

Great Master 781

Chapter 781: The Secret of Blood IX

Deception and concealment are different.

In deception, you only need to deceive yourself, and then you can basically deceive everyone else.

But concealment is different.

No matter how you conceal, there will be flaws exposed.

Even if you hide a leaf in the forest, you will encounter elementary students with glasses and high school students with braids tirelessly searching for differences.

If you encounter an adult with a pipe and wearing a Deerstalker Cap, then congratulations, you've hit the jackpot.

The 'Blood Drinker' Haibo had experienced something similar.

Therefore, when facing its absolute 'fatal weakness,' it chose 'forgetfulness'!

That's right!

Forgetfulness!

After using 'Distortion' to change 'the fresh blood of its descendants could kill it' into 'the fresh blood of its direct female descendants within five generations could cause fatal harm to it,' it forgot part of it!

That part was extremely crucial!

And it was carefully hidden!

That part was—

Only the 'Bloodline Clan' members possessing the fresh blood of its direct female descendants within five generations could cause fatal harm to it.

Using the secret technique of the 'Bloodline Clan,' the 'Blood Drinker' Haibo made itself forget this part.

Then, when it came into contact with its direct female descendants within five generations, it would remember it.

Besides that?

There was no way for others to peep at it.

After all, even it didn't remember.

'Quite impressive, me!'

The sudden memory that emerged in its mind almost caused the 'Blood Drinker' Haibo to burst into loud laughter.

It admired its own decision.

It also mocked the ignorance of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium before it.

Finally—

"Haha."

This former demigod couldn't hold back and just laughed out loud.

The laugh filled with self-satisfaction and mockery, and the micro expressions on its face made the corners of Arthur's mouth rise.

Similarly, Arthur also let out a soft chuckle.

"What are you laughing at?"

The 'Blood Drinker' Haibo stopped laughing, a look of confusion flashing in its eyes.

"What are you laughing at?"

Arthur countered.

"I'm laughing at something laughable!"

The 'Blood Drinker' Haibo squinted its eyes.

"Same here, I'm also laughing at something laughable," said Arthur, his eyes narrowing slightly too.

Facing the demeanor of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium, the 'Blood Drinker' Haibo couldn't shake the feeling that something was amiss and almost subconsciously, the demigod thought to create some distance.

But,

it was too late.

In its field of vision, a hint of bloodred appeared in the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium's eyes.

That was the hallmark of the 'Bloodline Clan' members.

The 'Blood Drinker' Haibo recognized it.

But how could the Southern Lost Spirit Medium possibly be a member of the 'Bloodline Clan'?

Subconsciously, the demigod looked toward Arthur's left hand, which was not holding a sword— that hand was not only retracted into the sleeve but also obscured by the body.

The demigod couldn't see everything clearly.

However, the demigod was sure that the 'Blood of Doting' must be worn on a finger of that hand!

The demigod didn't know where the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium had acquired that 'Blood of Doting' from, nor why it didn't sense the presence of the fragmentary Bloodsucking Ancestor Worm.

After all, none of that mattered anymore.

What mattered was that the demigod wanted to know how the Southern Lost Spirit Medium had discovered it!

It had hidden itself so flawlessly.

Why?

Why could the Southern Lost Spirit Medium before it discover it?

With reluctance, the demigod spoke—

"How did you know?"

Arthur laughed.

He replied as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

"I am a Spirit Medium, after all."

Hearing such an obvious statement, the "Blood Drinker," Haibo, had no words to offer, or perhaps being turned to ash, it simply couldn't refute.

Arthur would never tell the other party that the hasty exit of the "Blood Descendants" was just some guesswork at the bottom of his heart.

For a sceptical person like Arthur, if the "Blood Drinker" Haibo had distorted his own vulnerability, leading to a change in conditions, then why not make the distortion greater and the condition changes even more?

For example: add the clause of the "Bloodline Clan" to the deal.

After all, if the final outcome wouldn't change, why not make the changeable conditions more stringent?

With this premise in mind, Arthur would certainly be even more cautious.

After the "Blood Descendants" left the scene, he had his dog bring him the "Blood of Doting" as a precaution.

It was just in case.

Even if he was wrong, what of it?

But what if he was right?

Arthur lowered his head to look at the gradually dissipating ashes, then his gaze shifted to the "Spider's Claw" in his hand.

A cold and fiery sensation emerged from the bottom of his heart.

The exterior was icy.

The interior, however, was enveloped in flames.

In a flash, Arthur's vision changed—

Within the splendid estate, handsome and beautiful young men and women were arguing while playing with him like a doll.

"Enough!

We don't need those extra conditions!

If it weren't for the Marquis wanting the port's management rights, you wouldn't even be my wife!"

The impatient young man cut off his wife's words.

"Hmph!

Do you think I would marry a 'Blood Race' like you who can't even achieve Entry at 30, if it weren't for the Marquis' personal visit and his expression of sincerity?"

The beautiful wife said fiercely while baring her teeth sharply like a wolfhound—teeth that represented the status within the "Bloodline Clan," and the faint crimson shadow that loomed behind her further indicated her identity as an "Entrant."

In the face of the crimson apparition, the handsome young man kept retreating.

This elicited scornful laughter from his wife.

Angered and humiliated, the husband stormed out.

Leaving behind the idle wife.

Playing with their son?

It was quite amusing just now.

Now?

Without someone to scorn, everything suddenly became dull.

It would be more fun to play some games with a servant.

"Haibo, dress yourself properly, your boots, and remember to tie your bow neatly.

If you cannot manage that...

I'll lock you up with those Blood Pigs."

Faced with his mother's words, Haibo hastened into action.

He didn't want to be locked up with the Blood Pigs.

But in the end, he botched it.

The three fingers his mother had broken the night before made it impossible for him to tie his bow properly.

He wasn't taken to the banquet.

After being slapped twice by his father, he was still locked up with the Blood Pigs—those women who provided fresh blood for the "Bloodline Clan" and were referred to as Blood Pigs.

Most of these were young girls who had made mistakes.

A few were young girls bought at high prices.

And he was locked in the greenhouse with a girl named Elizabeth who had been purchased—To ensure the deliciousness of fresh blood, the living conditions of the Blood Pigs were not harsh, and the food provided to them was of extremely high quality, even if it was mostly vegetarian.

But many believed that Blood Pigs should be grateful to enjoy such treatment before death.

However, Elizabeth was not among them.

Elizabeth didn't want to die.

So, Elizabeth abducted Haibo.

The girl thought that as the son of someone important, Haibo could exchange her a chance at life.

But, unfortunately...

Haibo's parents couldn't wait for him to die.

Chapter 782: The Secret of Blood X

With Haibo's knowledge of the manor, Elizabeth managed to get a horse—

"They won't care about whether I live or die.

If you want to escape, it's better to go alone.

A horse can't run fast with two people on it."

Haibo kindly advised, but Elizabeth did not take it to heart.

In the girl's view, this was just a ruse by the noble young master before her, trying to rid himself of her.

Therefore, she glared fiercely at the noble child who appeared to be only seven or eight years old.

"Get on the horse!"

At her command, the habitually obedient Haibo got on the horse.

Elizabeth also mounted the horse.

Together, they miraculously escaped the manor.

To Haibo, this was inconceivable, as the manor's guards were not merely those seen on the surface, not to mention the Hidden Guards.

Yet they had really just walked out.

They had not only escaped the manor but had also fled from his family's territory.

However, the initial smoothness did not make Elizabeth relax; the girl continued to hurry along with the noble child through the night.

It was only after three consecutive days that Elizabeth finally eased up.

"You can find your way home, right?"

The girl inquired.

The noble child shook his head repeatedly.

"Good!

Since you can find the way back!

Then let's part ways here!"

Having said that, the girl rode off on her horse.

Leaving the noble child standing alone in the wilderness, looking around blankly.

Until darkness fell, the noble child hadn't left the spot.

He really didn't know where to go.

Go home?

Deep down, he didn't want to return.

The moon climbed higher.

The girl came back.

With injuries.

The girl was surprised to see him still in the same place.

"You didn't go home?"

It was just a question, followed by a long silence. Clearly, the girl had thought about the fact that the noble child had ended up in a "pigsty."

Seemingly to ease her own embarrassment, the girl quickly said,

"I have some good news to cheer you up—

The Blood Marquis and Marchioness have hunted down the family of their son's fiancée, apparently because the lady-to-be had insulted their son.

You're really lucky you didn't attend that banquet.

Otherwise, with your silly and clueless self, you probably would have been executed too, along with your family."

Listening to the girl's words,

The noble child's eyes lit up.

Being executed along with his own family?

That would be really great!

He was fed up with his family!

He hated his parents even more!

If they could all die together, that would be truly... perfect!

Quietly, the noble child remembered the name of the Blood Marquis—though his parents had mentioned the marquis more than once, this time he took note.

The girl didn't notice the noble child's abnormal reaction; she kept looking for topics to alleviate her awkwardness.

"Do you know about Demon Hunters?

I want to become a Demon Hunter!

Only then can I kill you 'Blood Race' folk!

Of course, someone as silly and clueless as you will probably survive, but those jerks who occasionally indulge in the 'Bloody Rite' and slaughter the innocent, I'm determined to kill them!

I just don't know where those Demon Hunters are!"

Under the cloak of night, the two talked a lot.

Most of the time, it was the girl talking and the noble child listening.

When daylight came, the girl rode away on her horse.

The noble child, however, went home.

He remembered the way back.

When he got back home, his parents still hadn't returned—clearly, the Blood Marquis's massacre of the branch family was much more serious than imagined.

And this brought him relief.

At least, there was no need to explain.

A week later, his parents came back.

They hadn't noticed the Blood Pig's escape.

They simply scolded him for leaving the 'pigsty' at will.

His legs were broken and he was thrown back into the 'pigsty', where he was to stay for a full year—this was the punishment for leaving the 'pigsty' on a whim.

This punishment intensified over the next year.

Why one should use the right hand to eat and so on.

After his right hand was broken, why did he have to eat with his left hand.

After both hands were broken, why didn't he eat without using his hands.

His father and mother treated him like a plaything, wantonly abusing him.

And his punishment was hastily increased from one year to two hundred years.

He knew that under normal circumstances, he could never leave the 'Pigsty' alive.

So, he escaped.

He fled the family manor and headed straight for the Blood Marquis Manor—he was there to assassinate the Blood Marquis.

As one would expect, he failed.

He didn't even get close to the Blood Marquis before he was captured.

Upon hearing his reason for the assassination attempt, the intrigued Blood Marquis asked him whether he wanted to truly master power, to use his own strength to kill his parents.

Without hesitation, he nodded in agreement.

After that, the Blood Marquis began to instruct him.

Not only the secret techniques of the Bloodline Clan but also those of the Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association.

And...

He was shown the Chart of the 'Blood Path'.

Not just the charts for Entry, but also for Ascend Step.

He was perplexed internally, but he absorbed this knowledge like a sponge.

He knew that to kill his parents...

Zzzap! Zzzap!

He had to kill the Blood Marquis!

Zzzap! Zzzap!

That's wrong, he had to kill his parents!

Zzzap! Zzzap!

The sound of intense electric shocks appeared in this memory, causing the scene to be filled with an odd Distortion and even making Arthur, as an observer, frown slightly.

'Was this memory tampered with?

Or is it a chain reaction from a previous self-initiated memory deletion?'

Arthur speculated.

Then, everything returned to normal again.

But only the final scene remained—

"Do you think I will submit?"

Haibo roared at the smiling Blood Marquis before him.

Immediately after, he overloaded his use of the Distortion secret technique to break free from the Blood Marquis's hold, vanishing on the spot as a mist of blood.

When Haibo reemerged, the out-of-control Distortion secret technique had transformed him into her.

Not just a change of gender.

Even the personality had changed.

She named herself Elizabeth.

She was prepared to take the most cruel and vile revenge.

So, she set out to find a 'Demon Hunter' capable of taking on the 'Blood Race'.

The memory abruptly ended there.

The intense sound of electric shocks appeared once again.

Several times stronger than before.

When everything came to a stop, the Blood Marquis once again appeared in front of Elizabeth.

"Such a healthy child!"

"Get away!"

"Don't touch my child!"

Elizabeth shielded the child behind her.

But in the next moment, she was seized by the neck by the Blood Marquis.

"Of course, I don't need this child; what I need is you, my dear Haibo—you never know how important you are to me."

As he spoke softly, the Blood Marquis seemed to have discovered something and began to look around.

And at that moment, the sound of electric shocks appeared once again.

No!

It was no longer the sound of electric shocks!

It was thunder!

Boom!

In an instant, the memory before Arthur's eyes completely dispersed, and he found himself once again outside of Port Pult in Ainhars Territory, feeling the softness of the ground beneath his boots.

And...

The faint flickering of "Death Intuition".

'What a terrifying Blood Marquis!

To be detectable even in memory?

Such power...'

Arthur knitted his brows.

Then, he immediately cleared his mind.

As he mulled over the 'Blood Marquis,' the flickering of "Death Intuition" began to accelerate.

In order to forget entirely, Arthur quickly shifted his attention.

Fortunately, this wasn't difficult for the current Arthur.

He looked down once more, observing the greatly altered "Spider's Claw" in his hand—

"Huh?"

Chapter 783 Port Pult Resting I

The blade and hilt of the "Spider's Claw," originally both black, now had a splinter of crimson emerging from the edge of the blade—especially a streak of red along the middle of the spine, sinister like the narrowed eyes of a ferocious beast. The silver-white counterweight became crystal clear, resembling a

colorless gem, while the handguard had abruptly enlarged, expanding irregularly outwards into sharp barbs, akin to the fangs of a beast.

Under the moonlight, the interweaving of black and red created an unprecedented eerie aura.

When Arthur slightly rotated the hilt, the blade turned accordingly. The red on the spine seemed to flow, as if the beast had opened its eyes, and even terrifying roars appeared near his ear, eventually turning into sinister whispers.

Whoosh!

Arthur gently swung the blade.

There was no discomfort whatsoever.

No!

To be precise, it was too suitable!

It felt entirely like a part of himself.

In the next moment, a great many words began to appear—

[Name: Spider Blood Claw]

[Type: Sword Weapon]

[Quality: Legendary]

[Requirement: Arthur Kredos]

[Attributes: 1, Sharp Edge; 2, Graceful Figure; 3, Bloodthirsty Fangs; 4, Venomous Pouch; 5, Sinister Whispers; 6, Blood Mist Spirit; 7, God-Slaying Nature]

[Remarks: This is a longsword used by an assassin with grand ambitions. When crafting this longsword, he harbored the idea of challenging the 'All Gods.' In this assassin's heart, even the divine spirits of legends could not escape his assassination.

However, he overestimated himself. After assassinating two West Coast Generals, his assassin career and life both met their dramatic ends.

But the sword did not.

The little girl with the orange cat thought the sword was decent and casually tossed it away.

Ultimately, it was picked up by a soldier.

The soldier did not boast about it but silently hid it away, planning to make a fortune off it once the war was over.

Unfortunately, the soldier died in battle.

The longsword was then acquired by a farmer, who exchanged it for six large flatbreads and a jar of honey, feeling very pleased.

Fortune having its way, it ended up in the hands of the Lady of the Eternal Night and was gifted to you.

In your hands, it fulfilled the obsession it was imbued with.

No!

That had long been its desire!

In your hands, it killed the demigod 'Blood Drinker' Haibo.

It fulfilled its desire.

It also attained promotion.

It had already become different.

But it is your sword, and will always remain loyal to you.]

...

[Sharp Edge: Its sharpness can easily pierce and slice through any special armor such as fine gold or mithril, and when facing a defense force field, any field weaker than 'Ascend Step' will be shattered by a single strike. When facing 'Ascend Step' levels one through three, the wielder's power can aid in breaking the force field. Upon reaching 'Fourth Order,' the special effect of Sharp Edge will lose its effectiveness.]

[Graceful Figure: Not only is it much easier to wield than typical weapons, allowing you to swing it effortlessly, but it also provides you with a degree of 'Light Body' effect, making you more agile and extraordinarily light, such that even falling from the air will cause no harm, and when you walk over water, you'll be as lightweight as a feather.]

[Bloodthirsty Fangs: After promotion, the sword blade and its specialized blood groove ensure that your opponent's wounds cannot truly heal on their own. Only secret medicine and special treatments can heal them, while the blood flowing from the wounds will be absorbed by the spine, healing your injuries and restoring your physical strength.]

[Venomous Pouch: The souls of the creatures you slay, filled with reluctance and resentment, will transform into the most venomous curse power stored within this counterweight. When needed, once the 'Venomous Pouch' is fully charged, you can launch a 'Wraith's Howl,' causing an instant death attack

on creatures within a three-hundred-meter radius centered on you, having physical strength or spirituality lower than 5. When a creature meets one of these conditions, they will suffer severe injuries, only surviving if they meet both conditions.]

[Sinister Whispers: The strong breeze raised by swinging the longsword is filled with distorted whispers. Your adversaries will constantly suffer mental assaults; initially assessed at spirituality 5, but as time passes, the determination will gradually increase until it reaches your level of spirituality.]

[Blood Mist Spirit: It can transform into a blood-colored mist to follow you or conceal nearby. In blood mist form, Spider Blood Claw is immune to most physical attacks and can release 'Entry-level' corrosion.]

[God-Slaying Nature: In your hands, having experienced a god-slaying event, Spider Blood Claw has established unprecedented confidence. Even faced with divine spirits, it will not tremble but will still confront those spirits directly with its blade.]

...

'Is this what a legendary weapon is?'

Arthur looked at the Spider Blood Claw in his hands.

Although it differed only by a single character from "Spider's Claw," its power was heaven and earth apart.

Not to mention that the "Sharp Edge" disregards any defense below "Ascend Step", just the "Bloodthirsty Fangs" alone had already given Arthur more of a sense of safety.

In the various 'scenarios' imagined by the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

Being surrounded was always the most common.

Previously, he always had to devise some techniques to conserve physical strength.

Now?

He could adopt the most efficient method of 'trading injury for life'.

Not to speak of the "Sinister Whispers".

As long as there was enough time, he really could drag the opponent into his own rhythm.

And the "Venomous Pouche"?

It completely relieved Arthur from worrying about the human wave tactics.

As for the "God-Slaying Nature"?

Very well, he would give it a try.

And now, Arthur favored the "Blood Mist Spirit" even more.

With a mere thought, the "Spider Blood Claw" disappeared from Arthur's hand and concealed itself within his shadow unnoticed.

At this moment, the Marquess of Ainhars finally came to his full senses.

The spectral image of Count Bernaken had truly dissipated following the prior appearance of the "Blood Drinker" Haibo.

At this moment, there was also no sound at all.

Clearly, it was about reducing consumption.

"You killed it?!"

The Marquis seemed extremely surprised, even his facial creases trembled a bit.

"Of course, after all Count Bernaken had offered considerable sincerity.

And me?

I always believe in fairness!"

Arthur's lips curled upward, the smile on his face brimming with humility.

However, the eyebrows of the Marquess of Ainhars furrowed.

Doubtless, this Marquis had complicated feelings towards the Old Earl.

The two had been friends, and also adversaries.

And now?

The two were almost indistinguishable from each other.

This awkward feeling almost made the Marquis's 'Sword Body' bristle.

But deep inside...

The Marquis was truly grateful to the Old Earl.

To him, the Old Earl's help was not just life-saving, but also providing him with a 'path' to continue ahead.

In some sense, the latter was far more significant than saving his life.

Therefore, concerning the promises made by the Old Earl, this Marquis would not go back on his word.

Just—

Facing Arthur who had slain the "Blood Drinker" Haibo, this Marquis carried hesitation.

Because he knew that Bernaken's deal was to expel, not to slay.

But the Southern Lost Spirit Medium had completed the slaying.

Moreover, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium still believed in fairness.

'This is rather troublesome!' the Marquess of Ainhars thought to himself.

Watching all this, Arthur couldn't help but laugh inside—

This is perfect!

Chapter 784 Rest and Resupply at Port Pult II

As a qualified Spirit Medium, there was always an element of probing in his words.

It was professional instinct, as well as a survival instinct.

Just like just now—

It was the first time Arthur had truly met the Marquess of Ainhars.

Arthur had observed the Marquess from the sidelines.

But as for what he actually looked like?

Who could really know?

Humans are complex, always more so than one expects.

Even though Count Bernaken had already put all his chips on the Lord Marquis—it didn't change the fact that Count Bernaken was Count Bernaken, and Arthur was Arthur.

The two were different.

Not just in life goals, but also in their positions.

They were different.

So, Arthur tested the waters from the start.

And the result of his probing?

Satisfaction!

Great satisfaction!

Arthur had detected the awkwardness and the need for face inside the Marquess of Ainhars.

Nothing is more enjoyable than dealing with someone who cares about face!

If there is?

It must be that this person not only cares about face but is also awkward.

With such a person, you don't need to say anything, and certainly don't need to do anything. If he owes you, he definitely won't be able to sleep; he'll make sure to repay you double.

Just like back in his hometown, when Arthur encountered that seemingly shameless fat man.

After Arthur treated him to a barbecue, the guy disappeared for two weeks and then showed up to treat him to three barbecues in a row.

'I'm short on money? Joking!

The man was truly wealthy back in the day!

I'm not boasting, but when I got jealous, I'd wrap a dumpling!'

The fat man gnawed on the pork kidney, and an old man passing by suddenly said.

'I've collected all the bottles for you in the community. They are at the entrance of the underground storeroom in the hallway; remember to pick them up!'

'Got it, old man, you really know how to handle things; you make people feel at ease. How about a game of chess tomorrow afternoon? You gotta let me have a chariot, or else I just can't beat you. Your chess skills are too high.'

The fat man stood up and bowed obsequiously, which was quite a sight to behold.

A moment later, an old lady walked by.

'I've collected all the cardboard for you in the neighborhood. It's over by the south gate of the community; remember to pick it up!'

'Got it, old lady, you're really considerate of me. Before tomorrow morning's square dance, shall we do another set of the Eight-Section Brocade? You taught me before, but I didn't remember it all. My memory, oh, if it weren't for your help, who knows what might have happened.'

Again, the fat man bowed obsequiously, and it was even harder to watch this time.

In short, during a single barbecue, he ran into three acquaintances.

Whether it was collecting bottles, cardboard, walking dogs for others, or helping to fetch water and buy cigarettes.

To his astonishment, the fat man responded with great confidence.

'What's the matter?

Didn't I tell you, back in the day!

What was in the past is in the past, and what is now is now!'

The fat man said, a hint of melancholy on his face.

'How is it now?'

At the time, Arthur couldn't help himself and asked.

'Now?

Everything's pretty good.

I have the wife to take care of me.'

The fat man said this while taking a sip of draft beer, first taking a small sip, then downing it in one gulp. What was an ordinary two-ounce glass suddenly gave the impression of someone who could drink rivers in one swig and topple mountains with another—had it not been for the shimmering tear that flickered at the corner of his eye, everything would have been perfect.

What kind of life the fat man led, Arthur did not know.

But Arthur knew that this time, he wouldn't need to put in much effort.

In fact, it was exactly like that—

The Marquess of Ainhars had his family's guards and his vassals' guards seal off the area.

A viscount, a count, three barons, and four lords—more than half of them had met their deaths.

Unquestionably, this would cause an uproar throughout the Ainhars Territory.

And perhaps, attract some unwanted peeping.

Upon this, the Marquis's expression turned icy.

Within that iciness, murderous intent was mingled.

Without a doubt, the Marquis had already made a decision—if anyone dared to reach out at this time, they would be chopped down—Arthur did not doubt the Marquis's capability to fulfill this.

The Ainhars Territory seemed to have suffered heavy losses, but in reality, its strength had surged immensely.

The individuals below were gone.

But those above were still alive.

And more to the point, they had grown even stronger.

Without the ones below, they could be slowly cultivated anew.

The strength of those above, however, was something one could only hope for but not seek.

But some matters had to be clarified—

"Marquis, there's something I need to inform you of," said Arthur as he conveyed the events that had taken place outside Port Pult to the Marquess of Ainhars.

"'Devourer' Imola?"

Upon hearing Arthur's explanation, the Marquis looked at Arthur with a strange gaze, as if he were looking at a walking calamity.

"It has nothing to do with me!

It's that Gleisa Hamlet from Inner Bay who's playing the ghost!"

Arthur immediately passed the buck.

Gleisa Hamlet's specific role in this incident, although Arthur could not be certain, he was generally able to guess.

The Little Lion of Inner Bay was certainly not someone with a generous mind.

After the Port Dordot incident in West Berlin, she truly wished for his death.

So, with the intermediation of the 'Lady of Sorrow,' was it possible she would incite the young nobles of Ainhars Territory?

The answer was affirmative.

Perhaps, she might even make a hefty bet.

However, no matter what, she must have been involved.

And this involvement would certainly leave traces.

The existence of these traces was sufficient!

Faced with Arthur's confident words, the Marquess of Ainhars immediately raised his hand.

Instantly, a dozen Hidden Guards silently left the scene.

"Lori, Burton..."

The Marquess of Ainhars murmured the names of his two sons twice under his breath, then silently shook his head.

Arthur was certain that the Marquis had detected the little schemes of his sons.

But due to affection, the Marquis had not acted.

Instead, he had called for Lacar!

The Marquis hoped to use Lacar to stimulate his two sons, but the effect was minimal.

He wished for a qualified heir and for his sons to live in harmony.

But was that possible?

Even a washbasin during a division of the family property can lead to bloodshed.

It's difficult for an ordinary family to achieve such harmony, let alone Great Nobles.

Awkward folks are just like that.

Arthur, on the other hand, maintained an appropriate silence.

Even as the Marquis had his men bring two horses, and the two of them rode to Port Pult, entering Marquis Castle, it was the same.

Similar to the Castle of the Marquess of West Berlin.

The Castle of the Marquess of Ainhars was also brimming with the style of the Silver Age, with high battlement towers, the moat beneath the drawbridge gurgling, and waters teeming with unknown fish bristling with sharp teeth.

Passing through the drawbridge, the corridor, and the cloister.

Then through the great hall, the backyard garden, and finally into the core of the Ainhars Family—

The study!

"According to your agreement with that old bastard.

Everything here is now yours.

And...

Some of my personal collections."

As he spoke, the Marquess of Ainhars opened the secret room door of the study, took off a ring from his left index finger, and placed it before Arthur.

But Arthur did not truly gaze upon the ring.

Because the corner of his eye was completely captivated by a protruding corner within the secret room—

It was a massive horn!

Chapter 785

This horn is huge.

From outside the secret chamber, just a portion of it was enough to obstruct most of the view, preventing one from seeing the rest of the items inside clearly.

Of course, that wasn't the most important thing.

The most important was that the moment Arthur saw this horn, his Spirituality stirred, showing him a—

Dragon!

A crimson dragon soaring through the sky!

Its scales shimmered with a luster akin to magma!

When it raised its head, it overwhelmed all creatures.

When it lowered its head, its breath was unleashed.

Flames and wails.

Fierceness and Death.

It was once the theme of an era, as well as the symbol of that era—thriving in the Golden Age, a time far preceding the rise of human empires.

Its offspring revered it as the 'Wings of Blazing Flame'.

The people of that era named it the 'Flame Catastrophe'.

In the war between dragons and elves, it alone halted the 'High Elf's' assaults wave after wave, buying precious time for the Elders' Council held by dragons on 'Dragon Island'.

Even though...

Seriously wounded!

A team consisting of a Twin-Blade Dark Elf, a Hammer Dwarf, a Cunning Gnome, and a Treacherous Human ambushed it.

Its Fresh Blood poured all over 'Delsarte Fortress'.

A treacherous human with a long spear even snapped off its horn.

With wails, it fled 'Delsarte Fortress'.

It would surely return.

It sought revenge.

At this moment—

It's opportunity had come!

Arthur had not touched the Dragon's Horn, yet he had already felt so much; the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium couldn't help but exclaim in admiration.

"The Ainhars Family's collection really amazes me."

This hyperbole contained not a single drop of exaggeration.

Arthur was completely sincere and heartfelt.

The Dragon's Horn!

One of the important arcane base materials for his Ascend Step promotion.

Also, a material long extinct from the world.

Originally, Arthur wanted to ask Grandma Susan to see if the Countess of South Los's treasury contained such an item—Arthur had great confidence in the collections of the nobles.

The mentality of 'others don't have it, but I do' was vividly embodied in the nobles.

Indeed, he was not mistaken.

Before he even approached the Countess of South Los, he found it in the Marquess of Ainhars's treasury.

'I still underestimated the nobles!

As the rulers of an era, their wealth...

Is beyond imagination!' thought Arthur, as his eyes turned towards the Marquis of Ainhars, who wore a slight expression of pride.

Facing Arthur's praise, the Marquis stood up straight and declared.

"This was obtained by my grandfather, the ancestor who founded the Ainhars Family, during an adventure—it was The Holy Court's laboratory at the time, belonging to a Cardinal. However, this Cardinal strayed further and further on the path of toying with little boys...

Furthermore, he pursued eternal life.

He hoped to use the blood and organs of boys to help himself."

He discovered a method for eternal life in a notebook from 'Tower of Mist,' which involved replacing his own blood and organs with those of the young to achieve immortality.

Maddened by this discovery, he immediately attempted it.

The experiment was successful, but his power dwindled to a tenth under the new flesh and blood.

In the end, that place became known as the 'Evil Wizard's' laboratory.

At least that was its reputation.

In the end, it was conquered by my grandfather."

The Marquis roughly explained.

When he spoke of what the Cardinal had done, he showed undisguised disdain.

Arthur agreed with him.

The decay of the Holy Era was uncertain when it began, but most believed it started with the discovery of the bishops' peculiar hobbies.

"They're all finished, aren't they?"

Arthur said with a smile.

The unexpected acquisition of the "Dragon's Horn" brought genuine joy to Arthur.

"Yes, they're all finished,"

the Marquess of Ainhars nodded and immediately continued—

"After this artifact came into our possession, my grandfather also hoped to create an astonishing piece of equipment, but the 'Dragon's Will' on it was just too strong.

My grandfather was confident he could tame it but could not find a craftsman capable of doing so.

My father was the same.

And so am I.

It's likely to become just a decorative piece."

The Marquis spoke of this item's destiny.

Arthur laughed and echoed.

"How about adding one more Dragon's Horn to the Spirit Medium's study?"

"Of course, that's possible!

It, including everything inside.

And all the contents here, they are yours."

The Marquess of Ainhars nodded straightforwardly.

For the Marquis, these items, though precious, were insignificant compared to his own life and path.

Observing the Marquess, who remained normal under his probing, Arthur entered the secret chamber without changing his expression.

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium wanted to see if there were any items in the chamber worth noting.

It turned out luck was always fleeting.

The recently favored Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

Was not favored at this moment.

In the secret chamber of the Ainhars Family, besides the Dragon's Horn, there were some Arcane Base Materials and scrolls, but none that Arthur needed.

However, their value was considerable, and Arthur decided he wanted them.

Beyond that, there were many gems and gold, and Arthur decided he wanted those too.

After all, they were rightfully his.

As for the pretense of taking only the Dragon's Horn and earning a few words of praise?

Arthur didn't fall for that.

What about the relationship between the two parties?

Was it not friendly enough now?

As long as there was value and "mutual benefit," they could remain friendly indefinitely.

On the contrary, the favors earned by insincere praise were the cheapest—once an accident happened and an outsider showed malice toward you, willing to offer some reward, those who praised you before would become the sharpest knives stabbing at you.

Because you are kind.

Because you are easy to bully.

People who are kind and easy to bully end up being bullied more.

Is it absurd?

Yes, it's absurd.

But it's the truth.

When a defenseless woman faced a bully's oppression and kept quiet, a good person stood up for her, only to be betrayed by the woman—till death, the good person would never understand why he, who clearly went to help the woman, was betrayed by her.

Many people also don't understand.

So, many people die confused.

Arthur understood very well.

Therefore, he made sure what he had was secure.

'Apart from the Dragon's Horn, there are also...

Seventy-three valuable Arcane Base Materials.

One hundred thirty-one Arcane Scrolls, with six that meet the Entry standard.

Approximately fifty thousand Gold Coins.

All types of gems total about one hundred.'

Arthur estimated silently.

Afterward, the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium looked at the ring.

He knew the real value was inside.

After a careful check to ensure there were no problems, Arthur picked up the ring.

Then, surprise flashed in his eyes.

Chapter 786: Rest and Recuperation at Port Pult IV

As Arthur's finger touched the ring, information flashed before his eyes—

[Name: Lady Abel's Warehouse]

[Type: Other Items]

[Quality: Epic]

[Attributes: 1, Space; 2, Constant Temperature; 3, Durability; 4, Alertness]

[Remarks: In the middle of the Silver Age, after the 'Master Alchemist Lady Abel' truly completed the Wand Combat Technique, she turned her attention to the first ring she fabricated. She did not plan to alter this ring, named 'Abel's Herbal Medicine Box'. She needed this box to store the freshest Magic Potions to maintain their potency.

At the same time, she also needed a space item large enough to hold everything.

Thus, she thought she must own a 'Warehouse'.

And this is how 'Lady Abel's Warehouse' came about.

For the base material of this 'Warehouse', Lady Abel collaborated with the renowned South Los Family, aiding them in improving some medicines.

However, facing the retention efforts of the South Los Family, the lady showed hesitation—staying in one place for a long time would drain my creativity, she always said.]

...

[Space: This is a 10mx10mx10m space]

[Constant Temperature: This space maintains a cold temperature]

[Durability: Its durability far surpasses imagination. Even high-order 'Ascend Steppers' cannot destroy it]

[Alertness: Wearing this ring, you will be very sensitive to anyone who covets it.]

(Remark 1: No other space items can be stored inside it)

(Remark 2: No living creatures can be stored inside it)

(Remark 3: The weight of Lady Abel's Warehouse is fixed at 7g, currently storing 2000 Gold Coins, Raging Bear's Gallbladder X1, Severe Injury Healing Potion X10, Intermediate Injury Healing Potion X30, Minor Injury Healing Potion X100, Severe Injury Healing Scroll X10, Intermediate Injury Healing Scroll X30, Minor Injury Healing Scroll X100, Healer's Statue X1)

...

The space item of the Marquess of Ainhars was even larger than Arthur had imagined.

1000 cubic meters!

This volume had already surprised Arthur greatly.

Not to mention, this space ring came from that Lady Abel.

The lady had a quite friendly relationship with the South Los Family, in Arthur's original guess, this lady should have been spending her twilight years with the South Los Family.

But this ring informed Arthur that perhaps the lady had stayed with the South Los Family for a long time, but ultimately, she must have chosen to leave.

'Truly a lady who loves her freedom.'

Arthur admired the lady deeply in his heart.

Such appreciation was indeed evident in his demeanor.

After all, if it were not for her love of freedom, how could one possibly acquire the 'Raging Bear's Gallbladder'?

Regarding the 'Raging Bear's Gallbladder', Arthur quickly understood its significance.

It must have been prepared by the Marquess of Ainhars for his own son.

If a normal person were to consume the 'Raging Bear's Gallbladder', as long as they did not explode from the power, they would step into Arcana Level!

And if a person with awakened 'Spirituality' were to consume it, the effect would be even more pronounced!

If combined with a Potion Master crafting Secret Medicines, it could achieve a kind of ultimate effect!

Having understood all these, Arthur's gaze shifted to the healing potions and scrolls, afterwards, his eyes clouded with uncertainty.

Logically, there might be healing potions and scrolls here.

But, they should not be all there is.

There should be some other types of scrolls, for unforeseen needs.

Clearly, the observing Marquess of Ainhars noticed the young Southern Lost Spirit Medium's confusion.

"I have my sword, and that is enough!"

The Marquess of Ainhars gently placed his hand on the balance weights of his twin sword hilts, his deep wrinkles revealing unspeakable pride and honor.

The 'Sword Body' of the Ainhars Family, the initial and most important step, is to believe in oneself and one's sword.

To this, Arthur showed respect and understanding.

But he would definitely not do the same.

'Who knows what I might encounter?'

Arthur thought, as he fastened the ring of [Lady Abel's Warehouse],

Then, he proceeded to store everything in the secret room except for the 'Dragon's Horn' into it—it was truly effortless for [Lady Abel's Warehouse].

And the "Dragon's Horn"?

It required a procedure.

"I will stand guard here!"

By the name of the sword in my hand, you will not be disturbed by anyone!"

The Marquess of Ainhars then turned away.

Arthur, of course, did not believe in the name of the sword.

But Arthur believed more in the power of the contract.

With the constraints of the contract, the Count Bernaken was able to make the Marquess of Ainhars understand what should and should not be done.

Phew!

Arthur took a deep breath and placed his hand on the "Dragon's Horn".

Then, his vision transformed—

Wind!

Strong wind!

The fierce wind from above overturned the rooftops of nearby houses. Warhorses, along with the knights on their backs, were swept into the air in a series of pitiful screams, only to be harshly slammed back down.

All around, people screamed in terror, wailed, and pleaded.

They screamed for the loved ones they had lost and for their own fates.

Their wails were even louder; they hoped the calamity had some mercy in its heart.

They fell to their knees, praying for the calamity to spare them.

Alas, it was in vain.

The Crimson Dragon, known as the "Flame Catastrophe", wreaked havoc in the sky, its flames engulfing everything in sight.

Because—

Anger!

It had been ambushed by those lower beings!

It had not only lost one of its horns!

Its body, wings, and claws had all suffered varying degrees of injuries!

"Unforgivable!

Unforgivable!

How dare you!"

The defeat at "Delsarte Fortress" required the "Flame Catastrophe" to vent.

So, it came here.

It wanted to attract those despicable ones here too.

It wanted to avenge its previous disgrace.

Then, it saw a glimpse of something profound.

A chaos amidst the panic, growing ever darker and noticeable.

"Are you also one of them?"

The distinct aura instantly drew the "Flame Catastrophe"'s focus to Arthur.

And Arthur was slightly surprised.

He had thought that by entering the Phantom Realm, he'd be challenging a part of the consciousness of the "Flame Catastrophe" at that place called "Delsarte Fortress".

Who knew, it would be somewhere else.

"Is it because that memory there is too deeply ingrained, once you appear there, the so-called 'Twin-Blade Dark Elf, Hammer Dwarf, Cunning Gnome, Treacherous Human' quartet will also show up there, wiping out your last shred of 'dignity'?"

Arthur speculated.

"Shut up!"

The sudden roar in the sky unquestionably proved Arthur's correctness.

And the originally enthusiastic Arthur, following that roar, became disheartened.

He looked up at the hundred-meter figure diving down and murmured softly—

"There is only one calamity in the world, and that is death, that is—

Me!"

Chapter 787: Rest and Recuperation at Port Pult V

Arthur hummed silently, and the Death Qi surged in reverse.

The bodies that the dragon's wings had flung into the air and then smashed back to the ground.

The bodies that wailed in the blaze and turned into charred remains.

And...

Trampling!

Plunged into endless fear, utterly at a loss, scurrying about like headless flies, ultimately dying in this chaos—old men, children, and women.

Their unwillingness, at this time, had a voice.

Arthur was willing to listen.

Arthur was willing to help them seek revenge.

All that was needed was to release their Death Qi.

Then,

was there anything left to hesitate about?

Whoosh!

A fierce wind suddenly appeared.

This was a wind composed entirely of Death Qi, a true 'Wind of Death.'

This wind, cold and lifeless.

This wind, grim and endless.

This wind—

enveloped the Crimson Dragon!

"Roar! Ahhhh!"

Angry roars followed by relentless screams.

The entity known as 'Flame Catastrophe,' much like a bomber hit in the fuel tank, cartwheeled down to the ground, brushing past Arthur.

"Such power!

You are not human!

You are a child of 'Death'!

You are..."

The voice suddenly stopped. Arthur did not hear the rest of the words as he had already appeared in Marquess of Ainhars's private treasure chamber.

Arthur's expression was unchanged.

He was not altered or agitated because the words of 'Flame Catastrophe' were cut off.

Because Arthur clearly knew what was meant to be said.

It was merely about his Talent.

He knew these things.

What he knew more was that the recent 'Phantom Realm' was entirely a manifestation of the residual consciousness of 'Flame Catastrophe,' the degree of reality surprising Arthur about the original power of 'Flame Catastrophe,' which definitely exceeded the power of a Primary 'Ascend Steper,' at least an Intermediate, perhaps even a High Order 'Ascend Steper.'

From this, it can be inferred that the strength of the group consisting of 'Twin-Blade Dark Elf, Hammer Dwarf, Cunning Gnome, and Treacherous Human' was also extremely formidable.

They surely were not some unknown nobodies.

Perhaps some legends he once read were based on these four.

Thinking this, Arthur looked towards the 'Dragon's Horn' in front of him—5 meters tall, requiring two people to embrace at its thickest.

[Name: Dragon's Horn (Complete)]

[Type: Special Base Material]

[Quality: Epic]

[Attributes: Extendable]

[Remarks: Wings of Blazing Flame, also known as 'Flame Catastrophe', this is one of its complete dragon horns, containing power solely belonging to dragons. After all, for dragons, the horn is their crown. Once the crown is damaged or lost, they can never reach the pinnacle of dragonhood throughout their lives!]

...

[Extendable: The Dragon's Horn possesses extremely special, outstanding extendability, it can be used as the base material for weapons, armor, magic potions, and rituals, depending on what the user needs to use it for. Of course, whether infusing it into alchemy, enchantment, or potion-making, the user must possess superb skills to match, otherwise, it would only waste its miraculous properties]

...

"Is this the Dragon's Horn that can be used to craft the 'God-Slaying Spear'?"

Arthur caressed the pillar-like dragon horn, murmuring to himself.

The dragon horn was not as rough as it appeared; instead, it felt smooth and slick, similar to the sensation of stroking fine pebbles, but its stiffness was far greater.

"'God-Slaying Spear'?"

Such an item is merely a trick—if one can become a true 'Dragon Slayer,' then becoming a 'God Slayer' should not be too difficult."

Standing by, the Marquess of Ainhars commented thus.

When it came to "cutting corners," disdain flickered in the eyes of the Marquis.

For his part, Arthur smiled as usual.

This was naturally another test by the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

Being able to gauge a person's true nature through some "minor matters" was truly a great deal for Arthur—The "God-Slaying Spear" had been a weapon beloved by the elves during the Golden Age, particularly by the lords among the High Elves who took pride in possessing a "God-Slaying Spear."

For it represented illustrious achievements in battle!

The Golden Age was an extremely long era before the establishment of the Empire.

According to imperial scholars, this era lasted for about 2000 to 3000 years.

During this lengthy period, ninety-nine percent of the time, the protagonists were High Elves and dragons.

The two sides fought endlessly.

You were king for a time.

I dominated for a time.

It was an ongoing cycle.

At the time, both High Elves and dragons thought everything would continue this way, but humans seized that one percent of time.

Humans established their own empire.

The arrogant High Elves were expelled.

The powerful, almost Divine Spirits-like dragons were slaughtered.

What remained?

Only the "God-Slaying Spear."

In the early days of the Empire, there were records of 13 "God-Slaying Spears."

These 13 "God-Slaying Spears" were obtained by the High Elves after spending countless manpower and resources, sacrificing hundreds of their kin, but what use did they have?

Were they not just exhibit items?

No High Elf would use such glory.

This, in the eyes of imperial people, was putting the cart before the horse.

It was an expression of extreme vanity.

Thus, the "God-Slaying Spear" quickly turned from a symbol of honor into one of ridicule.

And in the noble circles of today, many maintain this attitude of ridicule.

Of course, there are still some nobles who consider a "God-Slaying Spear" a true honor.

However, most nobles never had the opportunity to obtain such honor.

The 13 "God-Slaying Spears" of the early Empire gradually got lost, and now, the only one that clearly still exists is recorded to be in the treasury of the Glowgold Family at Sidon Fortress.

However, that "God-Slaying Spear" had long been renamed—

"Aureate Spear!"

Rumor has it that the "Aureate Spear" has saved the Glowgold Family at critical moments several times.

And the Glowgold Family's rule over Sidon Fortress was also due to this "Aureate Spear."

Arthur had studied the specific feats.

Broadly speaking, whenever the Glowgold Family faced peril, whether from internal strife or external enemies, there would always be a chosen one who stood up, won the recognition of the "Aureate Spear," and saved the entire family.

Regarding this, Arthur simply thought of it as the Glowgold Family gilding themselves.

It was a way to maintain their rule using "legends."

However, Arthur did not scorn this.

Making the best use of things was indeed the style of a Spirit Medium.

Of course, in front of the Marquess of Ainhars, the Spirit Medium was extremely adaptable—

"That's right.

Only one's own strength is truly powerful.

The rest?

They are just trivialities."

Arthur thus spoke.

This statement naturally won the approval of the Marquess of Ainhars.

The Marquis's facial lines almost relaxed.

Immediately, the Marquis reassured Arthur—

"Tomorrow, when the 'Oriental' appears at Port Pult, it will receive the grandest welcome!"

Chapter 788 Rest and Resupply at Port Pult VI

When the Marquess of Ainhars' carriage brought Arthur back, a disturbance once again arose on the "Oriental."

The double-sword crest of the family was simply too conspicuous.

Especially on this land, it was even more so.

Because—

It represented the will of the master of this land.

And the hundreds of military-equipped cavalry following behind made it clear to those around that the master of this land could still carry out his will.

Not only was it the most grandiose welcoming ceremony for the "Oriental" after dawn.

It was the same when sending Arthur back.

In fact, if it weren't for the many things that happened tonight, the Marquess of Ainhars would definitely have wished for Arthur to stay and practice by candlelight through the night.

The Marquis was unparalleledly enthusiastic about Arthur's swordsmanship.

Even if he could not witness such swordsmanship right away, the Marquis also invited Arthur to have a sparring match after everything was taken care of.

To this, Arthur showed helplessness.

'The sword of a Spirit Medium, once drawn, will bring Calamity.

And I do not wish to let Calamity spread within Ainhars Territory.

But if I don't use my true strength to face you...

I wouldn't stand a chance, and it would be the greatest insult to you.'

Hearing such words from Arthur, the Marquis immediately upgraded the escort detail for Arthur's return.

The Marquis thought Arthur was a good person.

A good person with his own convictions.

Just like himself.

In his world, there was no term for 'bosom friend.'

But the Marquis thought Arthur could become his dear friend.

Because, ah——

Arthur understood him.

"Lord Kledos, may you have pleasant dreams," said the Knight escorting Arthur back.

The Cavaliers accompanying the Knight brought abundant food and drinks to the little boat, all of which were sent aboard the "Oriental."

"Of course, please also pay attention to safety.

I can sense that there are ill-intentioned fellows hiding in the shadows.

Please tell the Marquess of Ainhars to be careful."

Arthur advised.

Faced with such advice, the Knight did not dare to take it lightly and nodded repeatedly.

The Knight before him had accompanied the Marquess of Ainhars in the battle against 'Blood Drinker' Haibo and had watched with wide eyes the Bizarre nature of the 'Blood Drinker' and the miraculous nature of Arthur.

If Arthur's single stroke that killed the Bizarre 'Blood Drinker' wasn't miraculous, what was?

Moreover, with the Marquess of Ainhars' instructions, this Knight, who already held great respect for Arthur, became even more reverent.

"I will surely convey your message,"

said the Knight, who, after finishing his words and bowing once more, mounted his horse and rode off.

Arthur watched them and the other Cavaliers disappear.

As the Knight who was acting in the role of the Guard Commander for the Marquess of Ainhars—the Marquess, who harbored the obsessive belief that 'true strength comes from one's own power,' didn't see the need for auxiliary roles like the Guard Commander, Swordsmanship Chief, or Head Hunter. If it weren't for the real need to manage the land, the Marquess would perhaps prefer to dwell alone with his Twin Swords.

After all, in the Marquess's view, the pursuit of personal strength was the ultimate joy.

However, the land left behind by his grandfather and father also needed to be upheld.

Therefore, the Marquess chose a way that suited him.

After the escort party had gone far away, Arthur finally got on the small boat.

Rowing the boat was Albert, the First Mate of the "Oriental."

Naturally accompanying the young First Mate was Barry, the captain of the "Oriental."

At the moment, both of them were looking at Arthur with eyes full of admiration.

The single stroke from earlier had already been seared deep into their souls.

They would never forget the elegance of that stroke for the rest of their lives.

And now, the courtesy shown by the Marquess of Ainhars seemed only fitting in their eyes.

The Marquess of Ainhars was very powerful, but how could he possibly compare to their own boss?

Arthur felt the tangible admiration from both men.

The young Southern Lost Spirit Medium naturally wouldn't explain.

Having one's subordinates hold such admiration was always a good thing.

And moreover, he didn't mind increasing it a bit—

"Take these foods and drinks to the kitchen and let our chef prepare some exquisite dishes for our guests, as a representation of my apology.

I frightened them just now.

It was my moment of compassion that subjected them to unnecessary scares."

"I originally thought it would back off after realizing the difficulty,"

Arthur said, sighing deeply.

"Boss, how could anyone blame you?"

Your kindness is beyond doubt.

If there is anyone to blame, it's that creature's cruelty."

Old Barry immediately added.

"Right!

Boss, you really don't need to do this!"

The young First Mate kept nodding as he rowed, his eyes filled with even greater reverence.

For Albert, what could be better than having a powerful boss? Naturally, it's a powerful boss who is benevolent.

"Is that so?"

Arthur said, then stood at the bow in silence.

After a brief journey, it was only when Arthur boarded the 'Oriental' that he spoke again—

"Prepare a share of those foods and drinks for our crew as well.

Of course, those on duty are not allowed to drink.

If I find anyone who does, I will make them swim to Inner Bay during the rest of the voyage!"

This comment, slightly teasing, immediately evoked laughter from the surrounding crew.

In this laughter, Arthur continued with a smile.

"However, for the guys not on duty today, if they move enough cargo, I'll reward them with a bottle of the Marquess of Ainhars' esteemed wine.

Believe me, it's absolutely delicious."

With just one sentence, the surrounding crew sprang into action.

Everyone rushed towards the deck.

Even the guests were eager to try.

After all, it's the wine of a Marquis, surely worth a fortune!

Seeing this, Arthur spoke again.

"As guests, if you're lucky enough, you can also win a bottle—Barry, invite the guests to the banquet room. Once the food is served, we'll organize a raffle.

The person whose name is drawn will also win a bottle of the Marquess of Ainhars' wine.

What about the rest?

Naturally, they're all mine.

I presume no one minds, right?"

"Of course!"

"You've been more than generous!"

"Thank you!"

Amidst the many praises, Arthur, with a smile, walked to the observation deck and directly to the room that originally belonged to Lucius, Yula, and Joe—after the three 'left,' the room became unoccupied, making it a suitable chamber for meeting less intimate guests.

And now, within the meeting room, guests were already waiting.

Outside this first-class cabin, Old John was standing guard.

Seeing Arthur approach, the old pirate bowed respectfully, hiding the shock in his eyes—unlike the unsuspecting crowd, the old pirate knew exactly what Arthur had just slain with a single stroke of his sword.

"The Devourer" Imola!

An entity referred to as a "Divine Spirit"!

Such a being had been felled by a single sword from Arthur.

Him?

He would never be a match in his lifetime!

That power, like towering mountains and vast seas, made him involuntarily submit just by witnessing it.

At that moment, the old pirate felt a wave of indescribable emotions welling up in his heart.

The old pirate no longer thought about his contract.

He just felt that perhaps this was not so bad?

But then, a sense of discontent quickly surged again.

The bowing old pirate believed he was concealing it well, but Arthur saw everything clearly.

Arthur wasn't in a hurry.

After all, wasn't Inner Bay still ahead?

Now?

He had to deal with more pressing matters.

After giving the old pirate a slight nod, Arthur pushed the door open and entered—

He was about to further expand his gains of the night!

Chapter 789 Rest and Refit at Port Pult VII

In the cabin, Lady Windsor sat quietly on the sofa.

For this lady, even if she verbally believed in 'a cat's curiosity,' she was mentally prepared for being left behind.

After all, she was well aware of her own schemes.

Those men, if utilized correctly, could instantly take control of the entire Port Pult.

And once Port Pult was under control, would the Ainhars Territory be far away?

Lady Windsor believed that would tempt anyone.

Including, the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

However, she was not concerned about her own safety.

Because—

Her father was still there.

Still in that graveyard, doting over her damned lover.

'Heh, perhaps that's your only use.

Usefulness...

It's not small at all.'

Lady Windsor gave a self-deprecating smile.

Then, she became quiet again.

At least, that's how it appeared on the surface.

And deep down?

The lady began to calculate her losses.

These men could not be kept any longer.

It pained her heart.

But what pained her more was that her plans had failed in such a manner, and more importantly— the Marquess of Ainhars's vigilance.

Although the Marquis was not a man of harsh demands, he would certainly not be lenient in such a situation.

Therefore, negotiations had to be carried out in a 'noble fashion.'

Simply put...

Compensation!

'No!

Mere compensation probably won't be enough!

At least some properties must be offered, the Windsor Family's farms outside Port Pult are likely to be lost, plus two valuable secret technique items need to be brought out!'

Lady Windsor calculated, her heart aching anew.

You should know, that farm was cultivated with her utmost care.

Not just the mill, the fields, the livestock, but also two military camps—over three hundred soldiers under her command came from there.

And the remaining six hundred people?

A portion was recruited.

The other part was assimilated.

In places like Rat Street in South Los, Port Pult had its own, inside 'Pearl Alley,' where over half of the gang members were linked to her.

It was because of these fellows that she dared to harbor such ambitions.

'After this incident, the Ainhars Family will definitely no longer allow 'Pearl Alley' to exist.

If I need manpower...

River pirates, huh?'

Lady Windsor thought, her eyebrows knitting together.

Compared to gang members, the more ferocious river pirates were useful but extremely hard to control, which was why she had chosen members of gangs in 'Pearl Alley' over the river pirates.

She had no desire to witness pillaging driven by greed and subsequent rivers of blood.

But now, she had no choice.

Even though she decided on river pirates, she still hesitated.

'Blood Knights'!

This infamous river pirate had clearly shown subservience to the Southern Lost Spirit Medium.

This, she believed she did not misjudge.

Which meant that traditional river pirates were no longer an option.

Even cultivating river pirates herself would likely be ineffective.

The way those novices would act in front of veterans would quickly let these river pirates discern who the real mastermind was.

She absolutely did not want such an outcome.

'How difficult!

The challenge has suddenly escalated to an unprecedented level!

But...

The sense of achievement is also unprecedented!

It's enough to prove myself!

Lady Windsor's lips curled into an excited smile.

For this lady, nothing could better prove herself than such a challenge—she had to prove herself to her father.

Tap, tap tap!

The footsteps on the deck were continuous.

The following shouts informed the lady that the Southern Lost Spirit Medium had returned.

Immediately, the lady adjusted her thoughts and straightened her body.

She was ready.

To give up some in exchange for her own safety.

Especially after hearing Arthur's kind of heart-winning words, the lady was full of confidence.

For a partner who disliked killing and knew how to win over subordinates, trading benefits for safety was indeed the best choice.

Instantly, the lady felt even more assured.

And about several minutes later—

The cabin door was pushed open.

The Southern Lost Spirit Medium walked in with his cane, hung the top hat on a nearby coat rack, and then placed his cane to the side.

Without any pretense, very naturally.

Hence, Lady Windsor acted even more naturally.

"How are things?"

The lady asked calmly.

Just as if this were her own room.

But immediately, the lady sensed something was amiss.

The usually decisive Southern Lost Spirit Medium had a strangely complex emotion in his eyes, and his face bore an expression as if he had something to say but hesitated.

A bad premonition appeared.

The lady immediately pressed.

"What's wrong?"

What happened?"

Arthur then let the "Hand of Void" move over a chair and sat down opposite the lady. He paused for two seconds, as if thinking about how to start speaking.

Subsequently, under the inquiring gaze of the lady.

He spoke—

"Your father is dead."

"What?!"

The lady was stunned and instantly retorted.

"Impossible!

He has always stayed in that cemetery and simply couldn't leave!

How could he possibly die!"

Speaking, the lady stood up, as if intending to go to the cemetery to verify her father was still alive, and her previously calm expression had already been replaced by panic.

Arthur sat there without moving. He did not stand to stop her, nor did he speak up to prevent her, just quietly watching.

For Arthur, this was also a test.

He was contemplating what attitude to use to face Lady Windsor in the future.

As for Lady Windsor's naivety?

Who hasn't been naive before?

Back in his hometown, he even fantasized that if every person donated a dollar to him, he could become a billionaire.

Such fantasies were not a big deal.

The important thing was whether one could shed such naivety when faced with real issues and whether one could truly confront difficulties.

Lady Windsor, under Arthur's gaze, had already reached the door, her hand on the doorknob.

But then, the lady retracted her hand and turned back, sitting down again on the sofa.

"Lord Kledos, could you please tell me what happened?"

The lady's brown eyes were filled with pleading.

Arthur nodded.

"Of course!"

While he said so, Arthur did not answer immediately but asked instead—

"How much do you know about your family history?"

"Family history?"

Lady Windsor had a look of surprise on her face.

The lady wasn't ignorant of her family history, nor was she just a scoundrel living off the family's honor, but the sudden question filled her with confusion.

She did not understand why Arthur would ask such a question.

And for Lady Windsor, who had passed the first test, Arthur began the second step.

He was to tell her about the greatness of her own family.

Otherwise, how could she possibly have the motivation?

So, the next moment, the voice of the Southern Lost Spirit Medium became deep and powerful as he slowly said—

"Your family is unimaginably great!"

Chapter 790 Rest and Refit at Port Pult VIII

Sitting on the sofa, Lady Windsor listened to Arthur's narration.

She knew about the history of the Demon Hunters.

Her father had told her more than once that her ancestors were among the best Demon Hunters.

However...

Why would she be related to the 'Blood Drinker,' Haibo?

He was regarded as a Divine Spirit, just like the 'Devourer,' Imola.

More importantly, she turned out to be a descendant of that 'Blood Drinker.'

For this, the lady felt no honor whatsoever.

What she felt was only fear.

At this moment, Lady Windsor finally understood why Arthur had asked her for fresh blood.

It was to kill the 'Blood Drinker.'

If the other did not die, then it would be her turn to face death.

Lady Windsor believed that the 'Blood Drinker' would never allow his flaws to be exposed.

Simply put, if the 'Blood Drinker' did not die, her death was certain.

Under normal circumstances, Lady Windsor would have stood up to thank him by now and quickly used this as an opportunity to get closer to him.

But at this time, Lady Windsor was somewhat distraught.

Or rather, she was utterly bewildered.

She could not imagine that her father had died in such a conspiracy.

It was, so to speak, completely silent.

In an instant, a part of the lady's heart crumbled.

"I am very sorry about the death of Viscount Windsor,"

Arthur said, offering comfort.

More importantly, he offered a reminder.

This was Arthur's second test.

'Ten, nine, eight, seven...'

He counted silently.

He wanted to see the lady's reaction.

As long as she responded before he reached zero, it was acceptable.

In fact, by the time Arthur counted to five, the lady had already reacted.

"Lord Kledos, you need not apologize.

Actually, I should thank you—I had thought your need for my blood was for something else, and I even had some unpleasant suspicions.

But now, I know I was wrong.

Please forgive me."

Lady Windsor rose from the sofa and then performed a noblewoman's curtsy.

Shortly thereafter, she raised her head, looked at Arthur with her brown eyes, and continued speaking.

"A verbal thanks seems too insubstantial.

I hope to express my gratitude with more concrete actions, but your romance with Miss Caesar is something I admire and would never dream of offending.

Therefore...'

"The thousand men in Port Pult are yours now—three hundred of them are well-trained fine soldiers, some of the remaining seven hundred are uniquely talented individuals I have recruited, and the rest are members of the 'Pearl Alley' gang. I believe that having them will enable you to better manage Port Pult."

As she spoke, Lady Windsor walked over to a desk and began to write down their names.

Seeing this, Arthur almost clapped his hands.

The lady's reaction was too quick.

Or rather, her will to survive was indeed very strong.

First, she attempted to close the distance between them under the guise of gratitude, then used Marinda as a pretense to barricade any covetous thoughts he might have harbored deep within, and finally, she outright offered a thousand-man armed troop as a bargaining chip.

It was really one step after another.

Truly the 'Noble Education.'

Rarely, Arthur felt a slight admiration in his heart.

Naturally, the lady passed the second test.

As she approached the desk to start listing her subordinates' names, Windsor continually observed Arthur discreetly.

Only after noticing that Arthur did not exhibit any peculiar reactions but instead looked on with admiration, did the lady finally breathe a slight sigh of relief.

Her father was dead.

Her biggest support was gone.

She was well aware that she had to rely on herself from now on.

But this 'from now on' would require some time, and during this period, she not only needed to ensure her own safety but also the safety of the Windsor family.

Accomplishing these two tasks would not be easy.

She trusted her own intellect.

But she trusted others' greed even more.

Especially when she exposed her thousand-man troop, the Marquess of Ainhars, given his style, would not mind eliminating them and using it as an excuse to eradicate the entire Windsor family.

And she?

There was no question of her surviving.

So, she needed to find support.

Arthur Kledos instantly became her lifeline.

At this time, no one was more suitable than Arthur.

But, she couldn't truly discern what kind of person Arthur was.

So, it could only be a probe.

The current situation was quite acceptable.

At least Arthur wasn't like those disgusting individuals.

However...

It wasn't enough!

It wasn't safe!

Thinking this, the speed of writing the list by the lady sped up—not all thousand names were written out, but the major and minor leaders were, including four Mystic Side Persons, with marked abilities and personalities.

After finishing the writing, the lady turned to look at Arthur.

Then, she knelt on one knee—

"I, Elizabeth Windsor, vowing with my own name and the honor of my bloodline, swear to Arthur Kredos that I will be loyal, fearless, and will not rest until death—glory is my life!"

The Glyphic Language activated the Spirituality.

Lionheart Ceremony!

This was the safest method Lady Windsor had conceived.

She became a knight of the Kledos family.

She exchanged her talents for a space to survive.

She used the fortune of the Windsor Family to ensure its continuation.

Watching the 'Spiritual Light' emerging before her, Arthur smiled and clapped lightly.

Clap clap clap!

The loud sound made Lady Windsor's heart tremble.

She thought something unexpected had occurred.

Or perhaps her bargaining chip was insufficient.

Fear surfaced in the bottom of the lady's heart.

Arthur saw it and immediately spoke—

"You have passed!"

Speaking so, a longsword flew out from Atos's Box, still the weapon Arthur had collected during the battle on Moon Street.

The longsword tapped the shoulder of Lady Windsor, then the hilt turned around.

Lady Windsor grasped the hilt instantly, much like a drowning person clutching at a lifeline.

Huff, huff!

Only now did the lady realize how rapid her breathing was.

And her clothes were already drenched in sweat.

'Is this what it feels like to have a narrow escape?' she mused to herself.

Yet, she firmly remembered this feeling.

She needed to remember it.

Only by doing so could she become stronger more swiftly.

And only then could she truly understand her previous naivety.

And from now on—

she must rely on herself.

She respectfully received the 'Ceremonial Sword.'

The lady didn't stand up immediately but waited for Arthur's command.

The knight follows.

The lord bestows rewards.

The contract is established.

It's the natural order of things.

Now, she needed to show herself.

"They are still your subordinates, you are now the head of the 'Miss Qiu's Security Company' Ainhars branch— I will arrange the specifics later.

And now?

You can take out the Messenger Stone and tell Kalal this good news,"

Arthur said, winking at the lady.

Lady Windsor was startled.

Then, the lady's body shuddered—

Could it be?!