

Inevitability 17

Chapter 17 – 17 Suspect

17 Suspect

Lumian was on edge, his mind racing with excitement and fear. “What is it exactly?”

The woman took a leisurely sip of Venus Sacred Oil before replying in a calm, unhurried tone.

“You have to ask yourself that.”

Having said that, she lowered her head slightly and focused on enjoying her breakfast, giving the impression that she had no intention of continuing the conversation.

Why do you keep parts of the matter untold and only answer at the next opportunity? Isn't this a waste of everyone's time? He couldn't help but feel inferior to her ability to infuriate others.

Taking a deep breath, he forced a smile and bade farewell.

Lumian obediently spent the rest of the day at home.

This wasn't out of fear of the owl to the point of not daring to step out during the day, nor was it because he had nothing to do, but to avoid arousing suspicion.

Lumian was determined to get to the bottom of the help-seeking letter that Leah and her companions had in their possession. He needed to find out what was written and who wrote it. The key to his investigation was to flip through every livre bleu in the village and find the one with words cut out. As a villager, Lumian was best suited for this task, but he was hesitant to proceed after talking to the three foreigners. It could attract someone's attention and cause unnecessary trouble.

This was a matter of life and death, survival or doom, and Lumian knew that even with Aurore's protection, he couldn't guarantee that the other party wouldn't take any risky actions against him.

In the past two years, he had become better at figuring out the threshold required for pranks.

This was due to his rich experience.

He planned on “visiting” every family in a few days, using the excuse of pursuing the legends related to Lent.

After dinner, when it was dark, Aurore returned to her bedroom to finally write a manuscript that was long overdue.

Lumian entered the study planning to find some books related to dreams to read, hoping to gain some special inspiration for his dream.

As they only had one battery-powered table lamp at home, which was being used by Aurore, he had to light up the kerosene lamp that had a pungent smell and was not great for illumination purposes.

Carrying the kerosene lamp that emitted a dim yellow glow, Lumian quickly swiped his other hand across the backs of the books. Occasionally, he would choose a book and clamp it under his armpit.

After a while, he returned to the table with three selected books.

Just as he placed the books in his hand, Lumian saw the livre bleu at home.

It was quietly placed in a corner of the desk as usual, and the gray-blue cover seemed a little dusty.

Upon seeing this livre bleu, Lumian instantly thought of the book he had obtained in the dream ruins and the book that had been cut and meshed into a plea for help.

He reached out and picked up the livre bleu in front of him, planning to flip through the content to see which words were suitable for cutting and piecing into useful sentences.

After flipping through a few pages, Lumian's gaze froze.

There was an obvious hole in the notes attached to the current calendar page.

A word had been cut out!

“No way...” Lumian whispered, extremely shocked.

He quickly flipped through the livre bleu in his hand and found more than ten words cut out.

“No way...” Lumian whispered again, his reaction almost the same as before.

The livre bleu that Ryan, Leah, Valentine, and the others were searching for turned out to be the one at home!

Not only had they not expected it, but Lumian had never even fathomed this possibility!

It didn't even cross his mind!

Amidst the indescribably complicated emotions, Lumian frowned.

Could it be Aurore who requested help?

Why did she seek help from the officials? Why didn't she tell me?

Based on Leah and the others' behavior, their habitual choice to discuss matters with the padre as soon as they arrived, and other details, Lumian made a preliminary judgment that they were officials. They could be from the government, Dariège's Eternal Blazing Sun Church, or the God of Steam and Machinery Church.

Lumian hesitated, his expression constantly changing.

Finally, he made up his mind. He took the livre bleu and walked out of the study to Aurore's bedroom.

He planned on asking her directly and chose to believe in Aurore.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Lumian bent his finger and knocked on the door.

“Come on in.” Aurore's voice sounded.

Lumian turned the handle and pushed open the door to enter. Under the bright light of the table lamp, Aurore, who was wearing a two-piece cotton pajama set, had bound her golden hair with a headband and was engrossed in writing a story.

“Did you cut this?” Lumian asked, interrupting his sister before she could speak.

“Huh?” Aurore turned around in confusion, her eyes blank and distant, as if she was still deep in thought.

Lumian handed over the livre bleu, which had been flipped to the corresponding page, and stared into Aurore's eyes.

“You didn't cut this?”

Aurore gazed at it carefully for a few seconds before looking up in amusement.

“Would I be so bored and childish? I'm steady, mature, and broadminded, unlike you.”

Aurore's reaction was natural, and she didn't seem surprised or flustered that her secret had been exposed. Lumian didn't hide his confusion and asked, “But who would have cut out words from the livre bleu?”

“Wasn't it you?” Aurore sized up her brother. “After reading my novel, you planned on mimicking what you read and cut out words from books and newspapers to create a random letter to play a huge prank on the village. But before that, you wanted to see if you could fool me? Are you testing my deductive abilities?”

This really doesn't seem like Aurore's doing... Lumian's gaze was fixed on Aurore's face, not letting go of even the slightest change in her expression, but his sister's performance was flawless.

“It wasn't me.” Lumian frowned. “Who could have done it?”

Aurore smiled. “Go on and play your little game of deduction. I have a manuscript to finish. If I have time tomorrow, I'll help you figure out the truth.”

Using extraordinary means? Lumian tersely acknowledged her words and stopped disturbing his sister's creation.

He took the livre bleu and returned to his unlit room, sitting on the chair behind the desk.

“Who could it be?” Under the illumination of the crimson moon, Lumian muttered, trying to make deductions.

We are a family of two. Aurore is a Warlock with extraordinary abilities. She won't let others ransack our home...

If it's really not her, and in her words, ‘when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.’

So, in the case of having only two choices, I'm actually the one who did this?

For a moment, Lumian found it absurd and funny.

So I'm the 'criminal'?

Why don't I know that?

Lumian couldn't help but turn his body and look at the full-body mirror attached to the wardrobe.

Under the crimson moonlight, his mirror reflection was wearing a linen shirt and brown pants. His handsome features didn't have a smile on them, and his expression was abnormally heavy.

He was very sure that he had never cut out the content from the livre bleu.

To eliminate the possibility, he recalled his experiences in the past month.

Although many details were already a blur, he was still very certain about what he had done.

Bathing in the crimson moon's light that seeped in through the windows, Lumian muttered to himself, "Could it be that I did it when I was unconscious? While having that dream, I can sleepwalk in reality? No, that's impossible. Aurore said that she would watch me. If I really sleepwalked and cut the livre bleu, she would have pointed it out just now. Moreover, the letter must have been sent during the day. I'm very awake during those times."

Lumian eliminated himself and thought of other possibilities.

Someone else who came here, perhaps?

Although their family had few guests usually, it did not mean that they did not have any.

Firstly, poorer neighbors would come to borrow the stove or oven to smoke meat or make bread.

Secondly, Lumian's friends would come to his house from time to time to find some simple novels to read or listen to his stories.

Lastly, Nazélie, Madame Pualis, and a few other ladies visited Aurore from time to time to have a chat with her. Among them, Madame Pualis came the most. She even lent Aurore a pony so that Aurore could ride freely in the mountains. They were quite close.

After all, in a village like Cordu, only an author like Aurore was worthy of Madame Pualis' friendship.

Madame Pualis appeared very amiable on the surface, often basking in the sun with the other women and chatting with them, and even catching lice with them. She had a good reputation in the village.

Although Madame Pualis and Aurore could be considered friends, Lumian did not like her at all. Madame Pualis would often introduce one of her relatives to Aurore and persuade her to get married and have children as soon as possible.

It would be fine if Madame Pualis' relatives were nice, but every time Lumian asked around in Dariège, he found that the other party either had bad character or was not very capable. They were about to fall into poverty, and none of them made the cut.

The first time might have been a coincidence, but with it happening every time, Lumian bore a hatred for Madame Pualis.

It's definitely impossible for those who come here to smoke meat or bake bread. There's always someone watching them. They won't be allowed to go up to the second floor... Reimund, Ava, and the others are also unlikely suspects. I'll accompany them the entire time. Madame Pualis, Nazélie, and the other ladies have a certain chance. Every time they come, Aurore will keep them in the study to read while she prepares some snacks...

If Madame Pualis is really a Witch, then it's understandable that she needs to hide her identity from the authorities. Also, she is very careful to use other people's livre bleu to avoid being traced back to her...

Did she discover something when she was having an affair with the padre? Did she have to protect herself in this way?

The more he thought about it, the more excited he became. He felt like he was about to lock onto a suspect.

He stood up, paced a few steps, and suddenly walked downstairs.

He didn't want to question Madame Pualis, nor did he plan to pry into her actions now. Instead, he planned to find Reimund or Guillaume-junior and use their livre bleu as a comparison to determine which words had been cut out and what sentence could be formed.

This way, Lumian could recreate the exact content of the request for help.

He rushed down the stairs, through the kitchen, and opened the front door.

The crimson darkness outside rushed in, instantly calming him down.

“Uh, Grande Soeur said that before we figure out the owl's situation, I shouldn't go out after dark...” Lumian muttered. He took two steps back and closed the door.

Anyway, there was no hurry to borrow the livre bleu. It would be more natural to do it tomorrow.

After doing a stretch, Lumian walked towards the staircase.

Ding ding ding ding ding.

The doorbell rang, the sound echoing through the house.

“Who is it?” Lumian turned around in confusion, calling out as he walked towards the door.

A slightly magnetic and gentle female voice sounded from outside.

“It's me, Pualis de Roquefort.”