

Great Master 761

Chapter 761 Roaring II

Brightness suddenly appeared, illuminating the dense forest at the edge of the Ainhars Territory, and the Inland River of this basin was illuminated as well.

The crimson color, rising from the ground, resembled a small sun.

But it lacked the warmth of the sun.

What prevailed was a cold, distorted feeling.

And...

The scent of blood!

Even though it was far enough away, the faint scent of blood still penetrated into the nostrils.

Even covering one's mouth and nose was futile.

It was a smell that lingered.

Ugh!

Many began to vomit, and even more staggered.

People looked at each other in bewilderment, terrified, staring towards where the rumble originated.

No one knew what had happened.

Except for Arthur.

Facing the sudden roar, especially sensing inside the battling auras of two Ascend Stapers, two Entry Level auras, and many Great Arcana Level auras following one Ascend Stapers aura, continuously attacking another Ascend Stapers, the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium's heart finally eased—

"So that's it!

It's not that they didn't want to send a 'Protector'!

It's that they couldn't send a 'Protector'!

This besiegement...

Interesting!"

A flash of light sparkled in Arthur's eyes.

In the perception of the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium, he could easily identify who the Ascend Staper leading the team besieging another was, after all, that sharpness-like-sword aura completely resembled Kalal's.

Undoubtedly, that Ascend Staper was of the Marquess of Ainhars.

Having confirmed his identity, it went without saying who the rest—the Entry Level and Great Arcana Level—were.

They were the nobles within Ainhars Territory.

However, another Ascend Staper's aura caught Arthur by surprise.

Because, it was—

from the Bloodline Clan!

An Ascend Staper from the Bloodline Clan!

"A survivor from the annihilated Bloodline Clan has emerged?

And an Ascend Staper, no less?

The waters run deep here!"

Muttering internally about the depth of the situation, the sound of bat wings flapping soon reached them.

Lord Auburn, stepping on the giant back of a Blood Bat, appeared beside the "Oriental" ship's side.

This Blood Descendant's pale face carried the haughty detachment typically associated with his kind, yet many could discern a complex expression in his crimson eyes as he looked towards the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

Even though it was fleeting.

But that was enough to fuel speculation among those present.

Lady Windsor narrowed her eyes.

"Indeed, that aura is related to the Bloodline Clan!

But the gaze of this Blood Descendant...

Could it be that the Southern Lost Spirit Medium had anticipated this event?

Is that why he chose to rest an extra day at Port Doldot?"

Unwittingly, Lady Windsor began to speculate.

Speculating too were Yakaz, Lalia, and Leonides.

Unlike Lady Windsor, these three young nobles were both worried and expectant—they sensed their parents' auras.

Undoubtedly, a grand spectacle was unfolding there.

They worried for their parents' safety.

They looked forward to their parents bringing home the spoils of war.

A contradictory and complex emotion filled the hearts of the three young people.

But suddenly, the three young people were drawn back by the words of the Blood Descendant—

"Again, you guessed right!

This time I lose, I will grant you another request, provided it does not harm my own interests!"

"Guess?

Please do not doubt the professional integrity of a 'Spirit Medium'!

This is divination!"

Moreover, we've collaborated so many times, when have I ever harmed your interests?

"We have always been mutually beneficial,"

Arthur replied with a smile.

In response, the 'Blood Descendants' didn't argue much, only preparing to leave, yet Arthur called him back.

"Do you remember what I told you?"

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium turned serious.

This serious demeanor attracted the attention of everyone around.

What had been said?

Was it about the recent explosion?

Or...

about the outcome of the battle?

Yacass, Larya, and Leonides scratched their heads, desperately wanting to ask but not daring to.

Indeed, they didn't dare!

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium always had a reputation for mercy.

But the 'Blood Descendants' did not.

The latter certainly wouldn't mind killing a few who dared to interrupt recklessly.

"Hmm."

The 'Blood Descendants' nodded, then rode a Blood Bat towards the site of the explosion, while Arthur stood quietly on the ship's rail, watching his partner depart—since they were performing a dual act, they might as well go all out, otherwise how could he intervene in the matters there later on.

His proxy 'Blood Descendants'?

Apart from being a scouting sentinel, it was mainly to give him a reason to get involved there.

'What could be there?'

Arthur was filled with expectation.

Yet outwardly, he still retained a hint of concern.

"Lord Kledos, is the situation over there complicated?"

Lady Windsor approached him.

Compared to Yacass, Larya, and Leonides' concerns and expectations, this lady held no worries—her father was simply not there.

Ever since she had found her own lover, her father had never left their side.

"Quite complicated!

If not handled well, the entire Ainhars Territory could fall into the abyss.

And more importantly...

I promised that man, I would not casually interfere with their family's internal affairs,"

Arthur said with a helpless wry smile.

"Your friendship with Lord Auburn is truly admirable.

But if something really endangers the entire Ainhars Territory, I earnestly implore you to assist the entire Ainhars Territory.

After all, there are many more innocents here."

With that, Lady Windsor bowed deeply.

Standing behind Lady Windsor, Yacass, Larya, and Leonides also bowed deeply—firmly believing their elders would triumph, yet inevitably worried.

Under such emotions, the three chose to follow in bowing.

Thus, these three young nobles completely missed Lady Windsor, who had straightened up a step earlier, slightly extending a fist hidden in her sleeve.

Just a third of a fist.

But the gleam showing through her fingers was enough for Arthur to understand what it was.

Messenger Stone!

The lady before him was communicating with someone!

And, maintaining it for a long time!

Who could it be?

Arthur guessed inwardly, yet his expression remained unchanged.

"I'll do my best!

After all, divination is not omnipotent, it cannot be completely accurate!

So..."

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium was explaining, but on the side, Leonides's face suddenly changed color.

Because the scent of his father had vanished.

Not just Leonides's father's scent.

The scents of those 'Entrants,' 'Great Arcana Level,' flickered like candles in the wind.

At this moment—

Windsor's eyes shone even brighter.

Chapter 762 Roaring III

Low sobs rose on the deck.

It was young Leonides.

This young noble, with his round face and brown hair, always carried a hint of childishness in his demeanor. Finding that his father's presence had vanished, he staggered to lean against the ship's railings, tears streaming involuntarily from his eyes. Yet the teachings ingrained in him forbade him from crying out loud, forcing the young man to clench his teeth and let only whimpers escape.

Witnessing this scene, young Yakaz and Lalia instinctively moved to comfort him.

But they were stopped by Lady Windsor.

This lady held back Yakaz and Lalia with one hand, and with the other, she raised it high and brought it down with force—

Smack!

The slap resonated sharply.

It was followed by the lady's scolding.

"Crying? What's there to cry about!

Lord Leondsey died in battle, and that is the glory of being a noble!

As the son of a lord, your tears are a desecration of your father's honor!

For the sake of your father's honor, for the Leondsey family, you now go and gather every man you can!

We have to fend off those Peeping Toms!

Those from Inner Bay!"

The lady, unapologetically, grabbed young Leonides by the collar and fiercely delivered another slap.

In the midst of his whimpering, young Leonides was initially stunned by the hit.

After realizing he had been slapped by Windsor, the young noble was angry.

But after hearing Windsor's words, he quickly came to his senses.

Looking at the fierce Windsor, the young noble could only admire her.

He hadn't thought of any of this before.

He was no match for Windsor.

It wasn't just Leonides; Yakaz and Lalia had the same realization.

And Lady Windsor struck while the iron was hot—

"You go inform the other families; though we do not know what has happened, I am certain our fathers would have left something in place to deal with such emergencies.

At least, that's how my father was."

"Viscount Windsor, him?"

Young Leonides, Yakaz, and Lalia were shocked.

"My father has become despondent since my mother's untimely death and will not take part in recent events. But when it concerns family honor, he will surely go to the frontlines.

With him there, our burden will be lighter.

And furthermore..."

With that, Lady Windsor's gaze turned toward Arthur.

"Lord Kledos, I have heard of your 'fair trade' principle!

Previously, you helped the Marquis of Seberlin, and you earned a forty percent stake in the management rights of Port Doldot. Similarly, if you are willing to help us through this crisis, we are willing to offer forty percent of Port Pult's management rights!

Rest assured that even if those rights are not in our hands currently, I don't think anyone would refuse right now!

If we cannot produce them afterward, we are willing to secure them with assets from within our family!"

Lady Windsor said this very sincerely.

Upon this, young Leonides, Yakaz, and Lalia nodded repeatedly.

Because—

The battle deep in the forest continued.

And the presence belonging to the 'Great Arcana Level' had all but faded.

In simple terms, their fathers were very likely all dead in battle.

Under such circumstances, it wasn't just forty percent of Port Pult's management rights at stake.

Even if they offered the entire share, they wouldn't object.

After all, the management rights of Port Pult weren't theirs to hold.

As for not being able to produce them and needing to use family assets as collateral?

That mattered little!

The three of them were well aware that if they didn't resolve the immediate trouble, their families would be wiped out, and they themselves might not even survive.

Arthur pondered briefly.

Then, he sighed—

"Agreed!

It is fair!

Let's draw up a contract!"

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium took out a contract and wrote down everything that Lady Windsor had just mentioned—including the need to guard against potential peeping from Inner Bay and to aid in resolving the unknown presence deep in the dense woods.

After verifying the details, Leondsey, Yacass, and Larya signed their names.

Seeing that Arthur and Windsor had also signed their names, the three young nobles simultaneously heaved a sigh of relief.

"We shall assemble our forces immediately!"

Leondsey declared.

Just as the trio was about to disembark and leave, Windsor spoke up once more.

"Wait!"

The three turned back, puzzled.

"We mustn't forget about Seberlin!"

Even though the Marquis is gravely injured, we still need to have our defenses ready!

At the very least, we need a contingent at the border to make our stance clear!"

Windsor reminded them.

"Understood!"

The three nodded in unison, and the small boat swiftly set sail toward the shore.

Next was their rapid return to Port Pult on horseback.

Arthur, Windsor stood on the deck, watching the trio's departure.

Not until the backs of the three young nobles had shrunk to mere dots did Lady Windsor straighten up and hand the Messenger Stone to Arthur—

"My lord!"X3

Cries summoned simultaneously.

Arthur immediately distinguished Jimte and Kalal.

As for the third?

After a moment's thought, Arthur knew the identity.

Hayes!

The nephew of Count Bert, the man Jimte and Kalal ceaselessly longed to pull into the fray... No, not "pull into the fray," rather to persuade to join their cause.

"Lord Kledos, I believe you need to have a talk with Kalal and the rest."

With those words, Windsor began to move.

Not leaving the 'Oriental'.

But moving away from Arthur's side nonetheless.

To this gesture, Arthur raised his hand to stop her.

He certainly wouldn't allow Windsor to leave his sight.

That could create an unnecessary...

Danger!

Yes, danger!

Although Lady Windsor had just appeared earnest, with a demeanor suggesting her devotion to the Ainhars Territory, in Arthur's eyes, she was still performing.

And, perhaps because of excitement, over-performing.

Why would such a composed woman be stirred?

Success!

An impending success like never before!

The plan to unite and dispatch all of Port Pult's able-bodied forces, Arthur instantly had a bold guess.

She had a force within Port Pult!

A force that could instantly take control over the other families within Port Pult!

Besides, naturally, there were other possibilities.

But Arthur leaned toward this one.

Because, were he in her shoes, he also wouldn't pass up such an opportune moment.

Right away, the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium looked at the young lady before him, offering the most heartfelt of praises—

"Lady Windsor, you truly surprise me.

Believe me, I never lie.

You really amaze me, do you know that?

In you, I even see a trace of my fiancée, Marinda.

So...

Would you mind showing me the support you've kept hidden?"

Instantly, Lady Windsor's palm trembled.

Chapter 763: Boom IV

Lady Windsor's palm trembled, and the light of the Messenger Stone flickered in and out of visibility.

Another Messenger Stone.

Undoubtedly, apart from the broadcast she had open for Kalal, this lady was also making a live broadcast to her own people.

Crack!

The two Hands of Void worked together effortlessly, seizing the Messenger Stone and handing it over to Arthur.

"A friend of mine, 'the Doctor,' once said—"

A good trick should never be used just once."

Arthur inspected the Messenger Stone in his hand, his lips curving into a kindly smile.

Lady Windsor, however, wasn't listening to a word Arthur was saying.

But as soon as the Messenger Stone was taken from her, she stood there, dumbfounded.

Shock, surprise, and then resignation flitted across her eyes.

The sort of resignation that people often describe as a third mocking, a third disdainful, and a remainder carelessly indifferent.

The expressions were intensely vivid.

The kind that's impossible to conceal even if one tries.

Yet there was no fear present.

'Perhaps...

this is how it's meant to end for me.'

Lady Windsor looked at the kindness in Arthur's face, without the slightest doubt that she was about to face death—the result she had indeed considered during her years of planning.

And she was not averse to failure.

After all, the likelihood of her plans succeeding had never been high.

As for resistance?

If it were someone else, this lady would surely resist.

But facing Arthur, she simply couldn't muster the will to resist.

The difference was too vast!

Such a difference that despair had long since taken root.

Yet to her surprise, Arthur did not act immediately; instead, he continued to observe the Messenger Stone, as if it was something out of the ordinary.

Still, Windsor could confirm that it was just an ordinary Messenger Stone.

After a good ten seconds or so, Arthur finally spoke.

"Can you tell me why you're doing this—apart from ambition, I don't sense that emotion in you, but there's a stubborn, strong feeling?"

Can you satisfy my curiosity?"

"If I satisfy your curiosity, will I live?"

Lady Windsor counter-questioned with an undertone of impoliteness in her voice.

When a person is unafraid of death, oftentimes, they truly fear nothing.

Just like Lady Windsor at this moment, she just wanted to die quickly.

Because she was acutely aware that if she wanted to live, she would have to become a plaything for powerful figures.

What would follow?

Death was still inevitable.

Rather than dying a humiliating death after being toyed with,

she would prefer to meet her end with dignity.

That was Lady Windsor's thought.

Arthur guessed her mindset, so the Southern Lost Spirit Medium nodded quite seriously—

"Yes!

Pendragon just expressed his curiosity about you to me.

But as you know, curiosity can kill a cat!

And as everyone knows, cats have nine lives!

So, if you can satisfy my curiosity, it'll be like saving my cat nine times!

With that in mind, I can let you live."

Arthur spoke earnestly.

Lady Windsor, however, frowned.

She thought Arthur was insane—who ever heard of a cat being curious...

Huh?!

Pondering this, she glanced over at Pendragon, who was crouching on the deck.

Then, the lady saw a face full of curiosity, one of a cat.

Indeed, it was a cat face brimming with curiosity!

"Is it an Arcane Creature?"

Lady Windsor inquired.

"Mm."

Arthur nodded in affirmation.

"My aim was to prove that even as a woman, one can achieve what men can do... no, to surpass the achievements and strength of the vast majority of men."

Lady Windsor accepted the notion that an 'Arcane Creature' could possess curiosity.

As the heir to a Great Noble, Lady Windsor's knowledge far exceeded that of ordinary people.

Therefore, she modified her original intention of saying 'surpassing the achievements and strength of any man' to 'the vast majority of men' because she lacked the confidence to surpass Arthur, who stood before her.

And the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium nodded again—

"So that's the way it is."

Arthur's voice was gentle, his expression unchanging, while he swiftly organized his thoughts internally.

"Then...

I shall give you a chance to prove it,"

he said.

Lady Windsor looked astonished.

'What does he mean?

Prove it?

How to prove it?

Kill the Marquess of Ainhars?

This guy can't seriously be a madman, can he?'

Realizing that she was unable to follow the train of thought of the Spirit Medium before her, she involuntarily thought of those who had been distorted by their 'quest for power'—people who were inscrutable, just like the Spirit Medium from South Los.

Especially some of the individuals with pinnacle strength who, unlike ordinary people's perception of madness, kept eerily calm.

But in essence, they were far more insane than one could imagine.

Although Lady Windsor tried her best to conceal her inner thoughts, Arthur saw right through her.

To this, Arthur was indifferent.

Merely the relationship with Kalal was enough for Arthur not to choose to kill her directly.

Moreover, the power she possessed at the moment to control the Ainhars Territory was exactly what Arthur most needed.

Of course, aside from these two reasons.

Arthur had not anticipated that such an event would occur—

At evening time, Count Bernaken had his butler prepare a carriage to visit Viscount Windsor's estate.

This visit was extremely abrupt.

It was not in keeping with the etiquette of the nobility.

What's more, the Viscount Windsor, known for his reclusiveness, had long since stopped seeing anyone.

After all, who would live in a graveyard?

Even if that graveyard were fashioned like an estate.

After Viscount Windsor decided to seclude himself here with his old butler's son, Lady Windsor had the entire graveyard renovated.

The refurbishment of tombstones and crypts was naturally included in the process.

Most importantly, a building for her father to "rest" in peace was created, not sparing any expense.

Aside from various fountains being replaced with flower beds and the lack of many servants, it included all features such as stables, a vineyard, a cigar room, a smoking lounge, and a library.

One could say that apart from encompassing a graveyard, it very much matched most people's concept of an estate.

The messenger sent by Count Bernaken had braced himself for a reprimand from his master, but to his surprise, the pale-faced Viscount Windsor who smelled quite pleasant readily agreed to the meeting after reading the letter and even instructed the messenger to be cautious on his way back.

This took the footman by surprise.

He had never encountered such a benevolent noble.

Of course, he would never understand to his dying day why, after successfully completing his task without receiving any reward, the old butler would stab him through the heart with a knife.

"Pier was a good young man,"

sighed Count Bernaken, his hair graying and his face gaunt.

"No matter how good they are, those who have been charmed are unsafe."

The butler Lynn, slightly younger than The Old Earl but also middle-aged, reminded his master with a stern face, and took care not to forget to prompt his lord—

"Have you prepared how to convince that lord?"

Chapter 764: Bombing V

Facing the butler's question, Count Bernaken couldn't help but rub his brow.

For the Old Earl, he could draw his sword and battle ten great beasts head-on, but he was utterly clueless about how to persuade an abnormal noble.

Especially when that abnormality had long been branded into the Bloodline, it was even more headache-inducing.

He really wanted to go home and play Gwent!

Why did he still have to go out and busy himself even though he was retired?

That guy had been gone for so long, why did he still have to show up?

Couldn't he just stay hidden and wait until after his Death to come out again?

After all, by then, he wouldn't have to worry anymore!

As a servant and apprentice to the Old Earl, who had been with him for nearly thirty years, Lynn could tell at a glance what his master was thinking.

Right away, the butler Lynn spoke up—

"My lord, you are a Demon Hunter!"

"Retired."

"My lord, you are the last Master Demon Hunter in South County!"

"Retired."

"My lord, would you really be content to be ridiculed by the folks from North County?"

"Retired."

"My lord, are you going to forget the traditions of a Demon Hunter?"

"Retired."

Facing his apprentice and servant's questions, the Old Earl spread his hands and gave the same emphatically certain answer, again and again.

He was retired, wasn't he?

Why did he still have to do these things?

If he didn't follow tradition, would he have visited Windsor?

"Sigh!"

He sighed and leaned back in his seat, looking up at the carriage ceiling.

The wooden ceiling, polished smooth by the years, was not shiny—in a miscellaneous record, he had read that during the Empire Era, some Nobles would spend tremendous effort sculpting wood to make it as beautiful as jade, and in his youth, he had chosen a pair of walnuts to try this technique.

Unfortunately...

Just as he was about to achieve a great success, it was smashed by an ogre.

Even though he later skinned the ogre to use as a footpad, it was no consolation.

After that, he became disheartened.

But not unhappy.

After all, his Gwent skills were quite superb.

And...

The ladies at the club were all very generous.

Even if he couldn't show his true identity, his alias 'Old Bob' was quite famous in Port Pult.

'I'll have to break tonight's appointment; I hope Lisa won't be angry.

She had even invested in a shop for me before, which I lost gambling; if she finds out about that... She'll really be angry, won't she?'

The Old Earl pondered over the troubles faced by his other identity.

"Ahem, Master, please be more serious."

Lynn coughed lightly and changed his form of address.

This change made Count Bernaken have to take things seriously.

The Old Earl thought for a few seconds.

Then he said—

"Lynn, you will be the only Master Demon Hunter in South County from now on. You must..."

"Master, there's a limit to joking around!

As one of the Demon Hunters, I am well aware of my own strength!

I'm not capable, nor can I assume the role of a master at this time!"

Lynn's expression became even more stern.

Count Bernaken immediately raised both hands in a gesture of surrender.

"Alright, alright," the Old Earl repeated.

And deep down, he thought about simply letting 'Count Bernaken' die, since compared to Bernaken, his alias 'Old Bob' lived a much freer life.

It was settled!

After sorting out this affair, he would let 'Count Bernaken die' and then start a new life with Lisa, using the identity of Old Bob.

With a real decision made, the Old Earl sat up straight.

"Have they burned Pier's Body?"

"Yes! Before burning, I had already covered his entire body with Holy Salt.

The Silver Sword was also thrust back into his Body, until the very end of the burning."

Seeing that the Old Earl was finally taking things seriously, Lynn breathed a sigh of relief.

However, when it came to Pier, a trace of sorrow still surfaced in the butler's eyes.

Pier was his carefully selected candidate.

Today's delivery was also a test.

If passed, Pier would have become his seventeenth apprentice.

Unfortunately...

Lynn took a deep breath, casting aside the melancholy.

"May Pier rest in peace,"

After offering these words of comfort, The Old Earl began applying sword oil to his twin longswords.

The steel sword and the Silver Sword, both gradually absorbed the sword oil.

Sitting opposite, Lynn did the same.

Moreover, the butler was silently preparing more 'Curse Marks.'

Compared to The Old Earl, who was a master, if he didn't prepare in advance, he would find himself in the troublesome situation of cooling down during battle.

Such technique had also been taught to him by The Old Earl.

Likewise, it was precisely because of The Old Earl being called a master.

For The Old Earl had changed the original combat style of demon hunters.

'Curse Marks' had evolved from a supplementary measure to an indispensable skill on the front lines of battle.

"Milord, we've arrived!"

Said the coachman, bringing the carriage to a halt.

Equally, this coachman was also one of Lynn's apprentices.

Therefore, once the carriage stopped, the coachman vigilantly scanned the surroundings.

Even though the sun had not yet set, the mansion was already shrouded in thick fog, making it appear as if it were deep into the night.

Especially so as something inexplicable was stirring his "Spirituality."

It caused his entire body to go weak, and even his temples throbbed in pain.

"Relax!

You return to the previous crossroads!

Wait for our message!"

The Old Earl patted the coachman's shoulder, instructing him.

As a disciple, the coachman did not refuse or offer any rebuttal.

He was well aware that his staying would only be a hindrance.

The carriage rolled away into the distance.

Only then did The Old Earl step forward to knock on the door—

Thud, thud thud!

"Windsor? Windsor?"

Your Old Friend is here for a visit!"

The Old Earl called out loudly.

Then, the towering iron gate swung directly open—

Squeak!

The grating sound of the gate's hinges indicated that the door was not frequently used.

The bats flying out from the inside were enough to scare off many faint-hearted people.

Let alone the sudden onset of fog.

It was no longer a matter of "Spiritual" vision.

It was the actual reality, as dense fog surged from the depths of the mansion like a tide, Shielding the sky.

The sunset glow of the evening vanished instantly.

Leaving behind darkness and...

A streak of bright red.

A figure clad in a vibrant red dress appeared with the fog from the depths of the mansion, materializing instantly at the doorway, seated in front of a vanity, gently brushing her hair.

The hair grew longer as she brushed.

And as it grew longer, she kept brushing more.

In a breath's time, it piled up and started to creep towards the feet of The Old Earl and Lynn.

Without any apparent alarm, both simultaneously stepped back.

But the next moment, Lynn's expression subtly changed.

The butler vanished from the spot.

The Old Earl, his face a picture of resignation, didn't bother to glance at the figure brushing her hair and also disappeared into thin air.

However, the instant The Old Earl vanished, several more figures appeared.

Leading them, with Twin Swords at his waist and a cloak displaying the emblem of the red Twin Swords fluttering with each step.

Gazing at the bizarre scene before him, the figure drew his sword—

Clang!

Chapter 765: Bombardment VI

The Twin Swords were unsheathed together, their ringing sharp —

Clang!

Though there were two swords, at that moment, the unsheathing sound was like a single note.

Both longswords drew complete circles of sword flowers between the hands.

The blades flickered in the darkness.

Sword Qi burst forth amid the trembling sound.

Two two-meter-long crescent-shaped Sword Qis overlapped into a cross, slashing towards the red-dressed, long-haired woman at the manor's entrance.

Hum!

Humming!

The piled-up long hair, sensing the Sword Qi, came alive like serpents, shaking left and right, burrowing fiercely into the ground in batches, then arching to form one barrier after another.

The tremors that penetrated the ground formed a series of unique sounds —

Including obsession, stubbornness, madness, and hysteria.

It was as if a collapsing woman was holding her head and screaming loudly.

Invisible ripples.

Immediately, they became visible.

A white ripple spread rapidly, heading towards the two Sword Qis.

But,

It was futile!

Because —

Above those cold Sword Qis, a scorching white glow burst forth.

The white light was dazzling, blinding.

It shone like the sun.

That white light was...

The Slash of Vanquishing Evil!

In just a moment, the surging gray mist vanished, and the evening sun shone upon Viscount Windsor's manor once again.

And those hairs?

Hiss!

Hissing!

The piled-up long hair, though tough as steel and containing terrifying negative emotions, was severed by the Sword Qi.

Only leaving the red-dressed woman sitting there, sighing at the Sword Qi about to quarter her —

"Why?

Why must you force me?

Marquess of Ainhars!

I just wanted to live quietly here with Ross!"

At first, just calm words.

The voice was also a gentle female voice.

But with the second sentence, it turned rough, already a male voice.

Yet as the third sentence came out, the female voice reappeared mixed with the male voice, and suddenly, what was supposed to be a gentle female voice became shrill.

Hoarse and shrill, a raspy tone was also mixed in.

Overall, it was extremely unpleasant to hear.

It caused discomfort to the listener, leading to nausea and vomiting.

Even those following the swordsman, extraordinary as they were, were dizzy at this moment.

When the red-dressed woman stood up and things like the dressing table and the chair disappeared as if they were illusions, these people were even more on high alert.

And those two Slashes of Vanquishing Evil?

With the disappearance of the dressing table and the chair, the two Slashes of Vanquishing Evil also vanished.

This scene surpassed these people's understanding.

For them, who were only at the Arcana Level, Great Arcana Level, it was simply too incredible.

In fact, even the leader here, the Marquess of Ainhars who had "Ascend Step", could only vaguely peep into a bit —

"Ascend Step"!

Unquestionably 'Ascend Step'!

But this path...

Distorted?

The Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association?

No! No, no!

There are traces of the Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association!"

But it wasn't just that, there were also some "Bloodline Clan" secret techniques!

It was mixed with some other things...

That damned guy!

Since when had he become so crazy?!

The Marquess of Ainhars stared at Viscount Windsor, dressed in women's clothing before him, feeling a deep wariness in his heart.

The Marquess was quite familiar with Viscount Windsor.

At least, when the other was still a man, the Marquess knew him far better than he did his own two sons—the other's Talent and family power were things the Marquess couldn't afford to ignore, especially when the Old Lion from Inner Bay had shown him kindness.

Of course, Ainhars knew that the Old Lion was doing it on purpose, to stir up their relationship.

But, he had to be cautious.

However, as Viscount Windsor started getting involved with his butler's son and shut himself away, after Ainhars had probed a couple of times, he just left the necessary manpower.

Because it was true.

He had really dressed up in women's clothes, and even applied makeup and lipstick, even learning to talk like a woman.

This Marquess didn't understand why the person he always considered a rival had undergone such a change, but he didn't think such a person could still be his rival.

For that, he was relieved.

But that was before.

Now?

The Marquess felt even more relieved.

Controlling such an opponent was really too easy.

Therefore, unlike the Barons and Lords who were as nervous as if facing a great enemy, this Marquess showed a smile he believed to be calm, the clearly defined laugh lines pressing together with the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes to form an impressive first memory.

"Long time no see, Windsor,"

"I didn't mean to disturb you,"

"I just wanted to ask you—

Do you want to become a real woman?"

His speech was unhurried, but the concealed attack in the shadows halted.

Viscount Windsor, dressed in women's clothing, slightly furrowed his brows beneath his long hair.

"Really?"

An inquiry full of probing.

Indeed, it was filled with incredulity and excitement.

So much so that his voice trembled slightly.

"Of course!"

The Marquess of Ainhars nodded affirmatively, the crow's feet at the corner of his eyes bursting open like flowers as he continued to smile.

His voice was clear—

"The 'Blood Drinker' has appeared!"

Surprisingly, it has always been deep within the dense forests at the edge of Ainhars Territory.

According to my ancestor's wishes, I need to hunt it down,

Similarly, its power is something I desire.

"I hope I can reclaim my youth."

The Marquess of Ainhars touched the wrinkles at the corner of his eyes, his words filled with sincerity.

Because he knew that any concealment from Viscount Windsor could lead to the failure of their cooperation—after all, this time the other party was key.

Or rather...

Only he could truly hunt down that 'Blood Drinker'.

After all, the other party was a descendant of the 'Blood Drinker' when it was still human.

'Blood Drinker' Haibo, a genius of the 'Bloodline Clan,' but he was exiled for committing patricide—this was known to all, but many did not know that Haibo committed patricide as a female Demon Hunter and as the mother of a child born to Viscount Windsor's ancestor.

This was absolutely confirmed.

Just as it was confirmed that when Haibo was a member of the 'Bloodline Clan,' he was male.

Of course, when Haibo became the 'Blood Drinker,' he was referred to as 'it.'

Even though Haibo insisted it was He.

However, his former Demon Hunter companions all called it 'it.'

Because it had killed the father of its own child.

This was the behavior of a beast.

So, it was called 'it.'

But these were not what Viscount Windsor cared about; Viscount Windsor only knew that his ancestor could switch freely between male and female.

And that was what he wanted.

"Where is it now?"

He asked.

Chapter 766 Boom VII

Viscount Windsor's words were urgent.

The smile of the Marquess of Ainhars was brilliant.

"Everything is under control."

After the Marquis had given his assurance, Viscount Windsor headed toward the manor—he needed to share this good news with Ross.

He and he had waited too long.

The Marquess of Ainhars and three Barons, four Barons, stayed outside the manor gate.

They needed to give Viscount Windsor some time alone.

Although this was a courtesy usually reserved for ladies.

But Viscount Windsor...

It would do!

Leondsey thought to himself and glanced at his companions Darnel, Yakaz, and Lalia—they had all come from the same barracks.

Their fathers had also come from the same barracks.

And their grandfathers?

Had fought together in the "Seven Years' War".

Then, they died together in battle.

Thus, the bond between the four men was extraordinary.

Even though there were some tensions as they settled down and in order to cooperate with the master of Ainhars Territory, now was still a moment of close kinship.

They could even communicate with just a look—

Leondsey: This time, people might die.

Yakaz: When do they not die.

Lalia: Mainly because previously, it wasn't us who died.

Yakaz was a serious-faced middle-aged man, in contrast, Lalia wore a more relaxed expression.

And the silent Darnel wasn't truly silent; the Lord was worried about his son.

His son was not particularly Talent.

Though he had "Spirituality", it was unlikely he'd ever "Awaken" in his lifetime.

This was too cruel for his son.

If he had no "Spirituality", he could stay away, but having "Spirituality" without being able to master real power was truly agonizing.

So, he had come this time.

Staking his life!

The "Blood Drinker" Haibo!

This was the opportunity!

After taking a slight breath and noticing the questioning gazes of his former companions, Lord Darnel smiled.

Darnel: It's for my son.

These were the words within the Lord's heart.

They were the truthful thoughts of Leondsey, Yakaz, and Lalia as well.

Their sons were quite Talent, but had also not "Awakened".

They hoped their sons could have a better starting point.

So, they had come.

Leondsey: You haven't forgotten the battle formation, have you?

Yakaz: I remember.

Lalia: How could I forget?

Darnel: This time, I'll take the lead position.

The other three were stunned; they had never thought Darnel would make such a request.

The lead position, that's the frontline of the battle formation.

Simply put, during defense, it's where most of the attacks are borne.

And during attack?

It is the vanguard.

Ten years ago, Darnel was always in the lead position, but in recent years, Darnel had generally operated alone, acting as a cavalryman providing support.

Leondsey glanced at the three Barons nearby, then inquired with a look—

Leondsey: Are you sure?

Darnel: I am sure.

Yakaz then raised his hand, Lalia placed his immediately on top without hesitation, and Leondsey followed suit shortly.

Then, the three men turned their gaze towards Darnel together.

The Lord didn't hesitate, placing his hand on top as well.

"The Ainhars Four, reunited once again!"

Leondsey began to smile.

Even the stern Yakaz showed a smile.

Lalia shouted—

"We shall be invincible!"

This exclamation was heard by the three Barons, Tami, Kama, and Harlan.

But these three Barons did not care, even though Baron Harlan, who had always shown a close bond with Darnel, had no response.

At least, not outwardly.

But in their hearts?

'A rabble!

Waiting for death at the cannon's mouth!

"You will surely die!"

"The fruits of victory are mine alone to share!"

Baron Harlan cursed in his heart.

This time, in response to the lord's summons, His Excellency the Baron had brought everything his family possessed, including the Hidden Guard, the trusted aides, and all the props and scrolls from his family treasury, fully armed.

Indeed, the Baron was full of confidence!

He couldn't believe that the centuries-old accumulation of the Harlan Family couldn't hurt that 'Blood Drinker.'

And as long as they injured the 'Blood Drinker,' made him bleed...

They would win!

It wasn't just Baron Harlan who was confident; Baron Tami and Baron Kama felt the same.

They too were armed to the teeth, bringing all their family's assets and servants.

They also had to have a share in the spoils of this battle.

Because only by doing so—

Could their families climb to higher positions.

And those who elevated their families?

Naturally, they ought to receive the honors they deserved!

Their portraits would surely be placed in the very center of their family mansions.

Thinking about such glory, the three Barons immediately became excited.

Every expression and the slightest change among his subordinates were seen by the Marquis of Ainhars.

As for the discord among his subordinates?

He was very pleased to see it.

Or rather...

It was the result he had manipulated.

Tightly united subordinates were not beneficial to the rule of the Ainhars Family—unity might suit a Demon Hunter, but a Demon Hunter never makes a good lord.

Thinking of his grandfather's words, the gaze of the Marquis involuntarily shifted toward the nearby Shadows.

Then, he revealed a scornful smile.

He certainly knew Count Bernaken had arrived a step ahead of him.

He also knew that by trying to save that fool Lynn, Count Bernaken had made his own situation awkward.

He further knew that Count Bernaken was not a true noble, but merely a Demon Hunter wearing noble's skin.

So—

"You will eventually die the fate of a Demon Hunter!

Will it be killed by a monster?

Or impaled by a rusty pitchfork through your chest?

Or perhaps die unnoticed in a cold, dank basement in abject poverty?

You could have been adorned with honors.

Unfortunately...

You forfeited them!"

Thinking of how his numerous attempts at alliance had been ignored by the other party, the Marquis of Ainhars grew even more disdainful of the so-called Earl's choices.

Demon Hunter?

Ever since they were incorporated by The Holy Court, they had been in complete decline following the disappearance of The Holy Court.

Even if it was against their will at the time.

Even now, some youths claim to uphold the honor of a Demon Hunter.

But does it matter?

Not at all!

No lord would allow an additional power on his territory, especially not someone like a Demon Hunter, who are considered 'not very smart.'

The Holy Era had ended.

The Silver Age had also ended.

The Pioneer Era had begun.

However,

there was still no place for Demon Hunters.

Thinking of the 'Seven Years' War' that ushered in the Pioneer Era, when some landowners launched one Burning Stake after another under the guise of 'hunting demons,' the Marquis of Ainhars could not help but want to laugh.

On those Burning Stakes, not only were commoners and solitary women burned to death.

Many wizards and...

Demon Hunters were also burned!

The sight of Demon Hunters being burned at the stake was just too ridiculous.

"It's a pity, but that era is no more.

Thus, the opportunity for a fated death is given to you—

You should cherish it!"

The Marquis of Ainhars warned Count Bernaken.

Meanwhile, the Old Earl, who was busy pulling his apprentice and butler Lynn out of the Phantom Realm, paid no heed to this fallen Demon Hunter.

It wasn't that he didn't want to acknowledge him.

He simply didn't have the time.

If possible, he would have loved to p**s in the other's face to wake him up.

At that moment, a flicker of worry flashed in the depths of the Old Earl's eyes—

"Big trouble is coming!"

Chapter 767 Burn I

Count Bernaken had already guessed what the Marquess of Ainhars wanted to do.

Rejuvenation!

Or rather...

Regaining youth!

After all, they were too familiar with each other—over the past decades, they had not only been adversaries but also shared some blood relation.

It could be said that if there was anyone in the world who understood the Marquis better than his own wife, the Old Earl Bernaken was definitely first on the list.

That's why he was able to arrive one step ahead.

And he also prepared an excuse that suited Viscount Windsor.

Just...

He had miscalculated Viscount Windsor's strength.

'Truly terrifying, this Windsor.

Much more formidable than anticipated.

Could it be...

Is this the power of love?'

The Old Earl thought playfully.

Even when at a disadvantage, the Old Earl showed no signs of impatience; decades of life experience had already taught him—that moving slowly before the results were out was not necessarily a bad thing.

However, Lynn at his side was utterly ashamed.

This apprentice and part-time butler believed it was his mistake that had caused such an embarrassing situation.

So...

He wanted to make amends!

Almost instinctively, Lynn looked towards the depths of the estate.

Beyond Viscount Windsor, there was also his lover: Ross.

And Lynn's idea was simple, to capture Ross and bring Viscount Windsor back on track.

Lynn believed that with Viscount Windsor's feelings for Ross, this plan would definitely be successful.

But just as Lynn was considering when to make his move, he felt a weight on his shoulder.

Looking up, the apprentice-turned-butler saw the serious-faced Old Earl—

"There are things we can do, because they concern our honor.

There are things we cannot do, because they are my bottom line.

When honor and the bottom line meet, we must stick to the bottom line.

Because once the bottom line is breached...

We are no longer ourselves."

A silent Force Field had enveloped the surroundings before the Old Earl spoke.

Afterward came the Old Earl's words full of deep meaning.

This Old Earl certainly did not want his beloved apprentice to become like that bastard Ainhars, and similarly, he did not want his beloved apprentice to become a bastard like himself.

If it wasn't for his indulgence!

If he had strongly opposed it back then!

Perhaps Ainhars would not have become what he is now?

To regain youth, he would even cooperate with the 'Blood Drinker'.

Yes!

Cooperation!

This Old Earl was certain that the Marquess of Ainhars would definitely not kill the 'Blood Drinker,' but would consume his Blood to regain youth.

And then?

Naturally, he would keep consuming it.

In the end, becoming a monster just like the 'Blood Drinker'.

Of course, a monster is how he saw it.

In the eyes of the Marquess of Ainhars, that was probably considered a 'perfect Ascension'.

After all, the 'Demon Hunter's Path' of the latter had already been broken.

Even if he 'Ascended Step'!

But the final stairway had also broken after his numerous decisions.

If he still tried to climb?

That really would be a dead end.

It might be better to try another path.

Thinking this, the Old Earl sighed.

"Understood, teacher."

Lynn's respect for the Old Earl ensured that this apprentice and part-time butler would not go against the Old Earl's wishes, and similarly, in Lynn's heart there was also a sense of shame for his earlier thoughts.

Although Demon Hunters did not have the same doctrine as Paladins, which precluded attacking commoners,

it's not that Demon Hunters weren't noble enough, but rather that during the Silver Age, those villagers with pitchforks caused much more trouble than monsters for the Demon Hunters of the time.

Often, Demon Hunters were not killed by the sharp fangs and claws of monsters but were killed by the pitchforks of these malicious villagers.

Even there were instances where 'Entry' level Demon Hunters were beaten to death precisely because of their own creeds.

Thus, Demon Hunters made a change.

But only towards malicious villagers.

For the innocent, Demon Hunters must remain vigilant while also adhering to kindness.

"What do we do now?"

Lynn asked, watching Viscount Windsor leave with the Marquess of Ainhars and others.

This apprentice, doubling as a butler, believed his teacher surely had a plan.

Indeed, that was the case.

"We just need to get a step ahead,"

The Old Earl said with a smile.

He would never do something like 'not tying up Ross, just talking to Ross'—in the eyes of The Old Earl, it was no different from having tied up Ross.

It was even excessive.

Because, you see—

This was a moral hijacking!

With the education Ross had received, he would surely agree.

The Old Earl firmly believed this.

But if he did so, what difference would there be between him and that bastard Ainhars?

None.

Though he could preach about benevolence and justice, claiming it was for the other's good, for justice, but realistically?

Bullshit!

If it's for the other's good, he should not disturb them, letting them stay here safely; that would be the best.

As for justice?

It's crap.

He himself didn't even know what justice was!

"Lynn."

The Old Earl suddenly spoke.

"What is it, teacher?"

Lynn, rubbing his hands together in anticipation of his teacher's instructions, responded instinctively.

"Take care of Lisa for me; she is a truly good girl."

While saying these words, The Old Earl suddenly moved.

Slap!

A chop with a technique of secret art knocked Lynn unconscious.

The Old Earl adjusted Lynn's sleeping position, making his apprentice lie more comfortably before he set up two force fields.

One for alert.

One for defense.

Assuring that breaking the alert force field would awaken Lynn quickly, and that the subsequent defense force field would give Lynn enough time to respond, The Old Earl then put all the unnecessary props and scrolls into Lynn's pockets.

Then, The Old Earl once again adjusted his twin swords.

Following that, he pulled a magic potion from his breast.

It was a conical bottle.

The potion inside glowed brightly in the evening's afterglow—

"Oh, Demon Hunter...

This is the last time I will be called a Demon Hunter."

Having said this, The Old Earl drank the magic potion and donned his wide-brimmed hat.

The large brim shaded the blackened eyes and the veins bulging from his forehead and temples due to the potion.

But the wide brim couldn't hide the wave of heat generated by his blood burning from the potion.

The next moment—

Whoosh!

Blaze enveloped The Old Earl.

Watching himself wrapped in flames, once again feeling a power like never before, The Old Earl estimated the remaining time he had.

"One minute?

That's enough!"

Having said that, The Old Earl whistled.

From the shadows, every Demon Hunter's traditional mount named "Radish" strode forth.

The robust horse came to The Old Earl in quick steps.

Radish affectionately nuzzled The Old Earl.

The next moment, the flames spread.

Neighing loudly, Radish turned into a blaze-steed.

Immediately, The Old Earl mounted the horse.

Without any hesitation, man and horse sped towards their target.

Blaze surged, unstoppable.

Nothing ahead could block the path of a true Demon Hunter.

Because—

He was advancing for justice.

Chapter 768: Burning II

The extreme speed of Blaze's progression attracted the attention of three Barons and four Lords within Ainhars Territory. The accompanying Hidden Guards and trusted aides were on high alert as if facing a formidable enemy.

"Relax.

It's not aimed at us,"

the Marquess of Ainhars said with a smile.

Viscount Windsor frowned slightly.

"Count Bernaken?"

The Viscount was somewhat uncertain.

It was not just that Count Bernaken at this time was exceedingly powerful, to an excessive degree, but also that his speed was so fast it was unbelievable.

"That's the guy.

Don't question it.

It's just part of the legacy of a Demon Hunter—belonging to the part about Magic Potions.

Very useful.

But also very deadly,"

the Marquis replied.

For the Marquis, this scene was something he had anticipated long ago.

What other choice did that guy have except to sacrifice himself?

'Hmph, pathetic creature!

The fated death of a Demon Hunter.

I would not meet such an end.'

The conviction of the Marquis heart grew stronger as he turned to his trusted aides and guards, declaring loudly—

"You all must reach the designated location at top speed.

I and these distinguished guests will go ahead."

As he spoke, the Silver Sword from the twin swords at his waist flew out directly.

The Marquis jumped onto his Sword, flicked his wrist, and ropes fell into the hands of his subordinates—the three Barons and four Lords.

As for Viscount Windsor?

The Marquis believed that he would be able to keep up.

In fact, that was indeed the case.

As the Marquis led his subordinates in pursuit of the lone figure within the Blaze at high speed, Viscount Windsor's figure began to distort.

That distortion was like the air in high heat.

But more intense.

And after each distortion, Viscount Windsor left behind an afterimage where he stood.

The afterimage maintained Viscount Windsor's forward posture, yet with a blank expression.

As the Viscount advanced with each distortion, he left behind a trail of afterimages, their 'color' fading more and more, until the vibrant red of his gown was about to completely lose its hue and turn black

and white; only then did the first afterimage, as though attracted by some unseen force, began to move at extreme speed, catching up with the second afterimage left behind and merging into one.

Suddenly, the face's color returned somewhat to freshness.

Then came the third, the fourth, the fifth.

By the time nine afterimages had fused into one, Viscount Windsor distorted forward again.

This scene was silently observed by the Marquess of Ainhars.

'The Secret Technique of Theofact Psychic Cult!

But, infused with some of the Bloodline Clan's Secret Techniques!'

Different from the previous uncertainty.

Now, the Marquess confirmed Viscount Windsor's Secret Technique.

Immediately, the Marquis began to contemplate how to kill the other faster if a battle were to ensue.

Allies?

There are no eternal allies.

Only eternal interests.

However, that would be after he completed his plan.

Now?

He was waiting for the good news from that fool of a Demon Hunter.

He believed that the other would bring him good news.

Of course, it definitely wouldn't be the slaying of 'Blood Drinker'.

'Blood Drinker's flaws have always been in his hands.'

...

A wild boar weighing over 600 pounds was charging and crashing through the dense forest.

For this wild boar, there was no creature within the dense forest that could threaten it at this moment.

Its underdeveloped brain couldn't comprehend why, in just one night, it had grown to this size, but after it had killed the tigers and bears it used to avoid, it kept heading deeper into the dense forest.

It didn't know why it was going there.

It just instinctively felt that it needed to be there.

It seemed as if something was waiting for it.

More importantly, it was obviously exhausted, yet it still moved forward.

It wanted to rest.

But its body didn't obey.

It ran from night until dawn.

From dawn back to night.

The consciousness of this wild boar had completely dissipated.

What remained was just instinct, following the commands of the 'Blood Drinker'.

And the wear on its joints, which was beyond normal, was being replenished by the 'Blood Drinker' using the rest of the boar's flesh and blood.

If there had been enough time, it could have turned this exceptionally talented wild boar into an arcane creature, the most suitable mount for it.

But unfortunately, time was too pressing.

An unexpected exposure forced it to give up on the boar.

'Damn bastard!'

At this moment, the 'Blood Drinker' was still cursing the 'Lady of Sorrow'.

If not for her 'blabbering', how could it, perfectly concealed, be exposed?

Moreover, the 'Blood Drinker' suspected that she must have done something outrageous, deliberately exposing it to attract the attention of the demon hunters in Ainhars Territory.

As for the strength of that group of demon hunters within Ainhars Territory, the 'Blood Drinker' was well aware.

After all, it was once one of them.

The 'Blood Drinker' held a certain nostalgia for that past.

Not just because it had killed its so-called 'Bloodkin', but also because, in that time, it had found the true meaning of 'power.'

A power that belonged solely to it, suited for it.

What about the by-products of this past?

It cared about them a lot.

Because...

It hated!

It had killed its so-called husband, but its so-called son nearly killed it, forcing it to become what it is now.

Even though its current situation exposed it to a deeper level of power.

That didn't lessen its hatred at all.

It had long decided that when it had fully recovered, it would begin by killing its offspring to celebrate.

However, that was a previous decision.

Now, there was no need, of course.

It had already sensed that its offspring were approaching.

That feeling of bloodline connection was disgustingly clear.

But what was even clearer was—

The presence of the demon hunter!

Blazing!

Fierce!

The 'Blood Drinker' could not possibly misperceive it, it was a demon hunter.

A demon hunter who had truly embarked on the 'Demon Hunter's Path'.

However, unlike the demon hunters it remembered, this demon hunter's speed...

How could it be so fast?

The 'Blood Drinker' hesitated for a moment when this question surfaced in its mind.

And in that moment of hesitation, a blaze appeared behind the 'Blood Drinker'.

The next instant—

The blaze pierced straight through.

It went right through the body of the wild boar.

The huge boar, split in two, was instantly cooked by the flames, then shattered with the intense heat.

But the true body of the 'Blood Drinker', hidden within the belly of the boar—a statue imbued with a sense of age, half the height of a person, appearing to stand yet half-crouch—was fiercely stabbed by the tip of a silver sword engulfed in flames, right at its heart.

Ding!

Chapter 769: Burning III

The silver sword collided with the statue, and a piercing, grating noise erupted from the point of impact, forming a visible ripple that spread in all directions.

Within a mere instant, all trees within a radius of 100 meters turned to fine dust and scattered.

Boom!

The blaze entwining the silver sword spread to the statue at the moment of impact.

A 10-meter-thick pillar of fire shot towards the sky.

It even carried the statue with it into mid-air.

And, locked it firmly in place.

The twin eyes of the statue lit up in blood red.

"Demon Hunter!"

'Blood Drinker' Haibo spoke as if recalling or mocking in his unique self-mumbling way—all while his unique power allowed him to break free from the shackles instantly.

But as the shackles were broken,

The Old Earl's attack arrived once again.

The aged Demon Hunter who had just charged past on his warhorse turned the horse around with unimaginable speed, completing a backhand sword slash.

Clang!

This time, it was the back.

'Blood Drinker' Haibo did not dodge.

Or rather...

Could not dodge!

"Even if you're burning your own life, how many times can you launch such attacks?"

asked 'Blood Drinker' Haibo.

This time, without any mockery.

Only memories remained.

That blood-red within the cold eyes briefly held a tiny bit of warmth.

But distortion arose spontaneously once more.

Memories did not hinder 'Blood Drinker' Haibo's assault.

After all, in his memories, he too had torn apart his own husband who burned with life.

"It's been a long time since then.

However, thinking about it now...

I rather liked the temperature of that blood,"

'Blood Drinker' Haibo murmured softly.

With those words, the distortion was complete.

Not just a perception,

but a complete force field.

Within this force field, any speed faster than 'Blood Drinker' Haibo's was twisted to be slower than his.

But,

it was useless!

The Old Earl's speed did not slow down.

On the contrary, The Old Earl kept getting faster.

Fast as lightning.

Fierce as a gale.

Clang, clang, clang!

A series of afterimages brought a succession of striking sounds.

Yet as The Old Earl sped up, those afterimages turned completely into...

Radiance!

The radiance of crimson flames!

Bright, fiery!

And that striking sound became one!

Clang!

When that sound emerged, the situation changed once again!

Under The Old Earl's fierce attacks, wave after wave of ripples that kept appearing suddenly overlapped—before one ripple had fully dissipated, the next ripple began to emerge and, visible to the naked eye, it caught up to the previous one.

The stacked ripples now fused into one.

Converging upon The Old Earl's silver sword.

Light!

A light composed entirely of ripples burst forth at that moment!

Not dazzling.

Not blinding.

But it was extremely substantial, as if the trembling of the earth at that moment had merged into one.

This sword strike landed fiercely on 'Blood Drinker' Haibo's body, full of surprise.

The statue that had withstood hundreds of slashes without a scratch, shattered at this strike—

Crack!

Pieces of the shattered statue fell to the ground.

But those crimson eyes did not disappear.

They didn't even dim.

Those eyes were still twinkling, and the voice continued—

"Slash of Vanquishing Evil?"

No!

This Slash of Vanquishing Evil, imbued with one's own will, is far stronger than a normal one!

Demon Hunter, well done."

Huff! Huff!

Amidst heavy panting, Count Bernaken could no longer respond.

The feeling of fatigue surged like a tide.

Most importantly...

Vitality!

Count Bernaken, who had looked healthy and spirited like an old man, now had his white hair lose its luster and fall off in clumps, while his gaunt face had become nothing more than a layer of skin, resembling a breathing skeleton.

And the blaze that was burning before?

Only a thin layer remained.

As if it would dissipate with a gust of wind.

Seeing the Old Earl in this state, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo fell silent for about a second before chuckling—

"Humans are indeed fragile.

After such a strike, you've completely lost the power to resist.

You've become fish on the chopping block.

It's truly...

Laughable!"

As he spoke, the shattered statue reassembled.

It didn't restore to its original state; the cracks were still visible.

Feeling such injuries, there was no doubt that the date of full recovery had been significantly pushed back.

Just thinking about needing twice the time for a true recovery soured the mood of 'Blood Drinker' Haibo.

"You still have a tiny bit of blood left, right?

It's mine!

Consider it your insult to me!"

When mentioning 'blood,' 'Blood Drinker' Haibo no longer spoke gently.

The rude words were mixed with the roar of a beast.

And before the voice even fell, he rushed impatiently towards the Old Earl—

Cling!

A very familiar sound arose.

It was still the collision of the longsword and the statue.

The person who drew the sword was not the Old Earl.

It was the Marquess of Ainhars.

This Marquess's swordsmanship was completely different from the Old Earl's wide swings; not only was there no shockwave ripple, but even the sound was three times fainter.

All the power had been reined in by the old Marquess.

It was all focused on...

The twin longswords.

The silver sword, fast.

The steel sword, heavy.

The two longswords alternated attacks, with the former thrusting ten times before the latter would strike once, but one thrust of the latter was worth a hundred of the former.

It wasn't just because of the massive force, but also because the recoil from the former's impact had been accumulated on the steel sword by the Marquess.

After being hit once, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo's statue showed an even wider crack.

Almost instinctively, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo withdrew to fend off an attack.

But at that moment, the force from the heavy steel sword's feedback concentrated on the silver sword's speed.

Accelerate! Accelerate!

The silver sword struck 'Blood Drinker' Haibo at a speed tenfold faster than before.

Instantly, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo was entangled.

And the next moment, an even heavier steel sword came chopping down.

In a recurring cycle, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo was completely suppressed.

'Family Secret Art Twin Sword Slash!'

Viscount Windsor, who was merely a step slower, couldn't help but feel awed by the sight.

The Ainhars Family flew the banner of twin swords because of their 'Twin Sword Slash' technique!

Although rumors said that the secret technique originated from a demon hunter family, the Ainhars would never admit such gossip—back in the 'Silver Age,' they wouldn't want their past as a demon hunter family who served The Holy Court in the 'Holy Era' to be dug up.

Viscount Windsor was well aware of this.

But what he knew even more clearly was—

'Blood Drinker' Haibo was far from done!

Chapter 770: Burning IV

As a descendant of the "Blood Drinker" Haibo, still a Demon Hunter, the ancestral mansion of Viscount Windsor preserved a significant amount of records related to this "Blood Drinker."

It was precisely because of these records that he was able to find some secret techniques of the "Blood Drinker" Haibo during his time as a Demon Hunter in the Windsor Family cemetery.

Particularly among them were records of the period when Haibo was on the verge of becoming a "Blood Drinker."

Viscount Windsor was certain that those notes were written by Haibo himself.

As for why Haibo left these notes within the Windsor Family?

Viscount Windsor didn't know.

However, the Viscount was clear that if he wanted to live a stable life with Ross, he would certainly need tremendous strength.

So, he moved into the cemetery with Ross.

There, he unearthed one of the graves, meticulously researching those secret techniques.

As for the guilt toward his wife?

It was also real.

She was a good woman.

Every month, on the first and fifteenth, he would go to pay his respects to her.

Telling her about some of the recent incidents that had occurred.

Including those involving his own daughter.

But...

Very few.

Ever since discovering his secret, his daughter had deliberately avoided any interaction with him.

For this, Viscount Windsor held no resentment.

After all, he was the one at fault.

Knowing this in his heart, however, did not prevent the Viscount from feeling anxious and disturbed when he thought about these matters.

To shift his negative emotions, the Viscount looked to the center of the action, watching Haibo, the "Blood Drinker" being overpowered, carefully sensing—

Clang Clang Clang!

Clank Clank Clank!

The Marquess of Ainhars' Silver Sword was faster with each strike, while the steel sword was heavier with each strike.

Wave after wave of feedback followed by tremors appeared within the Marquis, adjusted and distributed by the Ainhars Family's unique Bloodline "Sword Body," and then released in an even more powerful manner.

Of course, this adjustment and distribution were not limitless.

"Sword Body" also had its limits.

Once those limits were reached, such an offensive would no longer exist.

However, before this limit was reached, the Marquis was confident in defeating his opponent.

After all, his arrangements were not simply these.

He was waiting.

"Ainhars?"

Ha, Ainhars!

My former companion...

No, to be precise, the descendant of my former companion, your swordsmanship has significantly improved from that of your ancestors!

After generations of accumulation and transformation, you finally possess the so-called 'Bloodline,' don't you?

Just like breeding swine!"

While being overwhelmed by the torrential assault, the "Blood Drinker" Haibo was in no way hindered from speaking loudly, his shrill voice making the words increasingly crude.

How did the world's first owner of "Spirituality" come to be?

No one can answer.

But as to how to increase the odds of awakening "Spirituality" in a person, many know.

Find a partner who possesses "Spirituality."

And the 'Bloodline'?

It's similar.

Even more malformed.

Because it involves the issue of 'Bloodline Concentration.'

Nobles who once refused to marry outside their lineage gave birth to many deformed children, and even if everything seemed normal, it might well be only on the surface.

Mentally, they had long been mad.

So, at the end of the 'Silver Age,' many referred to traditional nobles with a term of outright disdain: 'swine.'

A term meant to enrage the nobility.

However, the "Blood Drinker" Haibo had no intention of infuriating the Marquis of Ainhars.

It had already found the pattern of the Marquis' Twin Swords.

No!

To be precise, it remembered the pattern of its companion's Twin Swords from before.

Then, from that pattern, he found the current one.

Distortion Force Field!

The next moment—

The Silver Sword became heavier.

The Steel Sword became faster.

Just in an instant, the Ainhars Family's 'Twin Sword Slash' was distorted.

Just...

The heavier Silver Sword was even more ruthless than the Steel Sword, each strike akin to the battering ram's impact, heavy, and unbearable.

The faster Steel Sword was even swifter than the Silver Sword, each strike like a seabird skimming the water's surface, swift, and elusive.

The distorted 'Twin Sword Slash' became stronger.

"Lord Haibo, you don't think a perfect 'Twin Sword Slash' can't adapt the offense between the Silver and Steel Swords?"

If it can't even do that...

Then how is it perfect?"

The Marquess of Ainhars had a noble's affable smile on his face, while his Silver Sword radiated a dazzling light.

Slash of Vanquishing Evil!

Just a regular Slash of Vanquishing Evil.

But this regular Slash of Vanquishing Evil made 'Blood Drinker' Haibo dodge.

Because, when this 'Blood Drinker's Distortion Force Field appeared, the Distortion Force Field of Viscount Windsor also manifested.

However, it was not aimed at the 'Blood Drinker' or its Distortion Force Field.

Instead, it targeted the offensive move of the Marquess of Ainhars' Silver Sword.

Viscount Windsor diverted a strand of the damage to his own left arm.

Immediately, Fresh Blood scattered.

Instantly, the Silver Sword was stained red.

The Silver Sword, mingled with Viscount Windsor's Fresh Blood, immediately shone with a different radiance.

And this was what terrified 'Blood Drinker' Haibo.

Because the curse of 'Patricide' rendered it defenseless against the blood of kin and offspring, even facing the reality of true Death.

Thump!

The Marquess of Ainhars' Silver Sword pierced into the chest of 'Blood Drinker' Haibo.

However, not on the side of the heart.

The Silver Sword, tainted with Viscount Windsor's Fresh Blood, avoided the vital part, pinning 'Blood Drinker' Haibo to the ground.

This scene had not escaped Viscount Windsor's expectations.

A living 'Blood Drinker' was what he needed.

Of course, it was also what Barons Tami, Kama, and Harlan and Lords Darnel, Yakaz, Lalia, and Leondsey needed.

The Marquis turned the hilt of the sword, allowing the blood on the Silver Sword to flow better within 'Blood Drinker' Haibo's Body.

And then?

Naturally, he waited.

As long as the Fresh Blood on the Silver Sword, flowing from the opponent's Body to the blade's tip, began to drip, that would signal the moment of success.

At that time, he would return to his youth.

The Marquis had unshakable faith in this method.

Not only from the notes of his ancestors but also because an ancestor had once done so.

And now?

It was his turn.

He would ensure the Ainhars Family shone brightly once again.

At this thought, the corners of the Marquis's mouth curved upwards.

Viscount Windsor, too, was smiling.

Easier than he had imagined, he could become her.

Then it would be time to live a good life with Ross.

The three Barons and four Lords were also smiling.

They saw the ascension of their sons.

Similarly, 'Blood Drinker' Haibo was smiling, more radiantly than anyone present—

"A bunch of fools as dumb as pigs!

How could I possibly be harmed by the same method a second time!"

'Blood Drinker' Haibo once again spoke softly and gently.

It uttered these words.

The next moment—

Crimson surged to the skies!