

Great Master 721

Chapter 721: Harvest I

The sound from the jumping lead box was extremely faint, yet for Arthur at this moment, it seemed like thunder right next to his ear.

Of course, that wasn't the real reason that made Arthur smile.

The real reason was—

In that first-class cabin, Joe's pacing footsteps.

Fast and frequent.

Right after the lead box had jumped, that 'prey' Joe, who had always been under Arthur's watch, was now in this state.

Followed by a sudden pause.

During this pause, not a single sound could be heard.

Even the breathing had ceased.

Of course, this didn't mean the person was dead.

It was because 'Mikhail' possessed Joe had set up barriers, seeking outside help.

As for who the outside help was?

Naturally, it was the Old Lion from Inner Bay.

The special nature of Mikhail, the 'Lady of Sorrow', made Arthur unwilling to let go, but before he truly 'possessed' him, Arthur didn't mind letting him play a role for a bit longer.

Such as...

Distracting the Old Lion's attention, reducing the pressure on his later voyage!

'Go ahead! Go ahead!

Go check on South Los!

The Countess welcomes you!

Arthur thought to himself, his smile growing even thicker.

Especially after noticing that Marinda had been stealthily observing him, Arthur immediately winked at Marinda, and almost instantly, the lady realized what was happening.

'Is this rascal planning to make me distract the Old Lion?'

Thinking this, Marinda discreetly stepped on Arthur's toes.

Arthur's smile immediately turned into a grimace, and he raised his hands in a conceding gesture, a begging look on his face.

"Hmph!"

Marinda snorted coldly.

But it was just a snort.

Wanting to gain benefits without bearing the risks—where's such a good deal? She knew what would happen when she decided to sign the profit contract of Doldot Port.

The Old Lion?

He was always her artificial enemy.

As for Arthur, this rascal?

Wasn't she already punishing him?

But Marinda still had doubts in her heart.

'All these matters could be written in the contract. Why did Arthur do it this way?

Even if it were written in the contract, I would have agreed.

And why did he have to show it, letting me know?'

Marinda cast a suspicious glance at Arthur.

And Arthur?

Laughing, he mouthed three words—

I am willing!

Though she couldn't hear the sound, Marinda seemed to already hear Arthur's words mixed with a playful tone and laughter.

Because of this, Marinda almost subconsciously retaliated.

The lady wanted to give Arthur a punch.

The kind aimed at the abdomen.

But just before throwing the punch, the lady changed her mind,

The lady placed her other foot atop as well.

In an instant, there was almost no distance between the two.

With Marinda's feet atop Arthur's, and the moment of eye contact between those azure and deep eyes, both turned their heads.

Together they turned left. When they realized the other did the same, almost instinctively, they both turned right.

Without any practice, yet with perfect accord.

In the end, they both stopped again.

Those pairs of eyes, met once more—

"I'm going back to South Los!"

Marinda said this as she walked briskly away.

"Then...

Have a safe trip!

Are you coming for dinner tonight?"

Arthur scratched his head and asked.

"Do you think visiting here is easy for me?"

The farther you are from South Los, the greater my exhaustion becomes, and if it weren't for the 'Oriental' being marked by me personally, I couldn't even reach Port Doldot."

Marinda irritably turned her back on Arthur and raised her middle finger.

"So, the 'Oriental' won't be setting sail today."

Arthur said softly.

Marinda, who was walking ahead, paused in her step.

But the next moment, she walked even faster.

"I will bring the egg tarts baked by Aunt Mary."

As the lady's figure was about to completely disappear, a gentle voice came with the wind.

"I'm looking forward to it."

Arthur laughed.

He, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium, just wanted to eat some egg tarts.

After all, joyful occasions should be celebrated with food.

Then, Arthur's gaze turned to the text in front of him—

[Throughout Seberlin, your wisdom, agility, and kindness are celebrated, you saved Port Doldot, and everyone there is grateful to you; XP+5000]

[More people have heard your name: XP+1000]

...

A busy night, much planning.

At last, a worthy reward had come.

Not just the largest gain of 5000 XP points but also reaching new heights in daily XP earnings.

Moreover, Arthur firmly believed that as time brewed, new heights would come.

Seeing the XP reach 11200 points, although there was a long way to go until 99999 XP points, as long as it increased, there was hope.

Hope brought motivation.

What's more...

He had just reached Port Doldot in Seberlin.

There were still the Ainhars Territory and Bert Territory to go.

And, Inner Bay.

Arthur was confident that he would gain even more XP on the road ahead.

After all, people always cooperated.

The young Spirit Medium really wanted to say a loud thank you.

However, this kind of remote thanksgiving was far too impolite and insincere.

So, he decided to thank them in person.

He had to sincerely say thank you to their face.

Of course, that would be later.

Now?

Arthur returned to the upper cabin's terrace, where Pendragon, seemingly unaware of the one who had just completed a beautifully executed rescue mission without receiving any reward or even a word of praise, continued to sunbathe, simply flicking its tail.

Was it because of a clumsy rescue attempt?

What did that matter?

It was in charge of commanding!

Thinking this, Pendragon felt even more aggrieved, directly turned its body away, and turned its back on Arthur.

"Fancy some dried fish?"

Pendragon's ears twitched.

"How about some egg yolk?"

The tip of Pendragon's wagging tail perked up.

"Want to sniff some catnip?"

Pendragon turned around, stretched its body, yawned, and then suddenly realized its master was there, standing right in front of it.

Immediately, the cat that loved its master the most—

Meow~ Meow~ Meow~

While meowing, it rubbed its head against Arthur's trouser leg.

What flattery?

Can a cat's actions ever be called flattery?

"Pendragon, you're quite the flatterer."

Arthur lifted his chubby orange cat, held it in front of him, and scrutinized it closely.

They say a cat mirrors its owner, but he had never been so flattering.

What's up with this cat?

Did it grow crooked?

"Meow meow meow!"

Pendragon sensed the meaning in its master's eyes and immediately began to protest.

After a series of cat calls, Pendragon suddenly realized its master was looking at it with a half-smile.

Feeling the trouble, Pendragon tried to escape, but Arthur was not about to let him go.

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium held his chubby orange cat tightly, communicating through the power of the contract—

'Pendragon, kneel down, Daddy begs you for a favor!'

Chapter 722: Harvest II

Within the barriers, Joe, possessed by "Mikhail," exhibited a state of "blooming" — as if his entire being had blossomed, only instead of petals, there were skin, muscles, and bones.

And the pistil?

It was that swaying spine.

The connected skull kept emitting either sharp or high-pitched female voices —

"This is your responsibility,"

"Mmm-hmm,"

"If it hadn't been for you, I wouldn't have been ambushed,"

"Mmm-hmm,"

"According to the contract, you need to help me,"

"Mmm-hmm,"

Without a doubt, this lady's conversation with the Old Lion was not a pleasant one.

Each statement was followed by a perfunctory response.

Such evasiveness made this lady increasingly irritable, and eventually, she resorted to coarse curses.

But this did not make the Old Lion change his mind.

As for the so-called contract?

It had naturally ended.

"You will not die a good death,"

"I curse you and your family,"

Mikhail vented frantically, but the Old Lion didn't even bother with pretense anymore and simply ended the communication.

This action infuriated Mikhail terribly.

The lady's flower-like body began to sway wildly.

Crack!

In a crisp sound, the skull that belonged to Joe was flung away.

However, before the skull could hit the ground, it flew back, reattached by the lady onto the spine.

The airflow swirled.

This was Mikhail's breathing.

Or so it could be called.

The rapid breathing indicated that the "Lady of Sorrow" was calming down.

At least, her head would no longer fly off.

She now understood that the moment her collaborator had pierced the Marquess of Seberlin's chest with a sword, she had been rendered valueless.

She had been completely drained.

But she was not unprepared.

The "Lady of Sorrow," not her first collaboration with humans, surely wasn't without her precautions.

"You think I have only one collaborator?"

With these words, the "Lady of Sorrow" accessed a deeply hidden Messenger Stone —

"Long time no see,"

The "Lady of Sorrow" lowered her stance as much as possible while exchanging pleasantries with the other party.

Nonetheless, the other party's tone was still harsh.

"What?

Are you here to mock my failure?

If so, I understand,"

Gleisa Hamlet's voice grew progressively colder.

"No!

I'm here to discuss a collaboration!

Your failure was accidental, but my defeat was due to that despised Southern Lost Spirit Medium's scheming, so I believe we share a common enemy,"

The "Lady of Sorrow" offered the corresponding respect.

It was quite unusual for her to show respect. Knowing the "Lady of Sorrow," even Transcendents, mere humans in her eyes, were like weeds.

Even with a collaborator of high status and great power?

They were but robust ants.

No respect.

Only pity.

A lofty pity.

Gleisa Hamlet, having dealt with her before, obviously knew this.

Thus, the Old Lion's eldest son understood that the "Lady of Sorrow" was in big trouble and it was connected to the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

"It seems like it could be a worthwhile deal!"

The Old Lion's eldest son was quite enticed by the power the "Lady of Sorrow" commanded.

And the Southern Lost Spirit Medium?

Just the thought of Arthur made the Old Lion's eldest son clench his teeth fiercely.

Instantly, the Old Lion's eldest son had no more hesitations.

"Compensation!

What can I get?"

The Old Lion's eldest son asked directly.

"You will wait until you get what you desire—you covet my power, and I will give you a seed of my power, the kind without side effects."

This will enable you to successfully 'Ascend Step'...

No!

It will make your subsequent 'Ascend Steps' more seamless."

The 'Lady of Sorrow' adjusted her statement.

Though it was a slight adjustment, the meaning of her words had become very different at that moment.

One that was extremely close for Gleisa.

One that was absolutely essential for Gleisa.

However, the eldest son of the Old Lion did not show impatience, but on the contrary, he scoffed—

"Ha, a seed?

No side effects?

You think I'm that ignorant?"

Gleisa did not conceal his covetousness for the 'Lady of Sorrow's' power, but that did not mean he was a fool; he was all too familiar with these people's tricks.

What seed?

If you dare accept it, just wait to become a puppet!

"This is my greatest sincerity!"

The 'Lady of Sorrow' emphasized.

"Since it is your greatest sincerity, then, the location of the Temple within the Shadows can also be told to me, right?"

Gleisa stopped his scoffing, his voice becoming serious.

Immediately, the 'Lady of Sorrow' fell into silence.

Gleisa did not hurry her, but patiently waited.

The eldest son of the Old Lion had always prided himself on being a patient hunter.

This time was no exception.

Time passed by, second by second.

About ten seconds later, the 'Lady of Sorrow' spoke again—

"I also do not know the location of the Temple in the Shadows.

I accidentally arrived there once.

But, I cannot go back there again.

What I told you is the truth.

If you do not believe me, let's end our deal."

The 'Lady of Sorrow' said so.

This time, it was Gleisa's turn to fall silent.

About ten seconds later, the Old Lion's eldest son spoke again.

"I want to know about your specific experience in the Shadows."

"Agreed."

The 'Lady of Sorrow' readily agreed.

It wasn't that this experience wasn't valuable, but because she had traded this experience several times before, it had long lost its initial worth.

Of course, most importantly, she had concealed the biggest secret in Her heart.

At that moment, she could even feel Her pleasure.

She and He had originally been one.

This sensing could not be wrong.

She and He were also diverging from each other.

This sensing was even more undoubted.

She keenly noticed something was amiss, but then, she stopped caring.

She and the eldest son of the Old Lion negotiated everything.

About the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

This was the crux of the matter.

The rest?

No longer important!

Only by targeting the Southern Lost Spirit Medium could she retrieve her own body, become whole again, and better become Him.

Him?

The 'Lady of Sorrow' paused again.

But immediately, she returned to normal.

She and the eldest son of the Old Lion had reached a cooperation and even signed a rather favorable contract. With this contract in place, all she needed to do was wait!

Phew!

Joe, having regained his original appearance, took a deep breath and prepared to sit back on the sofa.

And just at that moment, there was a knock at the door—

Thump, thump, thump!

"Hello, I am Old John, the Chief Sailor of the 'Oriental'.

Commissioned by the esteemed Southern Lost Spirit Medium, I have some matters to inquire about with you."

The rhythmic knocking was followed by a voice of polite words.

But inside, Joe felt a chill.

Chapter 723 Harvest III

Joe felt a chill in his heart, and a look of tension appeared on his face immediately.

'I must have performed well, right?'

Yet deeper in his heart, 'Mikhail' was quite pleased with himself.

Why had she chosen Joe?

Wasn't it for this moment?

In the midst of the entire Port Doldot incident's conflict, Yula and Lucius, who shared the same cabin with Joe, were both deeply involved.

Even from a certain perspective, Yula could be seen as the leader of one side of the conflict.

In such a case, what fate would befall Joe, a person from the same cabin?

The best outcome would be an investigation, imprisonment.

Perhaps, he might even lose his life.

'Mikhail' of course knew all this.

But compared to the people Inner Bay might send, it was much safer with the Southern Lost Spirit Medium—after all, the Spirit Medium didn't know her true background.

This gave her room to maneuver.

Moreover, compared to losing his life, 'Mikhail' was more inclined to the idea of Joe being investigated and imprisoned.

According to the information she had gathered from various channels, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium was an extremely cautious person who would absolutely not take action without complete certainty.

And Joe, naturally, was valuable!

So, despite facing some hardships, he would certainly survive.

The moment the Spirit Medium had sent Old John, 'Mikhail' was utterly convinced of this.

Old John, she knew.

The Chief Sailor of the 'Oriental', a bastard whose hands were stained with blood and who couldn't completely Hide the pirate stench, no matter how hard he tried—although she didn't know how that Southern Lost Spirit Medium had recruited him, she was clear about the old pirate's cruelty.

What she knew even better was why the Spirit Medium had sent him.

What else could scare a person of South Los more than a pirate?

Naturally, a seasoned pirate!

'Probe first, warn later, then observe in secret, huh?

Ha!

Humans, they never learn!

'Mikhail' let out such a sigh in his heart, and the fear on his face grew even thicker. By the time he opened the door, there was not A Tiny Bit of color left on Joe's face.

'This guy is definitely problematic!'

The moment Old John saw Joe, he became quite certain.

Old John was aware of what had happened the previous night at Port Doldot, and although he hadn't delved into the Core details, the fact that the Spirit Medium sent him to probe this cabin's passenger was enough to prove a point—the person before him was connected to last night's events.

With an answer in his heart, Old John's face showed a hint of a smile.

Although he had washed the filth from his face, his gold teeth were still there; the three gold teeth glistened with a metallic shine as Old John smiled.

Bright, but chilling.

"Mr. Joe, may I ask where are Ms. Yula and Mr. Lucius who share the cabin with you?"

Old John glanced around and noticed that Joe was alone in the cabin, so he asked naturally.

"They left last night and haven't come back.

I've been waiting for them, and I haven't slept all night.

That damned Lucius, he must have lured Yula away."

Joe opened his mouth to respond.

At first somewhat stammering, but as he went on he became more fluent, and anger began to appear on his face.

However, this exaggerated performance was too obvious, and Old John saw through it at a glance.

But Old John, who had only been explicitly tasked with 'interrogation, not detention', did not expose this.

"You didn't leave the cabin at all last night?"

Old John continued to ask.

"No."

Joe was very certain.

"Very well, this is just a simple inquiry. Please go to the top deck terrace later, where the big boss will be waiting for you to ask further questions."

After speaking, Old John turned and walked out.

It was only after Old John's figure had completely vanished that Joe let out a sigh of relief.

Yet deep inside, "Mikhail" was full of disdain.

Just as she had anticipated, first a probe, then a warning, and thereafter, observation.

Now, the probing was complete.

Naturally, it was time for a warning.

However—

"Such matters should be dealt with personally, rather than delegated to underlings. Clearly, my appearance has thrown this Southern Lost Spirit Medium off balance!" thought "Mikhail" to herself, as her maggot-like body began to squirm incessantly.

This was a form of pride.

It was as if "Mikhail" had foreseen herself triumphing once again in the end.

Be it the Old Lion, his son, or the Southern Lost Spirit Medium!

All were to become her nourishment!

Thinking this, "Mikhail" no longer hesitated, but stepped into the washroom, letting Joe carefully tidy up her appearance.

After all, appearances always held so much importance in the human world.

"Shallow and pitiful humans," "Mikhail" entertained such thoughts as she exited the cabin and headed toward the top deck of the "Oriental."

It was not her first visit.

But Joe still needed to act surprised.

However, deep down, "Mikhail" had to admit that the top deck of the "Oriental" was indeed comfortable, not only offering a great view but equipped with comprehensive facilities—standing there gave one a sense of enjoyment.

"Perhaps, I should have my believers build such a ship for me as well," "Mikhail" mused, as Joe had already bowed respectfully to the Southern Lost Spirit Medium resting in the deckchair.

"Good day, Lord Kledos."

"Good day, Mr. Qiao," replied Arthur, behaving with utmost politeness.

Yet the more he did so, the more convinced "Mikhail" became of her guess—weren't all the important figures in human society like this?

They use their day-to-day facade to create opportunities for their true selves.

What a pity!

She had seen right through it!

Feeling disdainful once more, "Mikhail," maintained her stance, allowing Joe to adopt a posture as if he were all ears.

And just as the lady had anticipated, the next moment Arthur began to speak—

"Mr. Qiao, there is something... Hm?"

He had barely begun speaking when he abruptly stopped.

This caused Joe, who had his head lowered, to lift it in astonishment.

Then Joe saw Arthur wearing a look of helpless resignation as he glanced toward the inside of the cabin.

There, an orange tabby cat sat upright on the table, pawing at a lead box that was perilously close to the edge, threatening to fall.

Seemingly aware of its master's gaze, the chubby tabby quietly pushed the box back to its original place.

But just as Arthur shifted his attention away, the cat fiercely batted the box.

Thump!

The lead box fell to the floor with a sharp clang, and then it was batted around like a ball by the cat who had jumped down from the table.

Arthur looked on, his face wrought with resignation.

Watching this unfold, "Mikhail" inside Joe growled furiously—

"Curse you, cat!

Release my body!"

"Mikhail" desperately wished to tear the fat tabby to shreds, especially when she saw drool from the cat fall on the lead box. Even with the box as a barrier, "Mikhail" still felt disgusted and uncomfortable.

But...

The lead box, chased by the hefty cat, was getting closer to her.

The next moment—

Thump!

The lead box struck Joe's boot and came to a halt.

Chapter 724: Harvest IV

Thud, thud-thud!

The body of 'Mikhail', maggot-like, pulsed quickly and violently as if it were a heart.

In the lead box, was her body.

And now, the lead box was at her feet.

She only needed to control Joe, and with a bend, she could reach it.

But the Southern Lost Spirit Medium was by her side.

The other party would never allow her to take away the lead box.

And...

Could this be a test from the other side?

Thinking this, 'Mikhail' had Joe's body bend down and he scooped Pendragon up into his arms—

"What a heavy cat!

Lord Kledos, the cat you've raised is really strong!" Joe said.

'Mikhail' was observing Arthur's expression through Joe's eyes.

At the sight of expectation and excitement in Arthur's eyes when Joe bent down, followed by a faint sense of loss when he picked up the cat, 'Mikhail' laughed silently in her heart.

'It really is a test!

Was it the previous deal with Yula that led him to some speculations?

But what if there are speculations! You will never know that the real me is right in front of you!' she thought confidently.

This internal monologue made 'Mikhail' feel even more smug.

Meanwhile, Joe was all the more humble, holding the cat while still bending over.

"Pan loves to eat.

Seems like because he was a stray before, he has an unusual obsession with food.

Also, he's naughty and extremely wary of strangers," Arthur explained.

As if to prove Arthur's words, the next moment Pendragon started to struggle violently in Joe's arms and when realizing he couldn't break free, he bit down.

Joe immediately let go.

The bite was dodged.

But the claw that followed, a kick to escape, didn't miss.

Hiss!

A cry of pain escaped Joe's lips.

A bloody mark appeared right away.

"Sorry!"

Arthur, who was sitting nearby, immediately stood up to apologize as he saw this happen.

"Mr. Qiao, please come with me.

First wash it with plenty of saline, then I'll help you bandage it," he said while walking towards the cabin.

Joe didn't object to this.

'Mikhail' had no reason to object, but as she followed Arthur inside, the 'Lady of Sorrow' couldn't help but turn her head for a last look at the obese orange cat.

She would remember it well.

Cats hold grudges.

She, even more so.

Once she had gotten rid of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium, she would skin this fat cat and make it into a foot mat.

She would walk on it day and night.

Until she...

Huh?!

'Mikhail's heart churned with venomous thoughts when she suddenly realized something was amiss.

Her head...

How had it fallen off?

As the head tumbled, using Joe's eyes, 'Mikhail' saw Arthur, who was still smiling apologetically at her, and then she witnessed the surprise, shock, and anger appearing in the eyes of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium the next moment.

"Who?!"

With a low shout, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium's hands revealed a Cold Aura.

A jeweled bead the size of a little finger sparkled.

'A Legendary Rank prop?!' 'Mikhail' marveled at the wealth of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium. At the same time, 'Mikhail' also wanted to see who had attacked her.

However, as the 'Lady of Sorrow' began to look around, she realized something was wrong.

Apart from the cat, there were no other creatures here.

And...

That Cold Aura was directed at her!

At that moment, the 'Lady of Sorrow' struggled!

But it was too late.

As the Cold Aura from the Evil Spirit Orb shot forth, a huge lead box appeared.

Joe's body, his head included, was completely frozen, and in the next moment, even his head along with his body, was put into that lead box.

To better fit the 'Lady of Sorrow' inside, the invisible Tyr's Caress kept on rapidly striking throughout the process.

Crack!

After the crisp sound came the constant shattering.

But not a single piece of ice fell outside.

The lead box was the perfect size and thickness, as if it had been made-to-measure.

Indeed, it was.

It was custom-ordered by Arthur for Catherine's help.

The twin sister, undoubtedly, had taken her task very seriously and accomplished it all.

Arthur took back Tyr's Caress into the Bracelet of Carmen, and then extended his hand to Pendragon, who was looking at him expectantly.

An impatient Pendragon leaped up and high-fived his master.

Long ago, Pendragon had wanted to do just that.

But he never got the chance.

And this time, finally getting his wish, Pendragon was extremely excited.

His tail was almost curling into a doughnut.

"Pan, you know, this is something to be proud of.

Do you know what I've locked up with your help?

Divine Spirits!

They call her a Divine Spirit!"

Arthur explained to Pendragon.

Immediately, Pendragon grew even more excited.

But soon, Pan sensed that something was off—

Meow meow meow?

"What? You say you've never seen such a stupid deity?

Well, I don't know why this deity is so stupid either.

Maybe...

Her brains were eaten by maggots?"

Arthur said seriously as he explained.

And such humiliating words made the 'Lady of Sorrow' in the lead coffin unable to remain silent any longer, as she growled softly.

"Shut up!

Arthur Kredos, do you know who you're talking to?"

The voice sounded a bit like Joe, but it was also mixed with a hoarse female voice.

When these two voices came together, it became quite strange.

Pendragon felt very uncomfortable.

And his Spirituality made this little kitty want to get away from there.

However, looking at Arthur, who remained still.

The little kitty didn't leave, but instead sat down by Arthur's feet and watched the lead box coffin.

Arthur bent down to pet his cat and then nodded and said—

"I know!

A god whose brains were gnawed by maggots."

This time, the 'Lady of Sorrow' responded.

At this moment, the lady was very clear that from beginning to end, she had been outwitted by this detestable human, who had been deceiving her and acting all along.

And she?

Had discovered nothing at all!

She had completely fallen into the rhythm set by the other party!

Now, to say anything more would merely bring more humiliation upon herself.

It would be better to remain silent.

After all, couldn't he do nothing to her, right?

Arthur, on the other hand, remained smiling without a word.

The young Spirit Medium took out two Fragmentary Mikhail's Strong Touch and laid them on the table.

The 'Lady of Sorrow' inside the lead box coffin clearly sensed Arthur's actions. The lady was puzzled why Arthur was doing this.

What came next only added to her confusion.

In the lady's perception, Arthur picked up the lead box containing parts of her body and placed it on the table, alongside the two Fragmentary Mikhail's Strong Touch, arranging them side by side.

After adjusting the angles to make sure everything was aligned, Arthur then looked at the lead box coffin and said with a smile—

"How about we play a count-to-seven game?"

Chapter 725 Harvest V

Arthur's fingertips lightly traced over the lead box without making the slightest sound; the only thing audible was the laughter continuously bubbling from his mouth—

"Do you know how to play the Counting 7s game?"

When you count to 7, or any number containing 7, and any multiple of 7, it's your turn.

If you accidentally count wrong...

I'll let you experience pain."

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium whispered to 'Lady of Sorrow'.

At this moment, there was no excess expression on the face of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium, and his eyes were filled with calmness, but inexplicably, in 'Mikhail's' perception, he felt that the Southern Lost Spirit Medium before him was the real deal—without the usual mask, revealing his own cruelty. That was what she believed.

Because...

When she held absolute advantage, she also enjoyed playing these kinds of games.

To let those in sadness feel even greater sorrow.

To let those in despair feel deeper despair.

Just like what this Spirit Medium had said, making the 'Lady of Sorrow' feel 'pain'—wasn't it an interesting thing?

However, this lady did not believe that the Spirit Medium before her could achieve this.

Therefore, this lady remained silent.

Silence, both as a method and an attitude.

This lady chose the most passive way to irritate the Spirit Medium before her, carrying the pride of once being called 'God'.

Even though She had become her.

She would absolutely not do such a thing.

She is not some tamed, defeated dog.

And the words of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium continued—

"Now...

Let's start with counting down from 1000!"

Arthur said this and took out the ring [Blood of Doting].

Meanwhile, Abel, who could hardly wait, kept borrowing the power of the contract, beseeching Arthur—

"Let me eat! Let me eat!

Please, Arthur!

I beg of you!"

Abel's voice echoed in his ear, Arthur responded unhurriedly.

"What do you call me?"

"Master!

My dear master!

Please have mercy on me, master!"

The fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm, Abel, pleaded.

In response to such entreaty, Arthur nodded in satisfaction but did not immediately allow Abel to act, for he, Arthur, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium, not only had bottom lines but also abided by the rules of the game.

So, Arthur's gaze turned to the lead box coffin, and he quietly waited.

'Mikhail's' silence went on.

About three seconds later, Arthur tapped his forehead lightly.

"Sorry!

It's my mistake!

Confronted with a game I haven't played in a long time, I actually forgot the most crucial part of the game—demonstrating the punishment."

As he spoke, Arthur placed the [Blood of Doting] containing Abel on top of a [Mikhail's Strong Touch (Fragmentary)].

The devouring began.

The fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm devoured a part of the 'Lady of Sorrow'.

After obtaining the [Mikhail's Strong Touch (Fragmentary)], Arthur had asked Abel if the [Parasitism] and [Resurrection] contained in it would affect him, and Abel had stated that he had digested it all, with no [Parasitism] or [Resurrection] remaining.

But to be on the safe side, Arthur added a few more contracts.

Abel, who had already signed twenty-one contracts, had become accustomed to this.

No!

One should say he had become numb to it!

After adding contracts like 'must be able to digest [Parasitism] and [Resurrection] Traits, if not, then self-destruct,' Arthur could rest assured.

Compared to Arthur's reassurance, 'Mikhail,' locked in the lead box coffin, became increasingly frightened.

Unlike the standard [Mikhail's Touch], the [Mikhail's Strong Touch] contained a 'backdoor' left by this lady, so she could sharply perceive certain changes, especially after the [Mikhail's Strong Touch] was activated—she could distinctly feel it.

Hide, though this perception was fragmentary, as her own [Mikhail's Strong Touch] was being devoured, it was enough for the lady to sense that the being hidden within the ring posed a real danger to her.

"Now do you understand?"

"1, 2, 3..."

The counting began just as Arthur finished speaking.

Immediately, Arthur revealed a satisfied expression.

On the side, Abel, who had just finished devouring "Mikhail's Strong Touch (Fragmentary)," began to digest it.

Originally, in Arthur's perception, Abel, who only had a head and neck, now had a slightly longer neck, and his body should be coming out soon.

Clearly, the seemingly more effective "Mikhail's Strong Touch (Fragmentary)" was still inferior to "Mikhail's Touch."

After all, the latter had no side effects.

The time that followed in this cabin was filled only with the counting—

"998, 999, 1000!"

At this point, 'Mikhail' paused.

The 'Lady of Sorrow' didn't ask any questions, nor did she say anything more.

She just quietly waited for Arthur to speak.

And Arthur started by clapping his hands.

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium celebrated the other's passing of the challenge in this way.

Only after that did she speak.

"Tsk, as expected of the 'Lady of Sorrow,' actually counting to 1000, you really surprise me!

Now let's start the second game—

You just counted to 1000, so now, start subtracting 7 from 1000 until there's nothing left to subtract.

Of course, you still can't say the number seven.

And remember, the final number cannot be negative; it must be zero for you to pass."

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium began explaining the rules for the second game.

Thud!

A violent banging came from within the lead box coffin.

"Are you joking?

How can it be zero!" 'Mikhail' roared.

"You haven't even started subtracting; how do you know it can't be zero?

Are you questioning my fairness?

It seems like you need a bit of punishment."

Arthur sighed and then placed the "Blood of Doting" onto another "Mikhail's Strong Touch (Fragmentary)."

The fragmentary Abel immediately feasted with gusto.

Throughout the process, Arthur watched the lead box coffin with an innocent expression.

Time ticked by second by second.

Right at the fifth second, the moment after the fragmentary Abel had completely devoured the thread, the 'Lady of Sorrow' spoke again.

"993, 986, 979..."

"Haha!

She's counting!

She really is counting!"

Arthur burst into laughter as soon as the numbers began, leaning back and forth in his mirth, slapping his thigh.

At that moment, how could the lady inside the lead box coffin not understand what the Southern Lost Spirit Medium was doing?

He was mocking her!

He was using her dignity as the racquet, her honor as the ball, all for a full-force strike.

And then?

To shatter them completely.

"I am toying with you!

After all, opportunities to play with a god don't come around often.

Now that I have the chance, I intend to relish it fully."

As he spoke, Arthur placed the "Blood of Doting" on the small lead box.

Ow-ow!

Abel let out a truly jubilant cry, diving straight into the small lead box and starting his feast while from the small lead box and the lead box coffin, the wails of the 'Lady of Sorrow' resounded simultaneously.

The sound was piercing.

But Arthur was utterly indifferent.

He was only silently calculating—

It should be about time, right?

Chapter 726

Arthur was eager to learn some matters referred to as secrets from the lips of "Mikhail."

After all, this was a being hailed as "Lady of Sorrow," even considered akin to a Divine Spirit.

The secrets she held were naturally of immeasurable value.

But to truly obtain them was extremely difficult.

No!

It should be more accurately stated: trying to get secrets "directly" from her was akin to reaching the heavens in difficulty!

Even if she spoke, Arthur wasn't sure if she was deceiving him.

So—

Arthur decided to take an indirect approach.

Arthur didn't want to make the "Lady of Sorrow" feel "pain" because he thought she would yield to it. Instead, he was certain that upon feeling "pain," this "Lady of Sorrow" would definitely seek ways to save herself.

For example: reaching out to some allies.

These allies included but were not limited to the Old Lion and so on.

However, Arthur wasn't waiting for the likes of the Old Lion or his eldest son.

These two were akin to known factors.

Obvious factors lacked appeal to Arthur.

What he needed was those deeply hidden kinds.

For instance: existences like the "Lady of Sorrow," those referred to as "Divine Spirits."

Arthur didn't believe that these beings lacked hidden channels of communication.

Judging by how the "Lady of Sorrow" behaved like a person, it wouldn't be surprising if these entities had formed some sort of "organization."

Thus, there were definitely contacts!

They were just difficult for ordinary people to discover!

As for the danger?

There would definitely be some.

But it wouldn't be too dangerous.

After all, the "Lady of Sorrow" was seeking to save herself, not to "destroy herself." Thus, any Divine Spirit that she beckoned would only be of comparable strength, certainly not exceeding her own by too much.

And once they arrived?

Then they should not consider escaping!

By that time, it wasn't just about hidden messages; he might even directly obtain something.

After all, the "Lady of Sorrow's" "Mikhail's Touch" had a decent strengthening effect.

Other beings likely possessed similar items.

Of course, as a young, kind, upright, and simple Spirit Medium, how could Arthur possibly challenge the authority of Divine Spirits alone?

He most certainly needed to contact a few allies.

The Marquess of West Berlin was naturally the first to come to mind.

He had just collaborated with the Marquess.

Adding to that, the Marquess's attitude towards Them ensured there was almost no risk involved.

The second?

That naturally was the Countess of South Los.

Her strength reassured him.

What was more reassuring was that Grandma Susan was by her side.

This was even more reliable than the Marquess of West Berlin.

As for the third?

Arthur also had some thoughts.

But he needed to confirm some things first.

After all, if he were to involve the Old Lion of Inner Bay, due to the Old Lion's relationships with other collaborators, there would definitely be complications. Thus, he needed a more comprehensive contingency plan.

That's right!

Arthur had a place for the Old Lion in his plan.

You said enemy?

What enemy!

That's a joke!

That was his bloodkin!

There are no permanent enemies, only eternal interests—this saying, when Arthur was in junior high, he transformed the school bully who had just hit him into a friend with two packs of spicy strips and an hour of internet cafe CS, then used the bully to collect protection money from all the boys in the class in exchange for his internet fee. As things intensified, the bully eventually united all the boys, leading to a brawl.

In the end, the school expelled the bully together with several other troublesome students, including those who had extorted Arthur.

But does that matter?

It doesn't matter.

Arthur only remembered his two packs of spicy strips and that one hour of internet fee.

Initially, he had planned to spend a lovely afternoon.

Unfortunately, it turned into a pile of protection money. Looking at those cold coins, Arthur still missed the sunshine of that beautiful afternoon.

At least, it was warm.

Remembering this warmth, Arthur always acted with a bottom line—

"Sigh, there aren't many people with a bottom line like mine."

Arthur sighed softly in his heart, his gaze turning to a satisfied Abel.

The fragmentary Abel became a bit more complete.

He now appeared to have a torso.

However, he was still missing his limbs.

But when Arthur read the current introduction of the "Blood of Doting," his lips curled up—

[Name: Blood of Doting]

[Type: Ring]

[Quality: Above Epic]

[Attributes: 1, Child of Blood; 2, Contract]

[Requirement: Belongs to Arthur Kredos]

[Remarks: A ring forged by the Blood Marquis and his wife for their son, but the hidden Abel inside reveals to you that the Blood Marquis's hunting of the betrothed family members wasn't as simple as the rumors suggested. This was certainly not any 'washing away of shame,' but carried a deeper purpose. You are currently unaware of what happened, but as the fragmentary body of Abel becomes more complete, you feel that you are gradually nearing a sliver of the truth!]

...

[Child of Blood: When you wear this ring, it will continuously consume the fresh blood within you to feed the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm, which in return will enhance your power. You will become like one of the Bloodline Clan with a power 'Above the Entry' level, capable of flying, sharpening your palms, transforming into mist, bats, harnessing the force of frost, walking on vertical walls without regard for gravity, controlling bats as your scouts, and your abilities will be enhanced on moonlit nights, reaching their peak under a full moon, stepping into the true sense of 'Ascend Step'; the wearer will possess a physique 'Above Entry' level and will also be able to create semi-finished Blood Brides and complete Blood Slaves, Blood Gladiators, and Bloody Warriors with your own fresh blood.]

[Contract: The existence of twenty-seven contracts subdues Abel, making him your loyal servant, especially when he willingly calls you his master. Things have already become different.]

(Remark 1: The making of Blood Brides has become much easier; there's no need to strictly follow the steps for control. The creation of Blood Slaves, Blood Gladiators, and Bloody Warriors has become more straightforward, requiring just a tiny bit of your fresh blood, and as the fragmentary Abel becomes more

complete, the abilities of your Blood Slaves, Blood Gladiators, and Bloody Warriors are further enhanced.)

(Remark 2: The controlled Blood Brides are beginning to stabilize, and even when the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm is affected, they won't self-destruct.)

(Remark 3: Currently, you can have three Blood Brides: 0/3; the number of your Blood Slaves significantly increased to one hundred; 0/100; Blood Gladiators at thirty: 0/30; Bloody Warriors at ten: 1/10; additionally, you can select 13 people to become your next generation bloodkin; currently have: 1/13; when they become your bloodkin, they will receive a certain power enhancement.)

(Remark 4: As Abel becomes more complete, due to more contracts restraining him, he cannot suck blood without your permission.)

(Remark 5: When the wearer dies, the increasingly complete Abel will devour the wearer's body, and if you die, the increasingly complete Abel will self-destruct with you.)

...

The brand-new "Blood of Doting."

Its appearance changed from the pale amber texture to a vivid red, and the texture felt somewhat like crystal.

And the inner attributes were comprehensively strengthened.

Arthur knew well that his vest had gained more opportunities to appear, especially during the full moon when it was indispensable.

And if he were to develop offspring...

The young Spirit Medium, thinking of something, couldn't help but gently tap on the table—

"Maybe I could..."

Chapter 727: Net of Blood I

Arthur would definitely not disdain the strength of his own power and the expansion of his forces.

If possible, Arthur even hoped to expand indefinitely.

But unfortunately, that was impossible.

Because—

Resources were limited!

Just like the newly upgraded "Blood of Doting" this time, which had reached 'above epic' level, it could be considered one of Arthur's top-tier props.

Yet even so, the total number of Blood Slaves, Blood Gladiators, Bloody Warriors, and Blood Brides that could be created was only 143.

If this were the Silver Age, an era that emphasized cavalry charges, Arthur could have shouted that he finally had "the power to protect himself."

Because, in the Silver Age, even the wealthiest Inner Bay couldn't muster an army of ten thousand heavy cavalry.

In fact, at the peak of the Silver Age, Inner Bay's limit was 3,000 heavy cavalry.

Even this, Arthur suspected that there was some exaggeration involved.

But even if there was no exaggeration, so what?

143 Mystic Side Persons shamelessly engaging in sneak attacks and assassinations would be enough to leave 3,000 heavy cavalry helpless, even if the opposition also had High Order Mystic Side Persons, but the same was true for his own side.

Therefore, facing the troublesome Bloodline Clan, he also suffered a great headache, and this was once the pride of the Blood Marquis's family.

Unfortunately, as the times advanced, the update and iteration of productivity, and the rise of gunpowder in particular, had broken a certain balance.

A musket was enough to make an ordinary Mystic Side Person sweat profusely.

And in the military, the strategy of heavy cavalry charges had long been abandoned.

Ranks of musketeers were now the mainstream.

This form of musketeer ranks rendered most Mystic Side Persons utterly helpless.

Unless High Order Mystic Side Persons took action, but the opposition had them just as his own side did.

Neither side could take hasty action.

A bizarre balance emerged once again.

Therefore, some kind of secret warfare became the mainstream.

As for real fighting with real swords and spears?

One Seven Years' War was enough.

Another one?

The Mystic Side might suffer more than just a great vitality loss.

After all, compared with musketeers who could enter the battlefield after just eight weeks of training, Mystic Side Persons who emphasized 'Talent' were really too rare.

Moreover, the growth of Mystic Side Persons took too much time.

Even for those Mystic Side Persons with exceptional talents, without round-the-clock learning, they were barely useful.

'The emergence of gunpowder made the mystic lose its luster!'

Many Mystic Side Persons had heard this phrase.

Even if they didn't want to admit it, the fact remained a fact and would not change.

Arthur remained noncommittal about this.

At the moment, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium was only concerned with some matters of his own—

'Abel, when you become complete, how many Blood Descendants can you create?'

'Replying to Master, Blood Brides will still be 3, but the creation of them will be much easier. The number of Blood Slaves and Blood Gladiators can double, and Bloody Warriors will not increase, still being 10, but their strength will greatly improve.'

Facing Arthur's inquiry, Abel who had twenty-seven contracts responded honestly.

And that title of address did not contain any reluctance at all.

Having benefited from Arthur, Abel was fully aware of his status.

'3 Blood Brides, a strengthened version of 10 Bloody Warriors, and then 200 Blood Slaves and 60 Blood Gladiators, eh?'

Arthur pondered.

This number had already exceeded his expectations.

But who was Arthur?

Arthur, who upheld the values of a 'Spirit Medium,' always thought of squeezing oil out of the soil.

Therefore, after pondering for a moment, Arthur asked.

'Abel, is there a way to expand the scale of Blood Descendant creation—What I mean is, it's not necessary to truly grant those people the formal status of a Blood Descendant. They won't be Blood Slaves, Blood Gladiators, Bloody Warriors, or Blood Brides, but they will have the qualifications for one-time use of the Bloodline Clan's secret techniques, something more convenient like scrolls, Curse Marks, and the like.'

'One-time use?'

If it's the complete me, I can do such a thing.

Only, Master, doing this might be somewhat counterproductive, for the same amount of power, we could create a complete Blood Slave.

And Blood Slaves, being consumables, if they die, we can just make another one.'

"This is much stronger than those one-time uses."

"After all, the cost normal people pay for using a one-time secret technique is not low, and it is impossible to use it a second time in a short period!"

Arthur spoke with puzzlement in his voice.

But the corners of Arthur's mouth curled up.

The young Spirit Medium seemed to have already seen the sight of hundreds, thousands, or even tens of thousands of people crying out his name daily to gain power.

As Abel had said, such a thing seemed to be more trouble than it's worth.

But to others, not to Arthur...

It was absolutely worth it!

Because: XP!

Lots of XP!

What could be more exciting than tens of thousands of people crying out his name every day to provide him with daily XP?

Naturally, it was getting millions, tens of millions of people to witness the change in these tens of thousands!

Arthur didn't even dare to imagine how exaggerated his XP income would be at that time!

Especially when he made more people understand that by shouting his name, they would get this strange power, it would definitely be a feeling of madness.

No Talent?

No worries.

As long as you are devout enough!

As for the cost?

In the face of immediate death, this cost of using mana if available, using blood if not, can it even be considered a cost?

Not really.

Plus, there's...

Envy and jealousy.

You have it, he doesn't.

Seeing each other every day, this was destined to be the outcome.

Thinking of this, Arthur's already uplifted corners of his mouth became even more radiant, and excitement that would make most people tremble surfaced in his profound eyes. But deep inside, Arthur's voice remained calm.

"Abel, how many 'one-time users' can the complete you create?"

"If there is enough fresh blood or gold, I can make about five hundred. Beyond that, the 'one-time users' would self-destruct."

Abel answered truthfully.

"Five hundred?"

"It's a bit few, but it's enough!"

Arthur muttered to himself in his heart.

At this moment, the Fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm finally started to catch on.

"Master, do you want to..."

become a god?"

Although the sentence was phrased as a question, Abel was very certain.

Because in his fragmentary memories, there were quite a few beings who had done this; they performed 'Miracles' for their 'Believers', gathering more people's faith, then utilized the Power of Faith from these believers to 'Ascend Step by Step'. However, none of these beings met a good end.

Though their power increased incredibly fast, they went mad even faster.

At the moment he, she, or it became a They, he, she, or it was no longer the same—but They still thought of themselves as he, she, or it.

This was a contradiction.

And one that was irreconcilable.

The result was madness.

Just like 'Miha'!

When he became the 'Lady of Sorrow', he went mad!

But that was still far better than those who blew up on the spot!

Thinking of this, Abel thought of his twenty-seven contracts.

Twenty-seven contracts that blocked all his paths.

If something happened to it, Arthur would be fine.

If something happened to Arthur, it would surely die.

Realizing this, the Fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm immediately cried out—

"Master, I beg you, please don't do this!"

And in that voice, there was a cry for mercy.

Chapter 728

The fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm certainly didn't want to follow a madman, much less die for one.

If it were at all possible, Abel would have preferred to die a natural death.

It wanted to live!

Even living without dignity was acceptable!

Otherwise, it wouldn't cling to life, refusing to give up even when only a head remained!

And now, it was undoubtedly fighting for its right to keep living.

Without any concealment, Abel informed Arthur about the madness of these so-called "demigods," emphasizing continuously that demigods had no chance of becoming true Divine Spirits—

"They cannot become true Divine Spirits?"

"They cannot!"

Facing Arthur's query, Abel's response was rather straightforward.

However, the next moment, the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm showed some hesitation.

"It probably can't, can it?"

Not true Divine Spirits, without igniting the true 'Divine Fire,' the 'Poison of Faith' will only destroy anyone daring enough to embrace the 'Power of Faith.'"

In its fragmentary memory, there was no such existence.

But it could not guarantee that it hadn't forgotten something.

And facing Abel's hesitation, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium responded with a smile on his face, a gentle voice echoing in his depths—

"Look at 'Mikhail.'"

"Ah?"

Abel looked baffled.

It was a good thing the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm didn't have arms; otherwise, it would certainly have scratched its head at this moment.

A fellow boxed up in a coffin—what was there to see?

However, the power of the contract made Abel unconsciously look toward that lead box coffin.

But still, he could discern nothing.

The bafflement of the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm intensified.

Feeling Abel's bafflement, Arthur voiced a reminder from his heart.

"Tell me why both the Marquess of West Berlin and the Duke of the Inner Bay are 'chasing' this Lady of Sorrow?"

Could it be...

Is it possible this lady has discovered a way to avoid the 'Poison of Faith'?"

Arthur's tone involuntarily stretched out.

The fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm gaped.

Abel didn't know the Duke of the Inner Bay's purpose, but for the Marquess of West Berlin, it was for his daughter, as written in the contract.

It couldn't be falsified.

How did it change when it came to his master?

"The 'Poison of Faith'?

Hey, the 'Poison of Faith'!"

Arthur's plans in his mind became increasingly complete.

He was just worrying that the 'bait' wasn't sufficient when it was delivered to him.

Moreover, this 'bait' could make his actions seem more reasonable.

Spread his reputation, gain experience.

Somewhat like obtaining the 'Power of Faith.'

So, could he use the fact that 'Arthur Kredos obtained a way from the Lady of Sorrow to avoid the 'Poison of Faith' to cover up his greatest secret?

As his strength increased and he gradually encountered some formidable characters in South County, Arthur always wanted to hide... no, to provide a more 'logical explanation' for his strength.

Previously, the bloodline explanation had been sufficient.

However, after ascending a step, the bloodline could only fool some people.

The rest were bound to overthink it.

Instead of letting these fellows wildly speculate and come closer to a possible real answer,

it's better to give them a correct answer.

Meanwhile, hook all these fellows and 'trade' with them.

The way to avoid the 'Poison of Faith' exists!

But it requires specific conditions!

For example: killing a demigod who devours the 'Power of Faith,' like he did.

He, Arthur Kredos, did just that and then directly converted the people of the Pain Church to start believing in himself.

After that, his strength soared!

All of these are facts!

Indisputable!

As for your failures?

Perhaps you lack the Kledos family's bloodline!

But by that time, whether they are exploding or mad... no, all the exploding fellows, why would they come looking for him?

As a young, upright, naïve, and kind spirit medium, it was essential for him to make those madmen harmlessly disappear from the lands of South County.

Otherwise, a powerful madman was far too terrifying.

And by the time the individuals in South County who are entitled to draw upon the 'Power of Faith' have been harmed by the 'Poison of Faith', he will likely be safe.

Of course, this plan was far more dangerous than the smaller ones that had preceded it.

Extra caution was necessary!

At least—

'I must wait until I have shown a sudden surge in strength and am 'asked' about it before I can confess!'

Arthur thought to himself as he continued to question Abel.

'Does the insect form have a special meaning?'

'Ah?'

The fragmentary Blood Ancestor Worm scratched its head again, despite having no hands.

Facing Abel, who did not understand the meaning of his words, Arthur explained.

'Mikhail became the 'Lady of Sorrow,' and she transformed into a creature like a worm.

And you, my servant, also resemble an insect.

Is there a connection here?'

'I do not know, my master.

In my fragmented memory, there is no relevant memory.

It might be related?

Or perhaps it is just a coincidence?

My spirituality has not provided me with an answer!'

Abel shook his head.

A coincidence?

Arthur sighed deeply; as a Spirit Medium, he did not believe in coincidences.

He believed there was definitely something significant in this.

Especially the scene of the fragmentary Blood Ancestor Worm devouring 'Lady of Sorrow' to heal itself made Arthur think of even more possibilities—

Raising gu!

This was Arthur's first reaction!

Almost subconsciously, Arthur's eyes narrowed slightly.

His spirituality did not stir.

His Death Intuition did not flash.

Everything was normal.

It was as if Arthur was overthinking everything.

Yet Arthur told himself that he was overthinking, and the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium asked Abel again.

'Can you fully recover by eating her?'

'Yes!'

Facing Arthur's question, Abel responded with full confidence.

'How is the digestion going now?'

'I can swallow her at any moment!'

Abel continued to answer.

'Very good, then you wait.'

'Ah?'

The ready-to-feast fragmentary Blood Ancestor Worm nearly leapt out of the 'Blood of Doting' to demand whether Arthur was playing with it.

To this, Arthur was quite frank.

'Yes, just as you thought.

But...

Don't you want to diversify your menu a bit?

Is full recovery truly your only wish?

Don't you want to advance further?'

Arthur asked Abel with a smile.

'Yes!'

Without hesitation, Abel responded decisively.

Who wouldn't want to become stronger?

Once one has tasted power, they never want to be weak again.

Especially someone who was once incredibly powerful but became weak due to an accident and had to barely survive; this internal craving becomes tangible.

Arthur knew all this.

So, before Abel could answer, the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium brought out some contracts.

'Here, sign these.'

The contracts were not many, just fifteen.

They were supplementary to the previous twenty-seven contracts, covering various aspects.

If the previous twenty-seven contracts made Abel Arthur's slave, signing these fifteen would make Abel's descendants Arthur's slaves as well.

But Abel did not refuse.

The fragmentary Blood Ancestor Worm, understanding its master's plan, immediately signed its name.

Meanwhile, Arthur had already headed towards the kitchen—

Dinner, he had an appointment.

Chapter 729: Blood Web III

With billowing smoke rings, Marinda arrived on time, carrying a wooden lunchbox.

The lunchbox was divided into three layers, with not only the promised egg tarts but also larger pan tarts and egg tarts with added matcha, cream, and various fruits.

Undoubtedly, these were all Aunt Mary's new products.

In response, Arthur gave his one hundred percent approval—

"Not bad!

The caramel one is the most delicious!"

Wearing an apron, Arthur directly followed his 'Spirit Medium instincts' and took out the most attractive egg tart from the lunchbox and put it in his mouth.

The crisp and tender texture immediately woke up his taste buds, enhancing the sweetness and caramelized flavor, like a breeze suddenly blowing on a hot afternoon.

It wasn't cool, but it was comfortable enough.

Marinda accepted the compliment with a curl of her lips.

Because...

The caramel egg tart was made by her.

It definitely wasn't burnt.

Just a simple case of high heat, that's all.

And today's baking of the egg tarts was just an accident, a spur of the moment thing. It certainly wasn't specially made for Arthur to taste her cooking.

Marinda affirmed this to herself with a cheerful mood.

Arthur glanced at the smile on the corner of Marinda's mouth and smiled inwardly as well.

Food, why is it delicious?

Apart from filling the stomach, isn't it because there's a bit of heart in it?

And when such sentiment comes from a partner with whom one can cooperate for life, it is even more necessary to savor.

The sugar turned into salt?

No big deal.

Sweet or not, isn't it up to him to decide?

If he says it's sweet, then it's sweet.

If he says it's delicious, then it's delicious.

It's not some top-tier intrigue like 'Nine Twists Intestines'.

It's just a small gathering, not that complicated—

Arthur served the beef noodles he had made.

Most of the ingredients were ready in the kitchen, but making and cooking the noodles, as well as seasoning the base, were genuinely done by Arthur.

"Try it, I made it myself."

Arthur said.

"You can cook?

Don't tell me you can't even tell sugar from salt?"

Marinda was full of doubt.

Even though she had investigated Arthur, who managed to cook for himself at home, the fact that every time they met thereafter involved ordering from a private kitchen or eating ready-made meals made it hard for Marinda to believe in Arthur's culinary skills.

But in fact, Arthur did quite well.

The soup was rich but not greasy.

The noodles were firm and elastic.

As for the beef, what more needs to be said?

The chefs who could make it aboard the 'Oriental' were all carefully selected.

So, with one bite, Marinda was taken aback.

Subconsciously, Marinda took another look at Arthur, then took another bite.

"There are apples in the soup to prevent it from being greasy.

When mixing the dough, I added egg whites.

The beef, in particular, is my exclusive recipe."

Arthur explained as he brought out a pot of beef noodles from the nearby kitchen—this was prepared for himself.

Watching Arthur slurping the noodles, a full sense of surprise flickered in Marinda's deep blue eyes.

Arthur's cooking skills...

No!

Arthur's noodles are really tasty.

But is that the point?

No!

Although South Los is a port city, with delicious food from all over South County, the staple food of South County is still mainly various breads and potatoes.

Some of the islands make rice casseroles.

And noodles?

There are some, but definitely not the soup noodles Arthur had made.

These soup noodles are more a part of North County's diet.

The practice of putting apples in the soup is indeed the secret recipe of chefs from North County.

Despite the lack of more industries in North County, as 'Lady of the Eternal Night' from South Los, Marinda naturally had a vast knowledge and memory.

This lady could find more information from extremely minute details, thereby using this information to maintain her undefeated standing.

It was so before.

This time?

No exception—

Marinda's gaze turned towards the Lead Box Coffin.

The moment she had entered the cabin, the lady had seen the Lead Box Coffin.

However, the lady did not inquire.

In fact, there was no need to ask more.

With yesterday's experience, the lady was very clear about what was inside.

'Lady of Sorrow'!

Or rather, something related to 'Lady of Sorrow'!

Plus the North County noodles...

'Are they hiding their information in North County?'

Unconsciously, Marinda started guessing.

Then, the lady asked with her eyes—

'Speak up.'

'Speak what?'

Arthur was startled, but the speed at which he ate noodles did not decrease; on the contrary, he ate even faster, and that slurping sound made Marinda couldn't help but pick up the bowl in front of her.

'Of course, it's about what this here has to do with North County!' Marinda inquired while sipping the soup in small mouthfuls.

Arthur did not answer immediately but finished off the soup in the pot with gulps and then wiped his mouth.

'Nothing at all!'

Arthur's eyes were so resolute.

Resolute as if he had overdone it in acting.

Marinda immediately rolled her eyes but did not pursue further.

The lady knew Arthur's honesty. If it was possible to speak, Arthur would definitely tell, and now that Arthur did not, it naturally meant he could not speak.

Or rather...

Could not speak!

The lady glanced at the Lead Box Coffin.

Naturally, it was because of this thing.

Could not speak, yet needed to tell her so much, was it to make her...

Send a message!

To communicate with her cousin!

Immediately, Marinda guessed Arthur's intention.

'I knew you were not so kind-hearted for inviting me to dinner. As expected, a bad guy!'

Marinda clearly remembered, when she had left in the morning, the Lead Box Coffin was not there, and now upon her return, it had appeared.

It was just too obvious.

'I had no choice.'

Arthur spread his hands.

Seeing this, Marinda's mouth turned up in a smile.

Of course, she knew Arthur's reluctance.

The presence of Grandma Susan made it clear that Arthur was not suitable to talk directly with her cousin; he would be too constrained, and besides, the Lead Box Coffin needed to be guarded.

Such secretive matters were naturally Arthur's own doing.

So, he had turned to her.

Because Arthur trusted her.

'Considering what's below, I will help you.'

Marinda indicated with a smile that she did not mind acting as a Messenger.

Moreover, the lady did not delay. After eating a bowl of noodles, she left straightaway.

Looking at that smoke trailing away once more, Arthur's eyes revealed a smile—

Why he liked working with Marinda.

Beyond Marinda's own strength, what mattered most was her cleverness.

He not only liked such clever collaborators but also greatly appreciated them.

It was really too comfortable!

The young Southern Los Spirit Medium stretched lazily, yawning with her mouth, leaning back against the chair, as if she had fallen into a doze.

Meanwhile, outside Port Doldot, Grindelwald opened his eyes.

Chapter 730: The Web of Blood IV

The location of Grindelwald was a secret campsite by the river, about 20 kilometers away from Doldot Port.

Campsite it was called, but in reality, it was just a temporary resting place with some simple arrangements around two fire pits.

Due to his special status, Grindelwald had a tent that belonged exclusively to him.

When Grindelwald woke up, there were low sounds of arguing outside the tent—

"Toran! What are you trying to do?

Are you still delusional at this point?

There is no God of the Inland River!

There isn't!

It's all fake!"

A rather sharp voice, even when lowered, made listeners involuntarily frown.

It was truly grating to the ears.

"Exactly!

What we need to do now is leave Port Doldot as soon as possible!"

"Yes!

The Marquess of Seberlin has already put us on the wanted list!"

Agreement came in waves.

Messy and noisy.

And extremely unpleasant to listen to.

"I said when I was gathering everyone, those willing to come with me should wait here, and those not willing are free to leave."

Toran spoke calmly, unhurried.

He was different from before. The former Toran, though cautious and serious, always seemed impatient and unreliable.

But after last night's 'betrayal,' Toran seemed to have grown up overnight.

He became not only steadier but was also able to confront more than a dozen people without being at a disadvantage.

"Leave on our own?"

The sharp voice let out an even more piercing laugh.

"Do you think we should just leave on our own?"

A question.

A question in the dead of night grew more piercing under the night wind.

The wind fluttered the tent flaps, and Grindelwald saw the other party.

A man who was tall and skinny, with a narrow face, dressed in overalls.

At that moment, he was staring at Toran ferociously.

"What do you think I joined your so-called Inland River Cult for?"

Was it for faith?

Bullshit faith!

I'm here for money, women!

Now that I've gotten nothing, you just let me go?

It won't be that easy!

Hand over the money!

I've calculated it, there's at least 60,000 gold coins in the cult's Contribution Money, even if you haven't taken all of it out, even just a part would be enough!

Now!

The gold coins are ours!"

The opposition growled.

And those who agreed before stood behind him as well, these fellows drawing daggers and shortswords from their bosoms, looking fierce.

It's not 6 gold coins!

It's not even 60 gold coins!

It's 60,000 gold coins!

60,000 gold coins!

Just the thought of such wealth made these treacherous fellows breathe faster; they glared malevolently at Toran, wishing they could rip him open right then and take the gold coins out.

On the other side was Toran.

Apart from Mr. and Mrs. Gwen, there was no one else.

It wasn't that there were no other people present.

Most of those present kept their neutrality.

They watched Toran and the thugs opposite them.

They retained a trace of awe towards the 'God of the Inland River.'

But they also coveted the 60,000 gold coins with a greed they couldn't let go of.

They wavered.

They wished to continue living as followers of the 'Inland River Cult,' yet they longed to secure enough money to start a new life.

A contradiction.

Because they didn't want to risk it.

Especially since some of them had already come forward, naturally, they preferred to see it through to the end.

They chose the safest way to see how things would ultimately turn out.

Isn't that what everyone does anyway?

"Sigh!"

Mr. Gwen shook his head and sighed before pulling out a small firearm from his chest.

With the appearance of the firearm, the shouting from the other side quieted down a little.

But the next moment—

"What are you afraid of?"

He has only one bullet!

Can he really kill all of us?"

After retreating to the back of the crowd, the man with the long and narrow face began to shout with a more piercing voice.

"Yeah!"

"What are we afraid of!"

"Hand over the money!"

"Hand it over!"

With echoes one after another, the voices grew louder, and the faces became more ferocious.

Toran remained silent and drew his longsword.

At this moment, Toran feared no battle.

Because he firmly believed that the God of the Inland River existed.

He fought for Your Crown.

Even death would be the ultimate honor.

And it would be even better if he could take down that blasphemer before dying.

Facing Toran's gaze, the man who had shrunk to the back of the crowd felt a sudden panic and subconsciously wanted to turn and run away, but the human wall in front of him gave him the courage.

He started to laugh, and loudly said—

"What can you alone do?

No!

There are three of you!

Right, didn't you also bring a Divine Envoy?

Four people!

Haha!

You four want to fight my fifteen men?

Come on!

I'm standing right here, what can you possibly do to me!"

The sharp voice of the other party became increasingly arrogant.

Seemingly to boost his own morale, the man shouted while moving forward a step.

Then...

He stepped on a snake.

In pain, the snake twisted around and bit.

The color was dark brown, with a triangular head.

Poison!

Deadly poison!

The man only felt a sharp pain in his leg, then his breathing became difficult, followed by his vision darkening in waves.

Thump!

The man fell down.

The people surrounding the man were startled, and subconsciously, they checked on their leader.

Then...

They were also bitten by snakes.

Not just by the previous one.

But by dozens of small, quick-reacting snakes with extremely potent venom.

These snakes had been arranged in advance by Arthur.

They were a precautionary measure.

The situation for the Inland River Cult was not looking good, or it could be said, it was really awful.

In such an awful situation, anything could happen.

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium never dared to bet on the kindness of a person, but he was truly willing to bet on a person's malice.

The former was unpredictable.

The latter was a guaranteed win for him.

Snakes surged, and people fell to the ground.

The bystanders cried out in shock.

Toran, and Mr. and Mrs. Gwen were stunned.

Then, Mr. Gwen began to shout excitedly—

"The divine has a form, like a serpent, long and thick.

The Breath of God, deadly poisonous.

The Command of God, snakes in obedience!

Your Crown!

It's Your Crown!"

The excited voice was incredibly high-pitched, Mr. Gwen's cheeks were flushed red, and his voice echoed through the night sky, causing the bystanders to look at each other with horror and doubt.

Grindelwald wouldn't give these fools any more time.

After straightening his attire, the pale-haired and pale-faced Grindelwald stepped out of the tent.

His staff tapped lightly on the ground.

His voice was calm and prolonged—

"God of the Inland River, are You truly willing to accept them?"

As his words fell, the Inland River beside the dense forest started to churn.

The next moment—

A massive figure rose, blocking out the sun.