found curious was the unusual sensation when the other revealed his pain and struggle—the feeling of an increase in "Spirituality."

Very faint.

Very abnormal.

But exceptionally clear to Arthur's senses.

And this, to Arthur's surprise.

Arthur, no longer the rookie he once was, had a much deeper understanding of "Spirituality."

"Spirituality," this special talent, only exists in a very small portion of people.

Moreover, even among those with the talent, their "Spirituality" is initially constant and innate.

Simply put, the "Spirituality" of the talented is basically fixed and unchangeable before they experience a Bloodline Awakening, Talent Awakening, or a Ritual.

Why do I say basically?

Because there is an extremely special circumstance.

That is, when a person with the talent encounters a drastic change, with life becoming full of ups and downs, their "Spirituality" can also increase.

But such a case is very rare.

Moreover, Arthur did not believe that Lucius had just experienced that kind of drastic change in front of him—he hadn't killed the other's parents.

So...

'Some kind of ritual?'

Arthur guessed in his heart.

And this made Arthur even more interested.

Towards unfamiliar knowledge, Arthur always maintained a reverence and was always full of curiosity.

'Yula, huh?

Truly unexpected!'

Previously, Arthur had doubted that the information regarding Yula had some inaccuracies.

And now?

Arthur wouldn't believe a single word of it anymore.

Obviously, the Yula in front of him and the Yula from the investigation were completely different.

Of course, Marinda couldn't be blamed.

Being able to gather that information in such a short amount of time was enough to show that the current Yula was well-prepared, just waiting for someone to investigate.

Therefore, that information was true.

To put it simply, there definitely exists a Yula exactly as described in the documentation.

But that is absolutely not the Yula in front of him.

'Marinda's investigation must have triggered the 'alarm' left by this Yula, right?

If that's the case...

Then I'll 'make up' for it.'

Thinking this, the smile on Arthur's face became even warmer.

He knew too little about this Yula.

He needed to truly understand the other party.

Or rather, Arthur wanted to probe into the other party's background.

Although up to now, "Death Intuition" had not flashed, Arthur still maintained the necessary caution.

The lion uses all its strength even to catch a rabbit!

This saying from his hometown, he kept it firmly in mind.

After all, he did not want to capsize in a gutter.

So, the next moment, Arthur looked at Lucius with a hint of pity in his eyes, and his voice was even softer—

"Lucius, have you encountered any trouble?"

I can sense your confusion at the moment.

If you don't mind, I am willing to be your listener.

Of course, if it is some trouble, I can also help you solve it, but...

There will be a fee!"

Facing Arthur's inquiry, Lucius subconsciously prevaricated.

"It's nothing, I just..."

However, the words had only just left his mouth when the young Avenger suddenly stopped.

Because, the young Avenger suddenly realized that the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los seemed to be listening to something.

Then, under the gaze of the young Avenger, Arthur's eyebrows furrowed slightly, and he whispered to himself—

"So that's how it is!"

Chapter 636: Fabrication. Up!

Hmm?

Is someone there?

As Lucius listened to the scene in front of him, his muscles tensed up instantly, and a narrow-bladed dagger in his sleeve landed straight in his hand.

But, in the next moment, the young avenger became puzzled.

His eyes, his ears, they detected no intruder.

Yet, the "Spirit Medium" of South Los before him...

Wait a moment!

"Spirit Medium"?!

In an instant, Lucius thought of some rumors.

Rumors about the "Spirit Medium" of South Los being able to communicate with the undead.

And it was at the moment of recalling this rumor that Lucius's tense body began to tremble, the young avenger's lips quivering uncontrollably.

Father! Mother!

The young avenger wanted to shout out, but in the end, his lips were clenched tightly.

He hoped it was his father, his mother.

Yet he also feared it was his father, his mother.

What he feared even more was that it was not his father, his mother.

Time passed, each minute, each second.

And every second for Lucius was like an eternity of torment, as if he had fallen into an abyss.

About five minutes later, Arthur finished listening and his gaze once again fell on Lucius.

The young avenger didn't ask any questions, but looked anxiously at Arthur.

"You know, our family has some unique abilities.

Though not everyone can awaken them, once awakened, we can do some things ordinary people cannot understand, like just now..."

Arthur appeared to be organizing his thoughts.

At this point, Lucius couldn't hold back any longer.

"Is it my father, my mother?"

The young avenger asked directly.

"Yes, and no."

Arthur answered ambiguously.

The young avenger was stunned for a moment.

Arthur's words continued.

"This is somewhat complicated to explain. Normally, when people die, their souls quickly proceed to 'The Eternal Resting Land', but some souls, due to various obsessions, linger in the world of the living.

As time passes, they become maddened.

They turn into what people call ghosts.

Some even become evil spirits, fierce spirits," Arthur explained.

These were all common knowledge on the 'Mystic Side', completely true.

Arthur wouldn't fabricate lies about such well-known matters.

A wise man once said that if you want a lie to seem real, it should contain nine truths for every one falsehood.

Arthur agreed deeply with that statement.

So, everything he said that others knew was true.

As for the things others didn't know?

That depended on the situation.

Just like now.

"But your parents are a bit different.

They have become..."

Arthur paused, hesitating.

"Become what?"

Lucius stood up quickly, for to the young avenger there was nothing more pressing than matters concerning his parents.

"They have been influenced.

In fact, their fragmentary souls have been trying hard to convey some messages to you, but the influenced spirits couldn't manage to do that.

This time, when you entered my room, which has some special arrangements, it allowed them to momentarily break free from that influence and communicate with me briefly.

Only, the incomplete state of their souls made it difficult for them to convey more details.

They simply expressed their concern for you, and wanted you to live well," Arthur replied after a moment of deliberation.

This response was completely based on Arthur's collected information, rephrased and compiled.

From the previous information collected, there was only one point that Arthur could confirm.

That was: Lucius's parents hadn't died a normal death.

According to the information gathered by Marinda, it should be related to the "Reepra. Qiao Commerce Guild" and the "Inland River Cult." Had it not been for the faint changes in Lucius's spirituality, Arthur would have accepted this information too.

But, when such changes occurred:

It was clear that not only were Yula's investigative materials untrustworthy,

So were Lucius's.

At least, after the scene in the washroom, Arthur was absolutely convinced that Yula was not innocent concerning the death of Lucius's parents.

That sense of taunting prey was proof that it was all orchestrated by Yula, Arthur believed.

The goal was to turn Lucius into a perfect "raw material" for a ritual of his own.

As for how Arthur knew everything that had happened in the public bathroom?

It definitely wasn't because he was spying on anything!

It was just that during the making of "Oriental," as a precaution, he had prepared some measures, that's all.

Of course, that's not important.

Just like the similar surveillance in every first-class cabin, it's not important.

What's important is that Arthur was a bit curious as to what kind of ritual Yula was planning to hold, whether this ritual provided any extra help to him, or whether the secret techniques he possessed were of any help?

And was the level of the ritual a regular one, or was it an Entry Ritual?

As for the Ascend Step?

Impossible.

The "Stairway of Ascension" wasn't that easy, and if Yula were an "Entrant," the "Death Intuition" would have definitely flickered.

Mulling over these thoughts, Arthur's gaze turned towards Lucius.

At that moment, the young Avenger stood there in a daze.

Influence! Fragmentary soul!

These two terms kept echoing in the young Avenger's ears.

Although unable to fully understand the facts these terms signified in the Mystic Side, merely the literal meanings of the words were enough to set the young Avenger's insides ablaze.

Why did he seek revenge? It was for his parents.

But now!

The souls of his parents had become fragmentary!

This...

With his jaw tightly clenched, Lucius ground his teeth with a grating sound.

A hint of blood appeared in Lucius's eyes.

Kill!

Kill kill kill!

Kill those bastards!

Anger fuelled the intent to kill!

But Lucius wasn't impulsive; he thought again about the gap between him and those people.

Instantly, he felt powerless once again.

Powerlessness was imbued with pain!

In that moment, Lucius's spirituality once again began to grow, albeit faintly.

As Arthur sensed this, he grew even more curious about Yula's methods.

Then, the Spirit Medium of South Los bluntly said—

"My old friend, the 'God of the Inland River,' has asked me to apologize to you."

"Hm?"

Lucius was taken aback.

"You don't actually believe that the 'Inland River Cult' was created by my old friend the 'God of the Inland River,' do you?"

He doesn't even know about the existence of the 'Inland River Cult.'

That guy loves nothing more than roaming beneath the surface of Xisis Port, occasionally basking in the sun when no one is around.

As for founding a cult?

He's totally uninterested in that."

Arthur spread his hands wide.

Lucius looked at Arthur, and his intuition told him that the Spirit Medium of South Los before him wasn't lying.

Then...

"Someone is using the name of a Divine Spirit under false pretenses?"

Lucius blurted out.

"There are always some people who will take such shortcuts, and then, they bring trouble to someone innocent like me—I finally understand what the complexity in the look you gave me a moment ago was all about."

Arthur sighed.

Afterward, the young Spirit Medium pondered for a moment before speaking.

Chapter 637 Fabricate. Below!

"Sorry!"

"Previously, the 'spirituality' emanating from you led me to believe that you already had a teacher or a guide."

"However, it was only after your parents informed me about certain matters that I realized you had stumbled into this world—a world that's not so wonderful—by accident."

"Although my old friend did no wrong, in the end, I have used Their name, so—"

"I can offer you some compensation."

Arthur said, shrugging his shoulders.

Only then did the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los continue.

"Our family's rituals, belonging to the Kledos legacy, are not something I can teach you."

"The legacy I possess from the 'Cat Hole' is also bound by contracts."

"However, I have two other rituals in my possession—"

One is the meditation method of the Talin Faction, the 'Tower Oath'."

The other is the Assassin's blood rite secret technique, 'Bloodlust'."

The former belongs to one of the three basic types of regular rituals, the vow category, while the latter belongs to the indulgence category."

The 'Tower Oath' is the simplest of all; you only need to find a tower over 10 meters tall, under the starry sky, consume Secret Medicine, and then vow with your true name 'to humbly progress and learn continuously, maintaining over six hours of study daily'."

But if one breaks this vow, death awaits them."

It is a true death, with no possibility of turning back."

'Bloodlust' is more direct—hunting your enemies brings immense pleasure, but as this pleasure accumulates, it can lead to an obsession. If not controlled, this obsession can cause profound emptiness in your normal state."

"As long as you can provide 10 kilograms of gold, you may choose either one."

At this point, Arthur paused and looked at Lucius.

The young avenger was momentarily stunned.

He had been incredibly excited upon hearing the word 'compensation.'

Especially upon hearing the names of the rituals 'Tower Oath' and 'Bloodlust,' he was so thrilled he almost shouted out loud.

Was he finally about to touch that magical power?

With such power, he could finally take his revenge!

But he had not expected it to cost 10 kilograms of gold!

This abrupt twist left the young avenger frozen in place.

"What's the matter?

You didn't think my compensation would entail teaching you for free, did you?"

Arthur observed Lucius with a curious interest.

Lucius immediately shook his head.

"No!

I wouldn't be that naive!"

Even if he had thought just that a moment ago, the young avenger would never admit it.

He admitted to himself that he had been naive and childish.

After all he had experienced, he still naively believed in the chance of getting everything for nothing, like manna from heaven.

This thought made the young avenger laugh at himself internally.

But he was becoming more and more convinced by Arthur's words.

And this was exactly the effect Arthur wanted.

Arthur knew human nature all too well.

Gifts are met with suspicion.

Only costly things are treasured.

"Trust me, this knowledge is even more precious than you could imagine.

Me asking you for gold is already taking the compensation into account."

Arthur stood up to pour Lucius another cup of orange tea.

"Hmm."

Lucius nodded.

And deep down, the young avenger began to do some serious calculations.

1 gold coin weighs 2 grams.

10 kilograms is 10,000 grams.

That means...

5,000 gold coins!

Even though he already understood that such power was rare and precious, he was still taken aback by the price.

Even when his parents were alive and his family was wealthy, they couldn't have afforded such an amount.

In fact, they couldn't even come up with 1,000 gold coins, let alone 5,000.

And now?

Even less to say.

Lucius had only about 10 gold notes on him.

That amount was carefully saved by the young avenger himself.

"I need to think about it, Lord Kledos."

The young avenger said so.

"Of course!

I'm here any time before this journey ends."

Arthur smiled as he saw the young avenger out the door and watched him descend the stairs until the figure completely disappeared, only then did Arthur return to his cabin.

He first checked every plank of the deck that Lucius had walked on after entering the cabin, then the chair the other had sat on, the teacup he had used.

Then, after checking the entire cabin one more time, the corners of his mouth slightly curled up.

The trap is set.

Now, to wait for the fish to bite.

Lucius was never the focus.

The focus has always been Yula.

And the "Tower Oath," "Bloodlust" are in a way...

A reminder!

Yes, a reminder!

This was not some sort of test!

When Arthur had just mentioned these two rituals, he meant it genuinely.

If Lucius really produced 5,000 gold coins, he would truly let him choose one ritual and teach it to him without reservation.

Only this could remind Yula, who had always been monitoring Lucius, of Arthur Kredos's 'erudition' and the Kredos family's astonishing legacy.

Only this could get Yula to take the bait.

Only this could make Yula 'learn' more secret techniques from him through Lucius.

And it would be in exchange for something of equal value.

As for the money?

Lucius had none.

Did Yula have any money, then?

If Yula did have money, he wouldn't have to engage in convoluted dealings with Qiao Xu.

So, for more secret techniques, Yula would certainly offer something of equal value.

Arthur had gone through that period of ceaselessly pursuing secret techniques.

Even now, he was still in a similar phase.

So, Arthur knew well the madness of the 'Mystic Side Person' during that time, willing to sell their soul for a tiny bit of knowledge.

And if it weren't necessary to sell one's soul?

Then that would be excellent.

It would truly be a case of buying whatever one wanted.

Also, given the 'image' he had previously cultivated,

Arthur believed the items of equal value presented by Yula would not be some common trinkets, but would surely be of substantial value...

Information!

Regarding props or one's own Mystic Side knowledge?

Impossible.

No one would sell their props and Mystic Side knowledge.

Even if they had reached a certain level where these props and knowledge were no longer useful, they would still attach an incredibly high price to them before contemplating a sale.

Of course, this was the scenario Arthur would most welcome.

Yet, it was possible that a less favourable outcome could occur.

And at that time, another method would have to be employed.

Arthur silently contacted his other trump card in his mind.

At the same time, he kept a close watch on Lucius.

As Lucius returned from the top deck cabin and walked on the promenade deck, he seemed somewhat distracted, not fully awakening until he reached his own cabin's door.

The young avenger quickly adjusted himself.

But as soon as he pushed the door open, he saw Yula sitting calmly on the sofa, quietly watching the doorway.

At this moment, although Yula's mouth held a smile, there was a faint sharpness in his eyes.

Immediately, a chill ran through the young avenger's heart as he thought—

'Bad news!'

Chapter 638 Peeping!

Lucius, as always, maintained silence and sat down beside Yula—this was Yula's rule; as long as she was present, Lucius had to be close to her.

At first, Lucius was very resistant.

But for the sake of revenge, Lucius had no choice.

And now?

The feeling of resistance was still there.

Habit?

Some things are impossible to get used to.

Once, a fat man said that one could get used to eating shit, perhaps even developing a taste for shrimp fried with leeks, but if you had preconceived notions about someone from the start, those would truly be hard to change until death.

Because, once you put on tinted glasses, every action of the other person seems malicious.

With the passage of time, these prejudices deepen, instead of turning into habit.

But Lucius was different.

Because...

Lucius's feelings toward Yula weren't prejudice.

They were genuine wariness.

And Yula truly was malicious.

Just like at this moment—

Yula turned her body, supporting her left hand beneath her ear, adopting a pose that highlighted the curves of her body as much as possible to face Lucius.

Her vacant right hand gently slid across Lucius's shoulder.

But when it touched Lucius's upper arm, Yula's right hand changed into a gesture with her index finger extended, and she began to tap on Lucius's arm bit by bit.

"Darling, could you tell me where you've just been?"

Yula asked with a smile.

"I picked up that cat belonging to the South Los 'Spirit Medium' while strolling on the deck and returned it to him. After that, he invited me for two cups of orange tea,"

Lucius told the truth.

The young Avenger knew that lying was unlikely to fool Yula by his side.

So, the young Avenger cleverly omitted some details.

"Oh?"

Is that so?"

Yula inquired.

And she leaned her entire body closer.

The lady pressed her chin on Lucius's shoulder and wrapped her right hand around Lucius's waist, while her left hand began to slide up and down in front of Lucius's chest.

Feeling Lucius's tense body, the lady's mouth echoed with a clear laugh.

"Darling, what are you nervous about?"

"I'm not nervous, I'm just uncomfortable,"

Lucius replied, frowning deeply.

"Ah, still uncomfortable.

You have to learn to get used to it!

After all...

You are getting more and more fragrant!"

The lady said, and without warning, she raised both hands and clutched at Lucius's neck.

It wasn't playful.

Nor was it a joke.

She was genuinely exerting force, tightening her grip bit by bit; Lucius's neck was constricted bit by bit, and a feeling of suffocation began to set in, his face turned red, then started to turn purplish.

The pain of impending death spread with the instincts of his body.

Yula perceived it carefully.

She had not wanted to resort to such measures.

Because it would affect the taste of the 'fruit'.

However, the appearance of that South Los 'Spirit Medium' made her guard rise.

She never believed the words that Lucius said.

Lucius was a 'Seed' she had selectively bred, having been involved in its germination from the start, not to mention cultivating it carefully.

She knew Lucius too well.

Moreover...

She had already tampered with Lucius in various ways.

Faced with the carefully chosen seed, she would never be 'indifferent'.

Feeling the imminent birth of Death, Yula released her hands, activated the secret technique, and gently asked—

"Tell me, what just happened?"

"Cough, cough, I was just walking on the deck..."

Lucius fell onto the carpet, coughing as he recounted everything that had just occurred, unlike the previous omissions, this time, the young Avenger told Yula everything in minute detail, even mentioning that the cup of orange tea was very tasty.

After saying all this, the young Avenger completely collapsed onto the carpet, his body curling involuntarily amid the streams of tears and snot.

This unconscious spectacle drew Yula's attention.

Yula chuckled as she placed her foot on the young Avenger's head and rubbed slowly; then, she even extended her toes into the young Avenger's mouth.

Feeling the warmth, experiencing Lucius's pain and torment, Yula's thoughts became agile.

The lady connected the information in Lucius's words and one conjecture after another arose at the bottom of her heart, then the scenes at the dockyard also appeared, following that, such conjectures started to become clearer, and each clearer guess changed the lady's expression slightly.

First was surprise.

Then amazement.

Next came realization.

And then...

It was excitement.

"So it's like this!

Wonderful! Wonderful!

The glory of my lord shall spread across the land!"

The lady murmured to herself.

It wasn't the murmur of thought but seemed somewhat delirious.

And this delirious state was clearly conveyed to Arthur's view.

'Not only is there a secret technique similar to torture and interrogation, but there is also one for reconstruction?

Every interrogator would certainly be envious of such a technique.'

Arthur made such a remark while he recalled the changes in Yula's expressions just now.

Arthur of course didn't have a similar reconstructive technique, so he naturally had to rely on himself.

Fortunately, Arthur was not overly foolish.

And besides, everything before him was a trap he had set.

'The surprise must be that the 'God of the Inland River' is my friend.

Amazement must be because I am willing to compensate Lucius.

The excitement must be about... the 'my lord' Yula mentioned!'

Arthur thought to himself, unable to resist narrowing his eyes.

At this moment, Arthur felt like a fisherman who encounters an unexpected gust of wind.

'My lord? My lord?

Besides the 'Inland River Cult,' is there another sect?

No!

It's not just that there is another, but they have even sent believers like Yula to infiltrate the 'Inland River Cult'—if that's the case...

The next step would be for Yula to incite a dispute between me and the 'Inland River Cult'!

Arthur conjectured from Yula's perspective.

Arthur didn't know why Yula had infiltrated the 'Inland River Cult.'

But it was definitely with malicious intent.

If there's a chance to provoke a war between the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los and the 'Inland River Cult,' the other party would be very willing.

After all, the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los and the 'God of the Inland River' are friends, and the 'Inland River Cult' has been using the name of the 'God of the Inland River' all along.

With such a premise, wouldn't it be reasonable for the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los to take action?

Thinking thus, Arthur looked once more towards the first-class cabin where Yula and Lucius were—

By now, Yula had completely returned to normal.

Then, the lady began whispering the Glyphic Language.

She needed to ensure that no one had Peeped here during the time her mind was in a trance.

Invisible ripples filled the entire cabin and, having found no Peeping secret techniques, the lady's mouth curved up slightly, then, she walked towards her luggage.

There, was an item of paramount importance!

Chapter 639: Tentacles, Attack!

Note!

Hidden in a secret compartment of a suitcase was a notebook.

It contained several pieces of information Yula had gathered within the 'Inland River Cult'.

Originally, this lady planned to exchange this information for more meritorious service.

And now?

It was for a much greater scheme.

"Returning it to the cult in exchange for meritorious service is a good choice,

but if I could resolve the 'Inland River Cult' without shedding blood ...

that would be the real meritorious service!

With such meritorious service, I might receive the blessing from the 'Lady of Sorrow'!"

Yula caressed the notebook, already visualizing the battle between South Los's 'Spirit Medium' and the 'Inland River Cult' in her mind, her eyes couldn't help but show excitement, and she continuously murmured to herself.

At this moment, Yula was extremely grateful!

Grateful for her decision to infiltrate the 'Inland River Cult'.

Though seeking out this information, violating the contract, made her power drop from an 'Entrant' to a mere 'Mystic Side Person', at this moment, Yula believed it was worth it.

After all, it was merely a fall in power!

She had exchanged that power for her survival.

And now?

She was about to become a 'Follower' of the 'Lady of Sorrow'.

She would begin to 'Ascend Step'.

Step by step.

She would stand under that lady.

She would be above thousands beneath one god.

Thinking of this, the lady became increasingly excited.

Yet even she didn't notice that, in her excitement, a tiny tentacle emerged from her ear.

Twisting and trembling incessantly.

As if dancing.

The lady did not notice.

But Arthur saw it clearly.

And almost instantly, Arthur diverted his gaze.

Because—

"Death Intuition" was flickering slightly.

Not at this moment.

But in the brief future.

Faint, but alert enough.

And the moment after Arthur shifted his gaze, the tip of the tiny tentacle split into three parts and expelled nearly transparent thin threads.

Like a silkworm spinning silk, yet growing rapidly when exposed to the wind.

Instantly, they formed a net and enveloped Yula's face.

Yet the lady seemed utterly unaware of anything, still excitedly muttering to herself.

"What friends, she's the master!

'God of the Inland River' must be South Los's 'Spirit Medium's master!

Yes!

Yes, yes!

That's right!

Only this explains the oddity of the 'Inland River Cult'.

Without a god's blessing, it's a cult!

Just expelling the invasive 'Inland River Cult' from Seberlin, then all of Seberlin will be ours, the glory of the 'Lady of Suffering' will return to the earth.

Ha, it surely can return to the earth!

Ha, it can, it definitely can!"

Yula couldn't help but laugh out loud.

The laughter was somewhat sharp and piercing, and her face, even wrapped in nearly transparent threads, still clearly showed its distortion.

Even more so because of the entanglement of these threads.

The whole process lasted about 30 seconds.

The transparent threads vanished into the air.

The tiny tentacle also retracted back into Yula's ear.

Then, Yula suddenly snapped awake, rapidly recovering from that mad, dreamlike state.

The lady first paused, then incredulously looked down at her own hands.

Power!

Her power had returned!

Not fully restored!

But now, she possessed the power of a Great Arcana Level!

Having never felt such a condition before, but having read about it more than once in the church's scriptures, Yula quickly knelt on both knees—

"Merciful 'Lady of Suffering'!

You are the mother of all!

You bear our suffering!

And your blessing shall guide our way forward!"

After murmuring her prayer for a moment, Yula then rose again.

Different from before, she now shone even more radiantly, strikingly beautiful.

Not just in enhanced strength, but also because of...

Blessing!

The blessing of the 'Lady of Suffering' gave her absolute confidence.

The plan had not even begun, yet she received such a blessing.

If the plan succeeded, she probably could ascend to deity status with this merit alone!

Her lifelong desire was to become the 'Subordinate God, Servant of Agony' to the 'Lady of Sorrow.'

And now, the opportunity had finally arrived!

Without hesitation, Yula placed the notebook into Lucius's arms.

Originally, she wanted to set a trap so that Lucius would discover the notebook by accident.

But now?

There was no need.

The power of the 'Great Arcana Level,' though not as strong as her previous 'Entry' power, allowed her to utilize secret techniques with ease now.

"You faced Yula and bluffed your way through.

Although you had a savage beating, you kept your secret.

This is the notebook you stumbled upon unintentionally.

It contains plenty of secrets about the 'Inland River Cult.'

You originally planned to exchange these secrets for sufficient power, but now, without hesitation, you will trade them for a complete ritual from that 'Spirit Medium' of South Los!

However, to be cautious, you plan to memorize all the secrets first.

That's why you didn't agree immediately to the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los."

Yula helped Lucius 'recall.'

This type of recollection naturally would spoil the 'fruit's' flavor.

But at this moment, Yula, having regained some of her strength, hardly cared.

After all, Lucius's necessity was merely for her to regain her power.

And now, with the blessing of the 'Lady of Suffering.'

This 'fruit' had become irrelevant.

Even if the taste was a bit off, Yula didn't mind.

She would just switch to another if needed.

With such a thought, the lady was much rougher in her approach.

Lucius, already streaming with tears, opened his mouth to scream, but Yula stuffed it with her sock.

The scream turned into muffled groans.

When those muffled sounds ceased, the lady looked contentedly at the twitching Lucius.

She used her sock to wipe the filth off Lucius's face and then got up and walked toward the bathroom.

What followed?

Naturally, it was left to Lucius.

While she needed to spend some quality time with Joe.

The unexpected 'blessing' did not mean she did not need Joe's estate.

On the contrary, she needed more.

This time not only Joe's, but she wanted the entire assets of 'Reepira. Qiao Commerce Guild.'

She planned to use these riches to establish a secret stronghold for the 'Lady of Suffering.'

Thus, Joe needed to be properly disciplined.

The bathroom door closed silently.

In the living room, Lucius slowly regained consciousness.

"Hmph!"

Feeling the pain all over his body, the young Avenger could not help but grunt, but then he reached into his vest.

Upon touching that distinct texture, the young Avenger finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Then, without hesitation,

The young Avenger began to read through it.

He wanted to take this moment to memorize everything.

Meanwhile, Arthur's perspective shifted back again.

Chapter 640: Tentacles. Part 2!

Arthur swiftly took notes as Lucius flipped through the pages—

"The Inland River Cult has two strongholds in Seberlin."

The most important among them being 'Port Doldot.'

In this vital coastal port city of Seberlin, the members of the 'Inland River Cult' grew from fewer than 30 people three years ago to around 300.

Within these 300 members, there are a large number of middle-class individuals.

And one of them is the port's tax officer.

And the person in charge is the Inland River Cult's priest, 'Delpock.'

A Mystic Side Person without any blessings but possesses the entry Arcana Level secret technique.

The previous raid on the 'Lady of Suffering' at the port stronghold was Delpock's doing; the priest sacrificed twelve loyal believers, which resulted in an 'Entry' strike that flooded the shipyard with Inner River Water.

The 'Inland River Cult' originates from Inner Bay.

The small tavern established by the 'Inland River Cult' next to Ateil Trail in Seberlin has evolved into a place akin to a 'Secret Market.'

There, they recruit trustworthy manpower.

They also had twelve of them form a mercenary group known as 'Rapids Squad.'

The calamity in Dora Village earlier was committed by the 'Inland River Cult.'

The village annihilation in Akenel was also the doings of the 'Inland River Cult.'

It is known to be associated with the wealthy 'Balt Family' from Inner Bay.

...

The content in the notebook was very complex, with most of it being irrelevant.

Fortunately, as Arthur's 'Spirituality' increased, his memory significantly strengthened, and he needed only one read-through with Lucius to remember everything perfectly.

When Lucius was reading it a second time, Arthur had already written it down from memory.

Naturally, the next step was to check the notes he wrote down for any errors.

Having confirmed there were none, Arthur stared at Lucius while reflecting on the recent scene.

The sight of tentacles emerging from Yula's ears!

Even now, without the prompt of 'Death Intuition,' Arthur's 'Spirituality' still warned him of the danger of that thing.

In fact, such warnings were utterly unnecessary.

Just one look was enough for Arthur to steer clear.

Arthur definitely did not want to become a puppet like Yula.

That's right!

A puppet!

In Arthur's eyes, Yula was utterly possessed, and moreover, blissfully unaware of it.

Even...

Her memories were manipulated.

Now, Arthur thought that the information Marinda had previously investigated about Yula could indeed be things the present Yula had personally experienced.

But manipulated just after coming into contact with that tentacle.

Of course, none of this was important.

What mattered was the 'power' of that tentacle!

Turning a person from an ordinary Mystic Side Person directly into 'Great Arcana Level' was no trivial matter.

Bear in mind, most of those celebrated Awakeners have 'Great Arcana Level' as their ultimate reach.

Even for most of the nobility's scions, 'Great Arcana Level' is the endpoint of their life's power.

'How was it achieved?

Can power be imparted so simply?

Or is the power merely temporary?

Or...

Is that type of filament a special material that I am unaware of?'

Arthur paced within the cabin from one corner to the diagonally opposite one, stroked Pendragon, and under the puzzled gaze of the little cat, he picked up his orange tea and returned to another corner of the room.

Systematic pacing tends to make onlookers feel bored and sleepy.

Whereas erratic pacing tends to cause irritation.

Undoubtedly, Pendragon was feeling just that.

Meow meow meow!

Pendragon began to protest.

Yet Arthur paid no heed whatsoever.

Not only did he ignore the cat, but a chilling smile also emerged on the young Spirit Medium's face.

It was the kind of smile that, once the corners of the mouth slightly curled up, a 'hehehe' sound would appear by the ears.

Pendragon instinctively wanted to slip away.

But he was scooped up by Arthur in an embrace.

'Pendragon, perhaps we have discovered something remarkable.'

Arthur communicated with Pendragon through his gaze.

'Meow?'

Pendragon, puzzled as a little cat face, yet as a kitten, he had to admit that the scene just now had indeed sparked the kitten's curiosity.

If only that way of boosting strength was available to him.

'No no no, even though increasing strength is worth exploring, what interests me more are the tentacles themselves.'

Arthur immediately corrected his little kitten's misunderstanding, urging him to delve deeper into the essence of the matter.

'Mew!'

Pendragon cautioned Arthur, warning him of the danger in it.

In response, Arthur nodded in agreement.

'Of course, we can't just brute force it.

That's not the style of a 'Spirit Medium'.

You must remember, your master, Arthur Kredos, is a young, upright, innocent, and kind 'Spirit Medium,' certainly not some sort of robber.

Remember—

We are always the partners of justice!'

Arthur formally informed Pendragon.

And Pendragon somewhat understood as he nodded.

'Meow?'

Then, the little kitten instinctively asked what they should do next.

Arthur immediately laughed.

'Wait!

Don't forget, we still have an actor who is getting ready!

And he?

He's the key!'

Arthur informed Pendragon, then he settled into a sun lounger on the deck outside the house, enjoying the warm sun of early spring.

With a lift of his hand, a cup of sugared orange tea appeared in it.

Pendragon tilted his head, meowed, and then a small fish treat floated from afar to his front.

Arthur didn't mind Pendragon eating snacks on him and just enjoyed the sea breeze and the sound of the waves so cozily.

'Pendragon, life is just like this, right?'

Arthur asked.

'Meow!'

Pendragon immediately nodded.

'This damn life!

Swindlers!

Damned swindlers!

You all should be purified!'

Meanwhile, Toran in South Los was cursing in his heart.

After being cheated by a food stall's orange juice, Toran was subsequently 'deceived' by the owners of a tailoring shop, a hat shop, and a cane shop, one after the other.

The exquisite garments were of the worst fabric.

The fine hats were actually second-hand.

The most outrageous was the cane shop, where a clearly broken cane had been repaired and then sold to him at the original price, shamelessly claiming it had endured the test of time.

Normally, only a fool would buy!

He had no choice but to purchase them to avoid possible pursuers.

Dressed in exquisite clothing, wearing a fine hat, and holding a time-tested cane, Toran looked towards a nearby house as the only priest of the Inland River Cult in South Los swiftly adjusted his breathing and emotions—

He had finally escaped.

Next?

He would make the whole of South Los feel the pain!

Especially that 'Defiler'...

Arthur Kredos!