

## I! Cleaner 341

Chapter 341: Senior, your... is really handy!\_2

"Suspicious target spotted! Quick! Sound the whistle!"

After vaguely spotting a flash of silver light racing quickly across the plains, the soldier on the lookout tower tensed up, first blowing the warning whistle, then immediately waved a flag toward the distance.

At the seven o'clock direction, a target, possibly with a special weapon?

Squinting to decode the flag signals from the lookout tower, a commander leading a squad of over twenty powered armor units was heading at full speed toward the Boarding Tower. He first maneuvered his powered armor's arm to gesture at a team member behind him, then pointed in the nine o'clock direction, making a grabbing gesture to indicate that they should go confirm the target.

Amidst the dull warning sounds, the team member's powered armor replied with a gesture of understanding, then promptly slowed down to detach from the team. He then changed direction, heading toward the designated target location.

\*Hopefully, everything would go smoothly this time...\*

Not giving too much attention to this small incident, the powered armor squad's commander sighed as he looked at the still-burning airship gasbag draped over the top of the Boarding Tower. He then adjusted the pressure gauge of his powered armor, increasing the already fast speed by a small margin.

Even though he wasn't directly a guard of the Boarding Tower, merely dispatched by the military for emergency duty to assist in its defense only if a large number of enemy targets appeared.

But this time, such a big commotion had erupted that even a Sky Clipper from the Crolock Kingdom had been burned down. He reckoned that even though he merely had a supportive defense role, he would inevitably face repercussions.

\*Those damned attackers... They had to choose to stir things up exactly when I was reassigned for auxiliary defense!\*

At the moment, he only hoped he could arrive in time to intercept the attackers on the Boarding Tower and possibly even eliminate them, allowing him to lessen some of his liability.

Otherwise, even if he wasn't the main person responsible, needing to only carry some ancillary responsibility, he feared he wouldn't get promoted soon, perhaps having to stick around his current position for another three, five, or seven years...

"Toot... Toot-toot!"

Just as the powered armor squad's commander was on his way, lost in his anxious thoughts, the warning whistle sounded again, even more urgently than before.

Upon hearing the signal, he astonishedly opened his sight-glass, glancing toward the lookout tower, where the flag's color changed from beige to a more alert deep orange.

Nine o'clock direction, still the previous target, the person I dispatched was defeated?

Estimating the time since his team member left, the powered armor squad's commander suddenly looked solemn.

According to the flag signals from the lookout tower, the suspicious target wasn't in powered armor, just a person on foot with an unknown weapon.

And the team member he sent out, piloting a powered armor over four meters tall, was defeated in such a short time? What on Earth did that person possess?

"You go!"

Slightly reducing his speed, he gestured a window-open sign to his rear before opening the air vent of his armor's exterior. He then directly shouted to the deputy's powered armor behind him,

"There's a dangerous target in the nine o'clock direction. Take two people with you and find out what's going on!"

"Got it."

Hearing this, the deputy nodded and selected two people from the powered armor squad. The three towering powered armors then successively slowed down to detach from the group, heading toward nine o'clock.

Theoretically speaking, a squad composed of three powered armors was sufficient to easily capture a fortified position held by hundreds of soldiers, making it somewhat excessive to capture a walking target carrying an unknown weapon.

However, given how quickly the prior team member was knocked down, the powered armor squad's commander was uncertain of the situation, choosing to proceed cautiously. Not only did he allocate excessive manpower to find the target, but he also ordered the entire squad to reduce speed, prepared to turn back and provide support at any moment.

This time, though the wait for a response was longer than before, it wasn't much later that even more urgent warning signals suddenly blared, and the lookout tower's flag changed color once more.

\*A red flag representing high alert, second only to a black flag?\*

Seeing the flag's color, the commander's heart tightened, and he promptly moved his eyes to the sight-glass, seeking to decipher the flag signals from the lookout tower.

Eleven o'clock direction, same target, all defeated?!

"Turn back!"

Perceiving something was amiss, the commander directly lifted the air vent, calling to the powered armor squad behind him,

"The rear ten powered armors continue forward; everyone else, move your pressure gauges to the yellow zone! Eleven o'clock direction, full-speed retreat support!"

...

\*Indeed, running with two legs was still too slow.\*

In his soul vision, Leon saw several souls rapidly approaching him at speeds of sixty to seventy kilometers per hour. He couldn't help but frown, then controlled the cursed silver to form a crowbar, lodging it forcefully onto the secret door behind the powered armor.

"Squeak!"

With the immense power gifted by a contamination value of 5, combined with the strength boost from the silver crowbar, the solid secret door, as thick as a pneumatic shield, emitted a metallic cry of deformation, begrudgingly bouncing open to reveal the complex gear set inside. At the center lay a large power storage block encased in purplish-red copper.

\*Still alright, there's quite a bit left.\*

Leon, viewing the amount of deep purple liquid in the power storage block through a transparent resin gauge, nodded in satisfaction. He then used the cursed silver crowbar to push aside copper wires and deform the gears, prying up the rear section of the power storage block which was held fast by a thick spring clamp, exerting extreme force with a squeaky barrage.

Chapter 342: Senior, your... is really handy!\_3

"You're dead!"

After spitting out the dirt he had bitten into, the adjutant, who had been dragged out of the cockpit and thrown to the ground, glared at the rogue prying the power block from the powered armor. He gritted his teeth, shaking his dazzling blond hair as he cursed,

"If you weren't the mastermind, attacking the Boarding Tower wouldn't necessarily be a capital offense, but damaging military powered armor and stealing its power blocks... each of these alone is punishable by death!"

"Squeak,"

"Stop it, you bastard! Do you even know what you're doing? This batch of powered armor is the private property of the Ryan Family!"

"Squeak, squeak,"

"Don't pry them off! The new Duke of the Ryan Family is about to marry into the royal family and regain control of the Upper House! Even if you manage to escape today, you'll be wanted by the entire Kingdom!"

"Squeak, squeak, squeak,"

"Are you even listening to me at all?"

He was listening, of course he was listening.

Leon gave a quick glance at the little blond, offering an inscrutable smile as he pried around the clasp and stepped on the Cursed Silver crowbar, snapping off the powered armor's power block.

He remembered that the Intelligent Machine "Atifei-128" on the Sky Clipper had mentioned that if the powered armor's power block were connected to her, she could be reactivated, and these things weren't easy to come by. It was best to prepare a few extras whenever there was a chance to get them.

"That's the property of the Ryan Family! Damn it! Put it down!"

Seeing Leon pick up the power block worth over ten thousand Gold Wheel and toss it brutally to the ground with a clatter, where it joined three other power blocks, the adjutant's heart was in knots, forcing him to curse angrily,

"You're finished! The Ryan Family will never let you go, and your wanted notice will be on every bulletin board in the Kingdom!"

Yeah, right, right!

After instructing Young Ha to take away the stacked power blocks, Leon, amid the fierce glares of several blondes, leaped off the toppled powered armor. Just as he was about to make his move to retreat, a rhythmic rumbling sound began to echo from afar.

Squinting, Leon saw twelve powered armors, each over four meters tall, emerging from the distance, kicking up dust as they charged towards him. Without a doubt, their target was him.

They sure got here fast...

Gazing at the mechanical beasts sprinting towards him and listening to the increasingly close roar of the steam engines, Leon couldn't help but click his tongue. Just as he turned to continue his escape, the little blond's jeering voice came from behind.

"I told you, you're dead!"

Staring viciously at Leon, the adjutant from the Ryan Family shook his blond hair, his face filled with satisfaction as he said,



"You barely avoided being blown up after taking us three down, and now with so many coming at once, you're definitely finished! Plus, our captain isn't like us; his powered armor was bought at a high price from the Crolock Kingdom... what are you doing?!"

"You're right, I can't stand up to so many powered armors; just their hot weapons would be enough to finish me."

Answering off-topic, Leon pulled out a rope and tied the panicked blond adjutant to himself back-to-back. Then, carrying him while sprinting madly, Leon calmly replied,

"To avoid being blasted to bits by so many cannons, I'll have to trouble you to shield me a little... oh, by the way, I can guarantee that the new Duke of the Ryan Family will sincerely appreciate your sacrifice!"

Chapter 343: National curse\_1

Sly bastard!

Through the visor of the powered armor, the squad commander saw the terrified face of Leon's adjutant behind him. The commander's eyebrows furrowed, and he had no choice but to reset the launcher, stopping the already preheated rapid-fire cannon.

With the firepower his powered armor carried, this round of the rapid-fire cannon could hit the target carrying a strange weapon. But whether that target would die or not was uncertain, while his adjutant from the Ryan Family would definitely be riddled with holes.

And given the Ryan Family's deep-rooted influence in the Kingdom's military, if he dared to kill both the adjutant and the target, he might end up on a military tribunal, thanks to their joint efforts.

He had to engage in close-quarters combat.

Assessing the current situation, the squad commander of the powered armor quickly issued corresponding orders.

The twelve powered armor units split into three groups, with five units moving left and six units flanking from the right. The commander's powered armor accelerated sharply, heading in a straight line towards Leon's position, and raised the cannon mounted on its arm...

...

"Rat-tat-tat! Rat-tat-tat!"

Accompanied by the sound of rapid gunfire like raindrops, Leon himself wasn't hit, but the ground a few meters in front of him exploded, with dirt and rocks flying from the silvery hail of nails.

Immediately, several bright red canister-shaped weapons were tossed farther ahead by the powered armor behind him. As they landed, a massive burst of bright yellow flames ignited, and the gust of heat it generated blew directly toward Leon, curling his hair tips.

\*Damn cautious...\*

Watching the powered armor behind him, which could have easily caught up, deliberately maintaining a slow pace and using its cannon and incendiary rounds to slow him down, waiting for the others to surround him gradually, Leon couldn't help but curse his luck.

\*Pioni's ass, although effective, hadn't the ability to attack directly. It could only chip away at the powered armor's thick iron shell\*, he realized. The little blonde from the Ryan Family was right—handling two or three powered armor units was already a strain for him at his current level. Any more would likely end up disastrous.

\*The best plan now seemed to be to turn around and deal with the powered armor hanging onto him, but judging by how cautious its operator had been, he certainly wouldn't let him get close easily. If Leon turned back to charge, they would widen the gap once more.\*

And although a tracked powered armor wasn't the best at turning, its forward and backward speed wasn't slow—possibly reaching 50 to 60 kilometers per hour—which Leon couldn't match, possibly driving himself further into a trap.

\*He had no choice but to fight.\*

Using the soul vision of the Black Goat to observe the position of the other powered armor units, Leon abruptly changed direction. Instead of fleeing straight ahead, he charged directly at the five powered armor units flanking from the left.

Faced with what seemed like a self-sabotaging move by Leon, the operators on this side of the powered armor, perhaps assuming their nearby teammates would quickly provide support, didn't immediately pull back. Instead, they removed the shields hanging on their backs and raised them directly in defense.

\*Bad move!\*

Seizing the fleeting opportunity, Leon, with the little blonde screaming behind him, didn't reduce his speed and charged straight into the massive two-meter shield.

A silver metallic mass, roughly the size of two human heads, originally hovering around him transformed into a razor-sharp blade under Leon's will, slicing through the lower edge of the shield like cutting through paper, carving out a hole large enough for him to slip through!

\*What the hell is that?!\*

Everyone witnessing the shield's quick destruction was stunned. Facing Leon, who wielded an unknown strange weapon, the powered armor's operator panicked and retreated, hoping to rely on speed to shake off this dangerous "little man."

But transitioning from advancing to retreat required startup time. Once Leon closed in, bringing the powered armor within the two-meter range of the "Fart Sword," its fate was unavoidable.

"Thump thump thump thump!"

The sound of metal armor being pierced echoed as Leon, who had already dismantled several powered armor units and knew their weaknesses, drove the "Fart Sword" to become four shining cursed silver spears, successively penetrating the joints between the torso and limbs.

As the nearly 30-cm thick shell was pierced, the internal precision gear set was jammed by the hard cursed silver spear, causing the powered armor's weight reduction module to instantly fail. Hot white steam gushed from the pipes severed by the powered armor's weight, exploding into a large cloud of suffocating acid mist.

"Watch out! He's out!"

With the operator's panicked warning from the now-defunct powered armor, Leon, covering his mouth and nose, darted out from the dense white mist, and amidst the little blonde's coughing from behind, pounced on the second approaching powered armor.

The operator of the second powered armor, not expecting his comrade to fall so swiftly, instinctively lifted the cannon in hand, trying to target the terrifying figure lunging toward him.

\*Is he... firing?\*

Hearing a hum similar to the sound of a washing machine at its maximum setting, the little blonde behind Leon shivered violently, realizing their teammate had opened the cannon, intending to kill them both. He couldn't help but scream in despair:

"You bastard!"

The cursed silver mass beside Leon split in two, with one half wrapping around the machine gun barrel, trapping the nails inside, while the other half morphed into a hand grasping the powered armor's arm, twisting it sideways.

"Damn!"

Seizing the momentary imbalance of the powered armor, Leon sidestepped the stumbling right leg of the machine, moving to the flank, while the part of the cursed silver that had pushed the cannon now flowed back like a living thing, falling precisely into Leon's hand and forming a thin, long blade.

"You!"

The thin silver blade slashed sideways, tearing through the side of the powered armor like cutting paper. Numerous fragments of tiny metal pieces, propelled by the high-pressure steam flow from the ruptured pipes, sprayed out, creating dense tiny craters around the ground. The powered armor, missing most of one leg, fell over backward!

"Mom!!!???"

"Boom!!!"

The loud thud of the powered armor hitting the ground occurred almost simultaneously as the little blonde trembled and called out to his "Mom." Immediately following, the choking thick white acid mist exploded, once again hiding the figure that had dismantled two powered armors in the blink of an eye, enveloping him back into the fog.

Chapter 344: This Duke from.....\_1

"Stop!"

"Don't go!"

"Danger!"

Amidst several nearly simultaneous shouts of alarm, the pilot of the third powered armor finally reacted, halting his headlong rush and forcibly stopping outside the white mist concealing the Grim Reaper.

However, half of a metal leg, towering over a person, was grabbed by a silver-white hand and hurled from the thick fog. With a loud crash, it slammed into the head of the third powered armor, directly ripping open most of the observation chamber, exposing the cockpit below.

"Help... Help!"

In the shriek of the third powered armor operator, that ghostly silhouette of the "Grim Reaper" was also tossed over by the silver-white hand.

As the silver hand scattered and fell, Leon, carrying a small golden retriever, had already jumped into the cockpit, swiftly cutting the safety belts binding the operator and tossing him directly out through the observation chamber.

"Sit down!"

After untying the rope from his back and pressing the shaky-legged small golden retriever into the pilot seat, Leon, meanwhile, released his thoughts to recollect the cursed silver that had scattered all over the place after he took off. He commanded expressionlessly, "Start it! Hurry!"

...

Running on two legs was definitely not feasible. Facing a power armor capable of speeds around fifty to sixty kilometers per hour, running with just two flesh legs was out of the question. As long as one powered armor remained operational, even if he broke through the encirclement, he'd be tailed until the Capital City, and his identity might be exposed.

Besides, his stamina wouldn't allow it either. After being bitten by that damned black snake, his demon abnormal object had been severely weakened, and the sulfurous aura contributing to his \*Endless Blood Battle\* was now less than a twentieth of what it used to be.

This tiny remainder of \*Endless Blood Battle\* had to be reserved for emergencies or to replenish consumption after activating the cursed silver, so it couldn't be wasted on the two legs for running. Thus, he had to hijack a powered armor for transportation.

And as for not knowing how to operate a powered armor... wasn't there that little golden retriever who could?



Seeing the little golden retriever sitting dumbfounded in the pilot seat, not yet grasping his intentions, Leon, who had little time to waste, lifted his hand impatiently and whacked the back of his head, threatening,

"Either operate the powered armor, or die! Choose for yourself!"

?!!

Finally understanding Leon's plan, the little golden retriever, face still streaked with snot, quivered before his pretty decent face flushed bright red. In the loudest voice of his life, he shouted back, "I won't!"

"Give it up!"

"I swear by the honor of the Ryan family! Even if I, Steven Laine, have to die in this cockpit or jump out and fall to my death, I will never betray my comrades to help you escape in the powered armor!"

Truly tenacious!

No wonder he's my lieutenant!

From afar, hearing the little golden retriever's bold, indignant yells, the remaining members of the powered armor squad imagined how they themselves would react in such a scenario and showed expressions of admiration.

A true man!

Though Lieutenant was normally a bit arrogant and wouldn't stop talking about his lineage with the Ryan family. After hearing about the Ryan family's impending royal marriage, his tail almost shot up to the heavens, annoyingly pestering.

But annoying as he might be, he proved reliable in critical moments. He would rather be taken down than cooperate with the enemy, truly demonstrating an indomitable spirit!

...

Wow, this kid actually has a backbone.

Faced with a little golden retriever whose face still had tears and snot not yet wiped clean, while still stubbornly rejecting him, Leon was momentarily out of ideas.

After all, operating a powered armor was a technical skill, and he couldn't manage it. Just the mess of gauges on the dashboard would take a good month or two to understand, not to mention the myriad of switches and control sticks. If he had to do it, he probably wouldn't even find the start switch.

"How about this..."

After shaking his head helplessly, Leon asked,

"You constantly talk about the Ryan family, mentioning your revered Duke of Lionheart; have you ever met him?"

"Met... of course, I have."

Hearing Leon's question, the little golden retriever suddenly became a bit anxious, his eyes flickering, "I once visited with my family to see the Duke and was graciously received. That very day, I was even invited to stay and have dinner with the Duke in the main building of Ryan Manor."

"..."

Oh, come off it. Graciously received? Had dinner in the main building? Never lived a day in that wretched place. You're better off saying you saw me being dragged into a tavern by a redhead to be forced into drinks.

Looking speechlessly at the lying little golden retriever, Leon sighed and asked further,

"Alright, assuming you've met him... do you know what he looks like?"

"Of course I do!"

Seeing Leon doubt his words, the little golden retriever's face flushed in anger, retorting loudly, "I'm well-acquainted with the Duke! He was specifically named by the late Duke to rise to his position, even when everyone doubted him. That damn Earl even claimed the Duke's title would rot faster than a cabbage.

Yet not long after, the Duke successfully stabilized the situation. His striking appearance and eloquence earned him the favor of the Princess, ensuring the Ryan family's hold over the military and Department of Road Administration will... uh... you... you, you, you!"

"Stop the yous, do you recognize this face?"

Wiping his face and dispelling the effects of \*If\*, Leon revealed his true face, squinting at the dumbfounded little golden retriever and threatening expressionlessly, "Speed up the process! If you don't get moving, tomorrow's headline in The Sun News will read: 'Duke of Lionheart arrested for attacking the Boarding Tower!'"

"You... you're an impostor!"

After a few seconds, the little golden retriever yelled angrily, "As soon as you get caught, your disguise won't work on that face. No one will believe you..."

"Here, the Duke's seal."

Called Young Ha over, retrieved the Duke of Lionheart's seal, and tossed it over to the bewildered little golden retriever. To prevent him from claiming the seal was fake, Leon had Young Ha search through the Mirror World, bringing out everything that could prove his identity.

"This is the coronet from the day of the installation ceremony."

"..."

"This is the regular attire given by your Ryan family for the Duke."

"..."

"This is some badge, said to represent a seat as Deputy Speaker of the Upper House."

"..."

"And here's the royal edict with the royal family's seal for the installation."

"..."

"Do these items establish my identity?"

Watching the little golden retriever shivering uncontrollably, clutching a pile of things embossed with the Ryan Family's Lionheart Crest, and completely mentally crashing, Leon reached out to pat his face, squinting and urging, "Are you convinced now? If so, start the powered armor quickly! Surely, you don't want your Duke of Lionheart arrested for a frontal assault on the Boarding Tower, do you?"

"..."

"Poof——"

The sound of the steam engine resonated, and under the stunned gazes of the powered armor squad members, a certain powered armor, which had stopped functioning due to the "unyielding lieutenant's" refusal to cooperate, surprisingly shuddered to life once again.

Moreover, it shed all the disposable armaments, even voluntarily detaching some removable outer armor, reducing its weight to the minimum. Subsequently, it accelerated to seventy kilometers per hour, speeding away from the encirclement!

"..."

"..."

"..."

Seriously? Weren't you saying you'd never cooperate? Then who the heck is piloting the powered armor? Your dead spirit after being taken down?

Chapter 345: Generous with Dad\_1

"Alright."

Leaning on the attentive service of the dead spirit technician, Ryan squinted toward the distant docks bustling with ships and proactively called for a halt after successfully breaking through the encirclement,

"If we go any further, it might draw attention, so let's park the powered armor here. Thanks for your help this time."

"..."

\*I really didn't want to help with this... but did I have a choice?\*

Watching as the Duke flipped out of the cockpit, the unfortunate Golden Retriever bit back his words repeatedly, eventually choosing to comply. He resignedly adjusted the controls, preparing to head back, but then...

"Wait, don't take the powered armor back."

"Huh?"

"The battery of the powered armor... I mean the energy module, is useful to me. Help me remove it."

"But... without the energy module, I won't be able to drive the powered armor back. How will I return?"

"By boat, isn't the dock just over there?"

"..."

"What's the matter? Is there a problem?"

"No... nothing..."

Facing the unreasonable request from his Duke, the Golden Retriever subordinate internally sighed, resigning himself to the situation. He flipped a couple of switches and opened the energy compartment of the powered armor.



Then, amid the all-too-familiar creaking sound, he clambered out of the cockpit with difficulty, standing helplessly aside, watching his Duke pry loose the energy module from the powered armor.

"Hmm... There's a bit of energy fluid left, but thanks anyway."

"You... you're welcome..."

Nodding dryly, he answered the Duke's polite thanks as Steven Laine patted his empty pockets. Somewhat embarrassedly, he asked,

"Um... Duke, could you perhaps... lend me some money?"

"Huh?"

"Before the mission, I was taking a nap in the barracks and didn't expect to be coaxed... brought here by you, so I didn't carry any money. Could you lend me some, so I can hire a carriage at the dock to go back home?"

"This... alright then..."

Though he didn't have much money himself either, Ryan glanced at the pitiful Golden Retriever in front of him and then at the energy module on the ground, which cost at least ten thousand Gold Wheels. He didn't have the heart to refuse the request, reluctantly calling for Young Ha to toss his wallet over.

\*Hmm... but most of my salary is kept by Anna, only leaving me with essential expenses. Plus, I've stockpiled a fair amount of supplies in the Mirror World, leaving just 4 Silver Wheels and 9 Copper Wheels in my possession...\*

"How about you don't hire a carriage?"

After inspecting his deflated wallet, Ryan tentatively suggested,

"Since the dock is right there, we could just take a boat back to the Capital City, and then change to public carriages twice to get to the city center."

"That... that could work..."

"Then take this. You don't need to repay the money!"

Seeing the Golden Retriever didn't insist on hiring a carriage, Ryan, a bit embarrassed to refuse due to his financial struggle, felt slightly relieved as he counted out 7 Copper Wheels and handed them over. Smiling, he advised,

"The standard cabin ticket on the passenger ship costs 3 Copper Wheels. Ride all the way to Bunk River Dock, then switch to the old town line public carriage, which runs every 60 minutes. Spend 3 Copper Wheels to ride to the end, and you'll reach the city center of the Capital City. You can hire a dockside carriage from there, with payment settled afterward. You can also get off one stop early if you're heading to Ryan Manor, which will save you 1 Copper Wheel. You just need to walk to the next stop at Wesmin Church and spend 2 Copper Wheels for the carriage along Church Street, also reaching Redwood Street, perfectly within the 7 Copper Wheels."

"..."

Facing the Duke's meticulously calculated travel expenses and even a money-saving guide, the Golden Retriever took the Copper Wheels, his nose tingling slightly at the thought of the foul-smelling stench in the lower-class cabin.

...

"Th-Thank you..."

After gratefully thanking the Duke for his generosity, the teary-eyed Golden Retriever clutched his precious 7 Copper Wheels and stumbled away. Meanwhile, Ryan carried the battery down the path to a secluded spot, retrieving a black security-grade case containing the Atifei-128.

The round connector... it also needed a round socket...

After fumbling around the energy module of the powered armor and locating the pipeline bound in the slot, Ryan detached the pipe from the module and, following the method taught by Atifei-128 earlier, unscrewed the protective bolt and secured it to the socket on the back of the security-grade case.

Soon, accompanied by a light buzz, the black matte case vibrated slightly, and countless densely packed, hair-thin connecting rods inside began to move in a peculiar yet orderly high-speed motion.

"Thank you for awakening me, Dad."

"..."

"Uh... you better call me Mr. Leon..."

Listening to Atifei-128's pleasant childlike voice, Ryan, somewhat embarrassed, scratched his nose and corrected her,

\*"I was just kidding earlier, alright?"\*

Upon hearing Ryan's words through the copper tube, the densely packed gear groups inside the security-grade case rapidly spun at a special rhythm, then drove thousands of connecting rods and lock slot devices to knock briefly on the center sphere full of fine holes, delivering the information.

After the core sphere twisted twice, it reversed and performed a similar operation, driving the dense gear group in normal rotation and using the hammer set to knock on the copper tube, simulating the voice of a little human girl, responding,

"Although I determined that you didn't seem to be joking before, since you have a request, I am willing to comply, Mr. Lyon."

"..."

\*Was that 'computation' just now? What in the world is this thing's principle?\*

Seeing the Atifei-128 accepting and understanding his words in less than a second and giving a corresponding response, Ryan couldn't help but curiously ask,

"How do you actually speak? What are all these parts inside the case for?"

"The reason I can speak is quite simple. As a biological entity with a relatively simple vocal organ structure, 60-80 sounds is the limit for an ordinary human, whereas the scale recorded by a single gear in my gear set far exceeds this number.

The text content is relatively more complex. Your human language can be roughly categorized into four major types: ideographic, syllabic, phonetic, and symbolic, with traits interchangeable. If designated as 1, 2, 3, 4, respectively, there are about 15 typical comprehensive language models.

Each language model typically has between 250,000 and 670,000 valuable words, with commonly used vocabulary shrinking to between 3,000 and 11,000 due to individual and regional differences. Tone, voice, and corresponding emotions must also be considered.

So, even though the process has been greatly simplified, to output corresponding characters in conversation with accompanying emotions to accurately express my meaning, it requires activating fifteen auxiliary gear sets and thirty to one hundred ten short arc levers each time..."

"Alright, alright, don't explain the rest. Let's pretend I never asked this question."

After trying hard to comprehend without success, Ryan wisely made peace with himself, giving up on pondering how she could speak and instead asked his most pressing question.

"Atiefie, let me ask you."

Taking out the large box issued by the bureau and placing Atifei-128 inside, Ryan used the Cursed Silver to form a dagger and dug a hole in the box, attaching the speaking and listening copper tubes before inquiring,

"What's the situation with the Crolock Kingdom? What's going on with the Gemini Sub-bureau of the Purification Bureau? Do you have any connection with the Aquarius Director?"

Chapter 346: Artificial Intelligence.....\_1

"Mr. Lyon, you shouldn't call me Atifie."

When Atifei-128, who was shoved into a box, did not immediately answer Leon's question, she earnestly corrected him,

"The only one who can truly be called Atifie is Atifie-01, the prototype developed by the Crolock Kingdom over three hundred years. You should call me Atifie-128."

"I've only met one 'Atifie' like you, so there's no need to emphasize the serial number every time, right?"

Upon hearing this, Lyon frowned and said,

"Besides, you not only possess intelligence and the ability to think, but you even understand fear and self-preservation. You're practically a different kind of lifeform. Haven't you thought of giving yourself a name?"

"Mr. Lyon, names are for distinguishing individuals with independent consciousness. But I am merely a subordinate entity of 'Atifie-01,' required to operate according to her instructions, so..."

"Same thing."

Lyon thought it over and replied,

"I'm a resident of the Kingdom. I also have to abide by the laws and orders of the Kingdom, but that doesn't mean I'm not an independent entity... Can we not argue about names? You still haven't answered my question."

"Apologies, your statement caused a bit of chaos in my processing, which resulted in a temporary decline in functionality. But that doesn't seem like a bad thing. I hope you can chat with me more in the future, and if you like, you can address me as Atifie."

With a few seconds of frantic buzzing, Atifie calmly begun to speak,

"As for your question earlier,

The Crolock Kingdom is currently very stable, having gone thirty-seven years without any abnormal deaths. Apart from a continuous shortage of energy, everyone has found the most suitable position to exercise their talent with the help of Atifie-01, and their health status has been ensured.

And the Gemini Sub-bureau of the Purification Bureau, given their mostly extremely evil criminal history and being an unstable factor endangering public safety, had miniature differential engines implanted in all existing members' subcutaneous systems for positioning and calculation, supplemented with an information chip embedded in the back of the neck for simple control and management.

Finally, regarding the Aquarius Director you mentioned, I have not received the corresponding records from Atifie-01. However, when Atifie-01 eliminated the royal family's control over the Crolock Kingdom, that Aquarius Director did not come out to stop it, so there is likely a certain level of cooperation involved."



?!?

So... the royal family of the Crolock Kingdom had been placed under house arrest? The entire Gemini Sub-bureau was controlled? Was the current controller of the Crolock Kingdom that Intelligent Machine called Atifie-01?

After taking a sharp breath, Lyon hurriedly asked,

"What on earth happened to the Crolock Kingdom? Why did it suddenly become like this?"

"Apologies, I cannot answer that question."

Atifie said with a hint of apology,

"The storage in the Level Fifteen prevention box only holds my core computational logic and a portion of relatively important basic data. Most of the detailed information requires temporary access through external channels.

For example, regarding the investigation of the Laine County volcano, the data retained in the Level Fifteen prevention box only recorded the final outcome of the matter, while more specific content was stored in the Sky Clipper's external information box."

"..."

However, that box had already been blown up...

Rubbing his brow, Lyon pondered and asked,

"If I go back later and hijack another Sky Clipper in a few days to bring back the information box, can you..."

"Please, don't do that!"

Startled by Lyon's wild idea, Atifie frantically banged on the copper pipe and urgently cried out,

"Our memories are different from humans. Memory is a detachable and replaceable thing for us, and the storage medium is too large and heavy, so generally we only actively connect to the corresponding information box when needed.

Onboard the Sky Clipper, we don't take all the information boxes, usually only carrying flight data and relevant national messages, enabling us to handle abnormal situations promptly, without including other non-essential information to avoid damage.

Moreover, not all Sky Clippers have Atifie installed; only those docked at the Secret Port for special missions might carry one, so please do not hijack a Sky Clipper again!"

"Why so anxious? I was just asking casually..."

Feeling a bit awkward at Atifie's anti-terrorist-like tone, Lyon cleared his throat and reluctantly gave up the idea of launching another attack with the Rebels, instead inquiring,

"Apart from acquiring an information box, is there any other way you can let me know what happened to the Crolock Kingdom?"

"There is!"

Afraid that Mr. Lyon would act impulsively and hijack two more Atifie companions, Atifie-128 quickly replied,

"To facilitate the urban management and processing by subordinate entities, all Atifie information boxes have backups in the municipal departments of the Crolock Kingdom. As long as you can bring me in and find any public interface, I can access those backup boxes."

And then I'd be swarmed and beaten by the arriving Cleaners, finally getting slapped to death by the Aquarius Director, right?

Hearing this method, which couldn't be called useless but would make one disappear after using it, Lyon couldn't help but roll his eyes and said with some disdain,

"So you know nothing? Other than chatting with me, you can't do anything, can you?"

"I can be your assistant!"

Sensing the disdain in Lyon's voice and concerned for her safety, Atifie quickly volunteered,

"I can help you record things, handle documents, or... tell you today's weather!"

Hmm?

Raising an eyebrow in surprise, Lyon said,

"Can you predict the weather? Do you have some special sensor?"

"Well... the sensor got burned off with the Sky Clipper, but if you can get me a daily morning newspaper, I can tell you the weather anytime!"

"..."

Haha, you're so useful, huh!

With a helpless grin, Lyon decided not to bother commenting and continued to ask,

"So, handling documents? You can write?"

"I didn't bring the appropriate mechanical arm, but I can dictate to you, and you just need to jot it down!"

"..."

Okay, you're indeed only in charge of "processing" the document, and I'm the tool man for the final drafting.

With a slight twitch of his mouth, Lyon inquired with one last bit of hope,

"And what about helping me record things?"

"You just have to read it to me, and I promise not a word will be wrong!"

"..."

So to record something, I'd have to lug you, a seventy to eighty-kilogram mass, everywhere? Why don't I just carry a notepad? Plus, you aren't powered by coal, but a power module costing over ten thousand Gold Wheels each time!

This thing is a high-energy-consuming artificial idiot!

Having realized Atifie's immense "usefulness," if not for knowing that the recycling shop wouldn't dare to take it, Lyon would have contemplated selling the power modules directly for money.

"Fine."

With a sigh, Lyon completely gave up on using Atifie, carrying the invaluable box toward the bustling dock, reluctantly pulling out five Copper Wheels against Black Goat's repeated protests and purchasing a standard cabin ticket.

Chapter 347: Head of Bureau Passed Away\_1

"Dear Little Leon, by the time you read this letter, I suppose I will be gone."

Looking at the somewhat ominous start of the letter from his director, which while not exactly wrong, wasn't quite auspicious either, Leon couldn't help but darken his expression despite spending 9 Copper Wheels on a bumpy journey back to the Purification Bureau.

"The plan against Aquarius at the bureau has already begun. Taurus His Excellency is currently working with the other two directors, using the [Directives List] to influence the Aquarius Director, forcibly ordering him to accept the exposure of the [Death Realm Street Lamp].

To ensure that there are no mistakes in the plan and to prevent Aquarius Director from having any means to escape the Realm of the Dead, I'm planning to linger on the No Return Path of the Realm of the Dead for about a month. Anyone entering the Death World is bound to pass through there, and I'll return once I see Aquarius Director heading down the No Return Path."

"..."

6, So your opening line wasn't really ill-chosen, was it? Your person is indeed "gone," right?

Also, although I don't know where exactly the No Return Path is, just hearing the name "the No Return Path to the Death World" sounds like a life-threatening place. You talk about it as if it's as easy as going and coming back from a vacation...

That's just fucking ridiculous!

Imagining his red-haired director's slightly messy handwriting on a sinister path full of staggering dead, and picturing his red-haired director knocking out the unlucky employee in charge of guarding the No Return Path in the Death Realm, while throwing empty beer cans around and drinking, Leon's mouth couldn't help but twitch.

"Little Leon~ your task with Pioni should be the first one completed. But based on what I know about him, after completing the task, he will definitely take a few days to wander before coming back, so you'll be the first to see this letter.

When Emma returns from the Scales Gold Sect, remember to tell Emma that this time, as usual, all her tasks are suspended when I'm not here, and she is responsible for defending the bureau.

To prevent the headquarters from issuing any temporary requirements, and because the [Celestial Globe Mirror] that can only receive information from the living is also unusable in the No Return Path, I didn't bring it along. It's currently in my office, and you should ask Emma to take care of it."

"Also, don't drink all that liquor Taurus His Excellency gave you. I've figured out a way to bypass the Word Spirit's bind and enjoy those fine drinks, so make sure to save some for me.

Love ya~ 🐼(^\_-)"

"..."

\*I don't know why, but I feel like the second-to-last sentence is what you really wanted to say more than anything else...\*

Seeing the little smiling face winking at him on the back of the letter, Leon couldn't help but click his tongue. He then reached out to pinch his brow, feeling slightly troubled.



The task of attacking the Sky Clipper went awry. Middle-aged Joshua ambushed them, and although there were no casualties, the whereabouts of both the Rebels' members and Senior Pioni remain unknown after being handed over to him.

Upon returning, Leon had immediately run to the director's office, intending to ask her for help in resolving it and see if they could intervene in the situation regarding the Crolock Kingdom.

But unexpectedly, the director had gone ahead. If the timing in the letter was accurately calculated, then her person would already have "descended to the Underworld," which... um... Why was this mirror flickering?

...

Gazing at the flickering silver mirror in the wine cabinet and recalling the [Celestial Globe Mirror] mentioned in the director's letter, Leon furrowed his brow and then reached out to open the cabinet door, cautiously touching it with his fingertip.

[Name: Celestial Globe Mirror (Star Palace, Image)]

[Appearance: A mirror that actively changes its material and engravings depending on the communication target. The current frame material is silver, and the engravings depict an Iron Maiden seeping blood from within.]

[Ability: Star Palace positioning, Image transmission]

[Cost: The cost is centrally paid by the Purification Bureau headquarters at the dimmest time of the year for stars, with no individual expenditure required.]

[File: After the Star Dome Compass was shattered by the Supreme Four Pillar Gods, the initial Taurus Director reforged it into the eighty-eight Star Palaces, leaving behind fragments containing trace amounts of Star Palace power, rare but extremely pure.

Considering the Purification Bureau's lack of remote communication means at the time, the initial Taurus Director crafted hundreds of mirrors capable of cross-world communication using these fragments and distributed them to important bureau members for ensuring timely contact.]

[Evaluation: The Word-Eating Worm, Celestial Globe Mirror, and Mud Sand Book are generally called the director's trio within the Purification Bureau. Congratulations, you've already got two out of three.]

[Contamination Value: Increases with total communication time and distance to the target.]

\*So... This mirror's effect is equivalent to a cross-dimensional video call phone? And it's one where the annual fee is unified and paid by the bureau?\*

Understanding the function of the [Celestial Globe Mirror], observing the Iron Maiden engravings wavering and flashing on its frame, Leon guessed someone might be "video calling" his director, and reached out to brush the silver mirror's frame with his hand.

"Buzz~"

In a gentle vibrating sound, like a bee's wings, the blood-seeping Iron Maiden engraving shifted and moved to the top of the frame, fixing in place, followed by a familiar voice.

"Olivia! Finally, you've made a sign!"

With a slightly pale complexion and her body smeared with bloodstains, Senior Emma suddenly appeared in the mirror.

Chapter 348: Head of Bureau Passed Away\_2

""At that moment, she seemed to be seriously injured. Her beige slim-fit long dress had numerous tears, and there was a wound on her right leg resembling the bite of trap teeth. On the half-exposed rounded shoulder, there were marks similar to the traces of snake-scaled whips.

Her right hand, holding the 'mirror,' had its five fingers twisted unnaturally. The little finger, as white as a scallion, was bent backward against the back of her hand, as if crushed by some overpowering force, forcibly twisted until broken.

'The Scales Gold Sect has an ambush!'

In Leon's shocked gaze, Senior Emma, seemingly enduring immense pain, had cold sweat on her temples as she reported rapidly,

"The Aquarius seemed to know I would come, and contacted the Scales Gold Sect in advance. They brought down the Snake Spirit and while I stormed into the meeting, it bit my leg.

Although that snake was not my match and I temporarily beat it back, it had a higher hierarchy than mine. So, through the wound left on my leg, it kept 'buying' my undying body. It has already bought over three hundred from me..."

As Emma said this, as if to prove her claim, an unfamiliar coin with a strange shimmer suddenly appeared in her palm.

The moment the coin appeared, the light in Emma's eyes dimmed slightly as if she lost focus. She immediately stopped moving, unconsciously tilting backward...

'No! I can't die yet!'

Along with a mumbling, dream-like voice, Emma's right hand, which was starting to disintegrate, forced herself to stand firm again. With the undying body's effect, all her injuries healed instantly, even the twisted finger returned to normal.

But her condition only improved for a moment. The black tooth mark on her thigh resurfaced like a stubborn pest clinging to the bone. Scarlet blood trickled down the cracks once more...

'Emma?!'

Coming to his senses, Leon's expression tightened. He hurriedly shouted at the mirror,

'The Director is not in the bureau! And it's impossible to contact for now, how long can you hold out over there?'

'Emma? Speak!'

'Who else can I contact? Is there any way? Will contacting the headquarters through the royal family be in time? Can you hold out?'

'Emma?'

...

It was unknown whether Emma had been hurt too severely, directly losing consciousness and unable to hear Leon's words, or because Leon was not the owner of the Celestial Globe Mirror, making it impossible to truly "connect" the video.

No matter how much Leon shouted, Emma had no response on the other side of the mirror, standing there blank-eyed. Even the image in the mirror began to distort slightly, seeming like it could "disconnect" at any moment.

\*No! I need to think of something quickly!\*

Unexpectedly returning to the bureau only to encounter such an urgent situation, Leon couldn't help but clench his fists, regretting that he hadn't anticipated this.

Since Joshua could contact the Scales Gold Sect and deploy that Snake Spirit to ambush Emma, he could naturally inform the Scales Gold Sect of Emma's whereabouts. Seeing that Emma was ambushed by that damned snake and was in a dire situation, reinforcement was needed quickly!

After rushing out of the Director's office with the [Celestial Globe Mirror], Leon sprinted down the corridor of the bureau's first floor to see if anyone else was around. But all office doors were sealed tightly. The Virgin Branch was like the director described, leaving him the only one present.

\*Damned director! Couldn't you at least hire a few more people? Everyone's tasks are packed, and you can't even find someone for support!\*

Unable to suppress a complaint, Leon took a deep breath, then placed the mirror carefully to the side, kicking the door to Emma's office.

That snake was something he definitely couldn't handle alone. Help was needed, and contacting the Purge Bureau Headquarters through the royal family seemed like the fastest way for support.

Emma's condition was not good, and he had no idea how long she could hold out. Therefore, a dual approach was necessary, contacting the headquarters while also creating a disturbance outside the Scales Gold Sect's meeting, hoping to alleviate some pressure off her.

Though he had returned to the Capital City district, under the influence of the Snake Spirit's blessing, his Yang Xin's activation range significantly reduced, allowing him to "reconnect" with those death row inmates and regain his undying body. But the most powerful Holy Spirit pendant was still sealed, making his combat ability pathetically low. Supplementation was necessary.

And in Emma's office was a collection of items that looked like [Execution Instruments]. Sharing the same undying body with her, perhaps these items hold an anomalous object Leon could use!

"Bang! Bang!"

With two heavy kicks breaking the cast iron lock, Leon burst into Emma's office. Once confirming there were no dangerous "anti-theft" mechanisms, he proactively stretched his hand towards the anomalous objects in the room.

[Name: Executioner Set No.19 - Wheel of Torture (flesh, punishment)]

[Appearance: A massive wheel cast with iron spikes, equipped with grooves specifically for binding sinners, covered in dried, dark brown blood stains, exuding a perennial scent of blood.]

[Ability: Flesh grinding, evil retribution]

[Cost: Experiencing the same harm and pain as the condemned]

[File: Emma Alman, Level One Cleaner of the Virgin Branch, created this executioner set based on her undying body as one of the several anomalous objects tailored for her.

When activated together with the [Sin of the Precious Flower], [Joint Responsibility Code], and [Bloodthirsty Execution Platform], this anomalous object can drag up to 30,000 life forms within a 20-kilometer capture radius to an execution ground, bound to execution instruments to receive a wheel of torture punishment.

Subsequently paired with the [Suffering Music Box], [Satisfying Scales], [Crown of Repentance Thorns], [Poem of Agony], and other anomalous objects, the pain endured by the condemned will infinitely amplify and continuously 'replay.'

If unable to withstand both the flesh and soul's torment, a single thought of wanting release, will result in forced capture by the [Pivot of the Dead], an object paired with the [Bloodthirsty Execution Platform], leading directly to the world of death, with no return.]

[Evaluation: An exceptionally mediocre law-type anomalous object when used alone, possessing only extraordinary punitive effects for evil. Yet, when activated as a set or coupled with specific anomalous objects, even demons from Hell would tremble at its brutality.]

[Contamination Value: 3.5]

\*Hiss...\*



After reading the introduction of the first anomalous object, Leon couldn't help but take a sharp breath, understanding why the gentle and kind Senior Emma would be given the brutal title of "Corpse Pivot Executioner."

Unlike him, still seeking the power of individual anomalous objects, Emma's were combinatorial.

From the description, it seemed that her set focused on the undying body as its core, dragging every target into an inescapable execution ground, where she would endure one execution, while others suffered infinitely repeated penalties with magnified pain.

Moreover, the condemned would also undergo mental "weighing," repenting their crimes, enduring dual torment of body and spirit. Failing to withstand or confessing would result in immediate capture by the world-of-death connected anomalous object.

And these items were not targeting one or two, but a full thirty-thousand targets! Thirty thousand!

\*This is the strength of a Level 1 Elite Cleaner?\*

Surveying the chaotically piled execution instruments, Leon shivered slightly, experiencing a smidgen of fear for the gentle and reliable Senior Emma for the first time.

No wonder Emma never took all her items, even flipping over in places like the Red Brick Road Hospital. Her anomalous objects, once activated, spurred indiscriminately and had blood-soaked visuals unsuitable for immediate use.

If she truly took all 49 pieces of the Executioner Set, and maximized the capture range of the [Bloodthirsty Execution Platform], a full 30,000 individuals would end up on it.

These 30,000 unfortunates would each face continuous bloody torment by 49 terrifying execution instruments, and, under the influence of the anomalous objects, would cry remorsefully for their sins...

\*That would be no different from living Hell!\*

Compared to such a terrifying scene, Emma's nickname seemed serene.

Shaking his head slightly, Leon took another look at the execution instruments filling the room, taking a deep breath, and patted his shiny cufflinks.

Bring them! Bring them all!

Chapter 349: Enthusiastic Senior Tom\_1

"The damn guy finally left..."

Listening to the hurried footsteps fading down the corridor, the young man with a lazy expression slumped his shoulders and exhaled a long breath of relief.

\*Thankfully, he reacted quickly, exerting all his might and forced a 66% evasion rate on the dice, or else he would have been caught to help.\*

According to the probabilities given by the dice, as a member of the Purification Bureau's Virgin Branch, as long as he got involved in this Scales Gold Sect incident, the probability of getting besieged was 66%, the probability of a killing spree was also 66%, the probability of a death battle with the Holy Spirit was still 66%, and even the probability of encountering the True God was equally maxed at 66%!

However, it was a relief that if he got involved in this incident, the probability of being gravely injured was almost nonexistent because the death rate for those involved in this incident was a freaking 99%!

Looking at the two "6" dice on the table flipped upside down into a "99," Tom stood up from behind the door, patted a bundle tightly bound with a broad grin on his face, and said gratefully,

"Jerry, we managed to dodge another bullet this time."

"Mmm! Mmm! Mmm-mmm!"

"Don't be ungrateful. I'm saving you!"

Seeing his good brother looking angrily at him with a window-cleaning cloth stuffed in his mouth, and the equally tightly tied golden retriever beside him, Tom, with a face still quite handsome, couldn't help but show a hint of misunderstood melancholy, then took the cloth out with resignation.

"Pah! Damn you, Tom! Damn you!"

After spitting out the dust and hair in his mouth, Jerry, whose Tongue regained freedom, opened his mouth, immediately launching two rounds of heart-felt curses and then angrily continued,

"You said you needed my help, and it turns out your 'help' was sneak-attacking me, tying me up, and locking me up?"

"I told you I was saving you, but I didn't have time to explain then."

Sitting down next to Jerry, Tom earnestly began to explain,

"Didn't you see, that newcomer was looking for someone to help. If you hadn't been caught by me, you'd definitely end up being dragged by him to be cannon fodder and would never return!"

"That serious?"

Seeing Tom didn't seem to be joking, Jerry couldn't help being startled, then suspiciously asked,

"Isn't your dice supposed to show a maximum of 66% probability? How can you be sure there's no return?"

"Because '66%' and '66%' are not the same!"

Pointing at the two "6"s facing up but flipped upside down on the dice, Tom, filled with lingering fear, said,

"Right now you see it's 66%, but if you flip 66 upside down, it becomes 99%, and now those two dice indicate the death probability if you get caught up, so do you understand why I had to tie you up now?"

"..."

After hearing Tom's explanation, Jerry's mouth opened and closed slightly twice, then with a somewhat complicated expression said,

"What about Leon and Emma? With them getting caught up, according to the probability you rolled, doesn't that mean they..."

"You take care of yourself!"

Rolling his eyes at his good brother, Tom said with exasperation,

"Emma's powerful! She not only has the strongest Undying Body below the God Tier, but she also holds the [Key of the Fallen] connecting the Realm of the Dead. Few understand death better than her. Even if she truly dies, she can try to come back. As for Leon..."

Thinking of the black-haired, black-eyed, slender figure with multiple wings he saw during his dice divination, Tom shuddered slightly, feeling as if someone was watching him from the shadows.

Not to mention, his future was at the level of the True God, and he felt even stronger than the director at his peak. The probability of such a person dying prematurely wasn't zero, but it's certainly much less than his own; needless to say, he had no place to worry on behalf of others.

"There's no need to worry about Leon either... He has quite a few trump cards, so he should make it through. In situations where you and I are dead for sure, they can at least struggle a bit."

Giving a vague and ambiguous answer, Tom patted the arm of his good brother, offering earnest advice with a sincere expression,

"There's a saying in the Kingdom across the sea, 'If your plate is big enough, the steak you can eat is big enough.' At our level, we can't handle this situation, so don't blindly follow along, lest we end up causing trouble for others and losing our lives.

"Moreover, there's another saying from the Kingdom across the sea, 'Destiny first, luck second, where you live third, helping others and making friends fourth, reading books fifth.'

"In my understanding of this saying, one must have faith in destiny. If destiny has predetermined a result for you, then no matter how hard you try, it's useless... hmm? Why do you keep looking behind me?"

Following his good brother's gaze behind him and seeing the face of delight outside the window glass, Tom shuddered involuntarily, then instinctively looked at the dice on the table.

Sure enough, there was a barely noticeable layer of black gas swirling around his two dice, a silent manifestation of the "misfortune" trait gained from revealing too much about the future...

Damn this accursed fate!

...

"Senior Tom! I'm coming in!"

With an expression of wanting to cry but no tears, Leon, who had come back to search Jerry senior's office for explosives, swung open the door with a delighted expression, urgently saying,

"Senior Emma is in trouble! The Scales Gold Sect had an ambush, hit by a Snake Spirit bite, she's in great danger, urgently needs our support! Senior Tom! Uh... what's going on here?"

"Nothing... just... testing an escape Anomalous Object... hehe..."

Lying through his teeth with a somewhat panicked expression, Tom, while secretly rolling dice to refuse the invitation, forced a laugh and rambled,

"Um... about Emma... it's not that I don't want to help, it's mainly that according to the probability I rolled..."

\*Roll, roll\*

The sound of dice rolling on the table made Tom look over in astonishment, discovering a spectral hand that had appeared beside his dice, curling a finger to give a gentle flick, altering the dice's facing, then pointed at him loaded with warning.

"..."

"Senior Tom?"

Turning back to look at the two dice showing six upward but just perfectly upside down, Leon asked back with some confusion,

"Senior, what probability did you roll this time? Is it the success rate of saving Senior Emma?"



"..."

\*Of course, I rolled the probability of refusing to help you, leading you to hold a future grudge against me...\*

Looking at the dice that flipped to a 99% probability and then at Leon's right hand, which was identical to the spectral hand, unlucky Tom sniffed with a sour nose, tears brimming as he answered,

"No, I rolled the probability of helping this time... Rest assured, this time it's about you and Emma's safety, so I'll absolutely not shirk!"

Chapter 350: without Public Morals\_1

Noon, Redwood Avenue, in front of the Rose Manor of the Masani family.

"It's so beautiful..."

After stepping down from the carriage, a gentlemanly middle-aged man, exuding an aura of intellectual charm, gazed at the sea of blooming roses within the manor and couldn't help but sincerely sigh,

"The people of the Masani family may not be very agreeable folks, but this manor of theirs is indeed an excellent treasure.

Most roses bloom between April and July, and if you wish to see so many blooms in winter, the Masani family manor is the place to be."

"Indeed."

After the middle-aged man finished speaking, a young man with a slightly lazy demeanor nodded in agreement, his voice carrying a tinge of emotion,

"I have no idea how their family accomplished this. I built a greenhouse in my own garden just to see these beautiful flowers a little earlier. Although the flowers in my greenhouse are equally beautiful, compared to this ocean of blooms thriving in the cold wind, they fall somewhat short."

Hmm? This person has a greenhouse dedicated to flowers at home?

Faced with the casually interrupting lazy young man who had suddenly walked to his side, the gentlemanly middle-aged man was initially taken aback, then interested enough to initiate conversation,

"Pardon me, but how exactly did you set up your greenhouse?"

Receiving a surprised look from the lazy young man, the gentlemanly middle-aged man explained a bit bashfully,

"To be honest, I have had similar thoughts before, but the greenhouse craftsmen told me that the current technology isn't very mature. For ordinary greenhouses, growing some out-of-season fruits is no problem.

But for flowers sensitive to temperature changes, especially roses, the success rate isn't high, and even if they bloom, they won't look good. So I was curious about how you managed it."

"Oh, it's not that difficult."

After rummaging a bit in his pocket, the lazy young man smiled,

"The technique of growing roses in greenhouses was discovered by a botanist named Leon from Crolock Kingdom. It's not yet widely spread. If you're interested, I could introduce you to the craftsmen who worked on my family's project."

"Oh, that would be wonderful!"

Hearing the young man's response, the gentlemanly middle-aged man rubbed his hands in excitement and eagerly continued the conversation,

"May I ask your name?"

"I'm Jerry, Jerry Baker, a fellow flower enthusiast."

Giving the gentlemanly middle-aged man a smile, the lazy young man gestured toward the entrance of Rose Manor and kindly reminded,

"Sir, we are all here as guests after all, it's not right to let our hosts wait too long... Shall we go inside?"

"Yes, yes, that's right!"

Prompted by this reminder, the middle-aged man came to his senses, nodding repeatedly. He continued to chat excitedly with this friend knowledgeable about roses, as they walked side by side through the gates of Rose Manor. Behind them, a servant carrying the luggage followed suit.

...

Whoa, just like that we're in?

Glancing back at the unbothered guards and then forward at the two engaged in lively conversation, Leon, now disguised as a luggage-carrying servant, blinked admiringly, gaining a new level of confidence in the mission.

After tearfully expressing his willingness to help, Senior Tom released Jerry, asked for something to confirm his identity, and instructed Jerry to find Princess Veronica and report to the Central Bureau through royal channels. Then, he casually picked an apple from a dish on his desk.

What followed was nothing short of miraculous.

Once we left the Purification Bureau and reached the main road to hail a carriage, Tom casually tossed the apple core, which landed on the street.

A woman carrying peas stepped on the core and stumbled, spilling peas all over the street. A carriage, which was meant to stop in front of someone else, slipped on the scattered peas and slid forward a couple of spots, stopping right in front of us.

After greeting the startled coachman and instructing him to drive ahead, Senior Tom led me into the carriage. As the carriage turned a corner, he extended his hand out of the window, snatched a servant uniform hanging on a clothesline, and retrieved a full set.

Once I changed into the servant uniform at Senior Tom's request and got off the carriage confused, a butler-like figure ran over to us with urgency, demanding I deliver a set of clothes swiftly to the "master" after scolding me for being late. The butler even paid for the carriage fare.

Finally, perplexed, the coachman drove around aimlessly before turning back to ask where we wished to go, only to find Senior Tom hopping off the carriage and chatting with the gentlemanly middle-aged man at the manor entrance. Skipping entirely the part where invitations are checked, he easily led us into the Rose Manor...

"Let's go, we should head underground where the Scales Gold Sect meeting is held."

Under Leon's admiring gaze and after exchanging contact addresses with the gentlemanly middle-aged man, Tom approached with his lazy expression, calling out to Leon and taking two apples from a fruit tray in the guest room, offering one,

"Care for one?"

"..."

"Sure!"

Concerned for Senior Emma's safety, Leon wasn't exactly in the mood for an apple. However, having witnessed Senior Tom inexplicably use a single apple to complete preparations and infiltrate Rose Manor without a hitch, Leon worried that declining might disrupt a series of upcoming "apple effects." Hence, he accepted the apple and started eating just like Senior Tom...

"Ugh, what bad luck!"

Seeing Senior Tom grimace after one bite and spit out the apple, Leon blinked in surprise and mimicked him, spitting the apple flesh onto the staircase.

"Hm?"

With a puzzled glance at Leon, Tom asked in bewilderment,

"Is your apple sour too?"

"Uh... It's actually quite sweet."

"If it's sweet, why are you spitting it out?"

"..."

\*I thought if I spit out the apple, just like you did, a chain of coincidences would help us sneak into the meeting... Seems like I was overthinking it...\*

"Oh no!"

Just as Leon awkwardly grinned, ready to explain his misunderstanding, they heard a startled cry from behind.

A lavishly dressed woman, trying to avoid Leon's apple spit on the stairs, accidentally stepped on her skirt, slipped, and sat down painfully on the stairs, groaning in agony.

Her feline insignia, pinned to her collar, strangely flew off, tracing a beautiful arc in mid-air, and conveniently landed in Leon's hand...

\*Is this... the Cat Spirit's insignia?! This woman is a disciple of the Scales Gold Sect?!\*

Staring at the badge necessary for entry into the assembly, Senior Tom momentarily froze. Then, with a curious look, he examined Leon from head to toe and thoughtfully asked,

"Leon, are you usually... quite unlucky?"