

Great Master 71

Chapter 71 Orange Cat!

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In Graham's diary, the legacy and power of the "Cat Hole" were mentioned repeatedly.

And the ritual to harmonize the "Spirituality" within the "Cat Hole" also exuded this strength—

The entire ritual of the [Orange Cat] required six naturally fallen whiskers from a mature tabby orange cat (preferably adult), a fresh leaf of catnip, one silvervine, 50 grams of salt, 100 grams of dried sardines, and a Golden Acorn as the ritual base material. Then, on the night of the full moon, consuming the base material with the Golden Acorn as the main ingredient would suffice.

Apart from the Golden Acorn, the remaining materials were extremely easy to find.

But the Golden Acorn?

Though a secret technique material and highly valuable in itself, it was nothing in comparison to the "Moon Grass" required by the [Tower Oath].

One must know that a whole "Moon Grass" could be exchanged for at least ten Golden Acorns.

And the side effects of the [Orange Cat]?

They were only becoming picky with food, weight gain, and slight drowsiness.

To Arthur, these side effects seemed negligible compared to the negative effects brought about by the [Tower Oath] and [Bloodlust].

'Convenience and wide applicability, is that what made the Cat Hole strong?' he wondered.

'Indeed, there's a reason for the strength!'

Arthur could fully imagine the heyday of the "Cat Hole."

Of course, the [Orange Cat] had its drawbacks.

That was pet ownership!

To ensure real orange cat whiskers, one must personally raise an orange cat.

Then?

There was the long wait for the cat's whiskers to fall off.

"Raise a cat?"

Arthur rubbed his temples, pondering seriously.

He had never raised small animals before; this was a significant challenge for him, especially since, to be more efficient, he needed to start with a mature cat.

As for his predecessor?

He knew how to raise spiders, centipedes, and toads.

Cats?

Like him, the experience in raising them was zero.

'I must consult with professionals, preferably a specialized pet institution.'

As he thought this, Arthur began to change his clothes.

From the memories of his former self, Arthur found a similar pet institution.

It was a cat pet store located on Garden Street, reportedly ancient and very popular— in this era's South Los, cats were greatly loved and welcomed.

But earlier on, cats were considered ominous.

In fact, during the Holy Empire Era, when the last Pope proclaimed cats, especially black cats, to be evil bearers of calamity, cats faced an unparalleled catastrophe.

Many cats were burned alive at birth.

Women who raised cats were considered witches and burned at the stake.

Men who raised cats were deemed warlocks and likewise burned.

Even some newborn infants, if their eyes were as bright and clear as those of cats, were considered ill omens and didn't escape the fire.

In that era, under the aegis of the Holy Empire, burnings were conducted fanatically, akin to a carnival.

People raised the heads, limbs, and torsos of innocent women above their heads as if they were skewers, dancing and singing around the burning houses.

They loudly declared that this was to expel demons.

But what was the reality?

They created demons.

They created devils.

Day and night, the blaze continued, the fiery flames burning ever stronger, the brightness grew ever more intense, seemingly purifying everything.

But the limbs in the ashes did not turn to dust.

The smoke above the brilliance, ever thicker.

Purification?

It was wishful thinking.

Within the thick black smoke, the plague known as 'Black' appeared.

For 6 years!

The Black Plague ravaged the entire Holy Empire, claiming tens of millions of lives, shattering the seemingly invincible Holy Empire into pieces.

The Pope died.

Twenty-two Cardinals died.

The Religious Tribunal was littered with corpses.

Their bodies were completely black, just like the limbs in the ashes.

But by then, no one cared about them anymore.

The nobles across the land reclaimed their glory once again.

They donned their ancestors' armor, raised their ancestors' banners, shouting their family names, heralding a new era—

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Silver Age!

At the beginning of this era, when the Holy Empire was still struggling for survival, all nobles declared one thing, cats were innocent.

Cats were not only not a calamity but were actually considered auspicious.

Because cats could catch mice.

But the foolish acts of the Holy Empire led to the massive abnormal death of cats, and as a result, mice began to proliferate and eventually brought the Black Plague.

And this became the final straw that broke the Holy Empire.

Similarly, regardless of the size of their territories, every Noble began to raise cats.

At first, it was to catch mice and prevent the plague.

However, as time passed and after two hundred years of the Silver Age, cats had long since evolved from being mere mousers to objects of admiration.

Their value also skyrocketed.

According to the memories of his predecessor, there was once a cat in Inner Bay that sold for the sky-high price of 20,000 gold notes in an auction among nobles.

Of course, Arthur definitely did not need such a pricey cat.

All he needed was an ordinary tiger-striped Orange Cat.

It rained again in South Los in the afternoon.

The rain quickly gathered on the surface of the roads.

Arthur stepped off the public carriage, holding an umbrella in one hand and the Spirit Medium Box in the other, with 'Anna' tucked in his chest, he briskly walked towards his destination.

Turning north from Garden Street, when he entered a street with an even road surface, Arthur found number 17 on Garden North Street.

He stood in front of the door, examining the wooden sign hanging there.

Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home (Established in 1552, 245 years to date)

The text at the front was written normally, whereas the date was written in tiny, decorative script, and at the very end of the signature was a pink cat paw print.

Through the tic-tac-toe-shaped window, Arthur could see one cat after another playing and frolicking in a semi-enclosed room.

There was a carefree feeling.

Infected by this feeling, Arthur unconsciously curled the corners of his mouth upward.

Just as Arthur was still standing at the door, preparing to take a good look at the cats, an elderly lady had already opened the door from the inside.

"Need to take shelter from the rain?"

The lady was dressed in a black dress without much decoration, her hair had already turned white, and her face wore a warm smile, making her seem very approachable.

Arthur looked at her in surprise.

You should know that ever since he had 'Anna' in his arms, there had been no one who took the initiative to greet him, let alone anyone who approached him on their own.

"Anyone who can pause for a cat and smile cannot possibly be a bad person, no matter how menacing they might look."

As she spoke, the elderly lady stepped aside to invite Arthur in.

Arthur had come for the cats in the first place, so he naturally wouldn't refuse.

He nodded kindly as a gesture of greeting and then entered 'Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home'.

As soon as he stepped into the room, Arthur felt the warmth.

"Cats don't like the cold," she explained.

"They love the sunshine, and they love dried fish," she continued.

"Would you like something to drink?" she asked with a smile.

The elderly lady explained to Arthur and immediately added, "If it's a regular beverage, it's free here."

The old woman pointed to a wall nearby.

A menu was hung on it.

Coffee (free refills): 1 Suo

Coffee with milk: 1.2 Suo

Hot chocolate (water/milk): 0.8 Zeroes/1 Suo

Juice (currently apple, orange, pineapple): 5 Zeroes

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These prices were not cheap; the same orange juice only cost 1 Zero at Eivor's mobile snack stall, but here it was 5 Zeroes.

A fivefold difference!

Arthur was secretly amazed but understood somewhat upon seeing the confined cats behind the wooden fence.

There were special 'waiters' here, and it made sense if the price was a bit higher.

"Plain water will do, thank you."

"Alright, sir, please wait a moment," replied the old woman as she moved towards the beverage area, while Arthur carefully examined the cats behind the wooden bars), looking for one that matched the requirements for the "Orange Cat" Ritual.

However, there wasn't one.

Consequently, Arthur was ready to ask the elderly woman.

At that moment, the doorbell rang as more guests arrived at 'Amanda's Cat Best Friend's Home'.

Three well-dressed young ladies, each holding their own cats, entered beneath the umbrellas held by their servants. One of the ladies caught sight of Arthur, and her eyes immediately lit up.