

Inevitability 21

Chapter 21

21 Response

Lumian fell silent, his eyes glued to the restored request for help.

Although what he pieced together wasn't necessarily the content of the letter; after all, the words could create other sentences like 'the people around us need help as soon as possible; we are getting weirder.' He couldn't help but feel a weight pressing down on his heart.

In the past, he might've dismissed it as a prank, but too many abnormal things were happening in Cordu—and those were only the ones he noticed.

I can't pretend that I didn't see anything, nor can I pretend that nothing happened...

Grande Soeur said that a person with a normal heart and mind needs to know how to avoid danger. They shouldn't stand under a wall upon discovering that it's about to collapse...

He snapped out of his reverie and made up his mind.

He couldn't risk staying in Cordu a moment longer. He had to leave with his sister, and he had to do it now!

Regarding the abnormality, the officials would undoubtedly handle it. The villagers of Cordu were under their protection, and Lumian had neither the duty nor the capability to take on such a responsibility.

In addition, I have to speed up the exploration of the dream ruins and strive to obtain superpowers in a short period of time to deal with any accidents that might happen when I leave this place... The urgency of the situation filled him with a sense of imperative that he couldn't ignore.

He needed to become much stronger if he wanted to protect his sister and ensure her safety. The last thing he wanted was for her to be implicated in any abnormalities that might erupt before they left Cordu.

Keeping his mission in mind, Lumian carefully returned his livre bleu to its original place. Then, he snatched up the piece of paper containing the words and sentences from before and strode purposefully down the stairs.

He made his way over to the stove and tossed the piece of paper into the hungry flames.

Once outside, Lumian wasted no time in making his way straight to Ol' Tavern.

But as he approached the door, he found it tightly shut, a clear indication that the owner and bartender, Maurice Bénét, had likely gone to attend Naroka's funeral.

Still, Lumian knew that as a part-time hotel, it was impossible to lock all the doors during the day without inconveniencing the guests.

So, he headed for a side trail and slipped in through the back door.

Climbing up the stairs, Lumian scanned the hallway but saw no one in sight.

Thud. Thud. Thud. Lumian's footsteps echoed as he ascended the stairs to the second floor of the inn. He paused outside the door of the enigmatic woman's room, examining the doorknob for any sign of a "Do Not Disturb" placard. Finding none, he inhaled deeply and exhaled slowly, steadying himself. With a bend of his finger, he rapped lightly on the door.

Knock! Knock! Knock...

He knocked three times in a row, but there was no movement inside.

Knock. Knock. Knock... No answer. Lumian tried again, rapping more firmly this time.

He pounded on the door, but the room remained silent.

She's not here? Lumian frowned. She went to attend Naroka's funeral?

Without wasting a moment, he bolted down the stairs and out of the inn, making a beeline for the cemetery beside the cathedral.

En route, he passed by Naroka's house, where the mourners who had said their farewells at the door had dispersed and headed to the cemetery to await the procession.

Lumian surveyed the area, his eyes scanning the landscape until he spotted a figure emerging from the house. It was none other than Pons Bénet, the younger brother of the padre.

“Wh...” Lumian's heart skipped a beat as he leaned against the nearby building, trying to remain inconspicuous.

Wasn't it strictly forbidden to enter the house of the deceased as it could potentially influence the family's fortunes?

Pons Bénet stopped in front of Naroka's house and whispered something to Arnault André, the old lady's youngest son.

After a brief exchange, Pons Bénet departed, leaving Arnault to lock up the house and make his way to the cemetery.

Naroka's death is indeed a little peculiar... Lumian frowned and muttered to himself silently.

He now felt that perhaps the owl wasn't to be blamed for Naroka's death. It was more probable that the padre's group has something to do with it.

The owl might be simply adhering to its duty of taking souls from the dead in Cordu. It just happened to stop on the way and observed Lumian for a while.

Of course, Lumian had an even more terrifying guess: What if the padre's group and the owl are connected!?

Their peculiarities and clandestine activities could be attributed to the Warlock's remains.

Before exiting Cordu, I should find an opportunity to share my thoughts with Ryan, Leah, and company. I hope they'll uncover the truth and put an end to the issue expeditiously. Lumian averted his gaze and mumbled to himself as he headed towards the Eternal Blazing Sun cathedral.

Despite appearing somber and solemn during the funeral, Lumian kept a watchful eye on each villager, hoping to detect any abnormality in their demeanor.

Alas, his efforts yielded no fruit.

Nonetheless, he had a sneaking suspicion that some of the villagers were wearing a facade...

Additionally, the enigmatic woman who had bestowed upon him the tarot card was nowhere to be found at the cemetery.

As the evening descended upon the semi-subterranean two-story abode, Aurore fixed her eyes on her brother, Lumian, and demanded, "Where's your script? Let me see it."

Lumian's expression turned serious as he replied, "I have something to tell you."

Aurore scanned his face.

"Did some wild animal in the village chew your script again?"

"No," Lumian whispered, his voice low. "I found out something from those foreigners."

Aurore's smile faded as she nodded, gesturing for him to continue.

Lumian revealed how Ryan and his gang were snooping around, investigating a letter, and the peculiarity of the livre bleu at home. He spoke of his suspicions regarding Madame Pualis and the letter's contents, which he had unearthed using Reimund's livre bleu.

Finally, he suggested, "We have to leave the village as soon as possible and head to Dariège. No, Bigorre. We'll stay there for a while."

Aurore didn't respond right away. She mulled over Lumian's suggestion for more than ten seconds.

"This is indeed the best choice for now.

"However, there's a problem. If we suddenly bolt from Cordu while the officials are investigating, won't it draw attention to us? Will they intercept us and make us the focus of their investigation?"

"It's fine if I'm not a Beyonder, but I'm an unofficial Beyonder. I'll be captured and cleansed by the Inquisition."

Lumian was out of his depth, an amateur in a sea of seasoned veterans. The problem at hand was a conundrum that he had never faced before, and for a moment, he was at a loss for words.

He finally managed to stutter, "So what's the plan? We break out and hide in another city, another country?"

"Oh, Lumian, you are overestimating me," she said. "Those three foreigners are more powerful than you think. If there was only one, I might be able to take them on, but three? And what if there's

an ambush outside the village? Maybe they're just waiting for us to make a run for it.”

Lumian was speechless.

He had to admit, compared to his sister, he was still green behind the ears. He just didn't have the same level of experience or the sharp attention to detail that she possessed.

“You're too impulsive,” Aurore said, shaking her head. “But I suppose that's to be expected. After all, what young man doesn't have a bit of fire in his belly?”

She paused for a moment.

“Tomorrow morning, you're going to do me a favor. Head over to the administrator's office and help me send a telegram to Novel Weekly. Ask them when their next author salon will be held.”

Aurore was a beloved columnist for Novel Weekly.

Only the administrator and the padre possessed a telegram machine, reserved for emergency communications. The villagers could use it, but at a cost in verl d'or.

Aurore saw Lumian's confusion and quickly explained her plan, “Novel Weekly has been begging me to promote my work in Trier, but I've always refused, including the most recent author salon. However, if I ask them to invite me now, they'll jump at the chance and even reimburse our train tickets. Our departure will seem ordinary, and even if we're being watched, we won't be suspects. I can temporarily trick them when the time comes. As long as we don't let the abnormality corrupt us, our chances of slipping out of Cordu are high.”

Lumian breathed a sigh of relief. “Alright,” he said.

In just a few seconds, Lumian posed an intriguing question to Aurore.

“Aurore, uh, Grande Soeur, is Beyonder a term for people with superpowers?”

“Yes,” Aurore replied, choosing not to elaborate any further.

However, Aurore then flashed a sly smile and said, “So, you're really going to abandon your friends and flee from Cordu.”

“I must have missed the part where that's my problem,” Lumian snorted in response.

Keeping his sister safe was his top priority at the moment.

Aurore clicked her tongue and laughed.

“Oh, Lumian, you're such a delight. Say that again, would you?”

“How many times have you said that before? And yet, every time, you either quietly offer your help or give them a pretend warning,” Aurore continued.

“Those were trivial matters,” Lumian defended himself.

However, the abnormality they faced now was a real threat to his sister's safety.

“Okay, okay,” Aurore sighed, not wanting to argue with the kid.

“Let's get dinner ready. It's your turn to cook today.”

Lumian grunted tersely and headed towards the stove.

The night was dark, the crimson moon obscured by thick clouds.

Lumian finished washing up and lay down on the bed.

A visible worry crept onto his face.

Aurore's response wasn't bad, but Lumian was worried that the anomalies in the village would erupt at any moment while they waited for Novel Weekly's reply.

Lumian was desperate to increase his strength and obtaining superpowers in the dream ruins seemed like the easiest option.

However, he hadn't been able to find that lady all day and didn't have any corresponding suggestions. He was left with no choice but to try it out himself.

The situation was like a nocked arrow, ready to fire, and Lumian couldn't afford to hesitate.

Without hesitation, Lumian composed himself and slowly drifted off to sleep.