

## Inevitability 25

Chapter 25: Sequences and Potions Translator: CKtalon

Lumian sauntered into Ol' Tavern, his sharp eyes scanning the dimly lit room. To his surprise, the mysterious woman was already seated in her usual corner, enjoying a lavish breakfast spread.

She had changed her attire yet again, donning a long brown, pleated dress and a dark velvet hat that screamed high society.

“So early?” Lumian approached her table, calming his racing heart.

The woman looked up, meeting his gaze.

“Is there a possibility that I didn't sleep all night?”

“Perhaps.” Lumian knew this routine all too well—his sister, Aurore, often pulled all-nighters when deadlines were looming. But what was the reason for the enigmatic woman raising this up?

As he glanced at her table, he found a delectable spread, with a cream soufflé sprinkled with nuts, a muffin that looked scrumptious, a croissant, a cup of black coffee, and a cat tongue biscuit.

What an appetite! Lumian thought, impressed. But how can Cordu provide such luxurious cuisine? Only Aurore or the chefs in the administrator's family could whip up something like this.

“It's all dessert,” Lumian said, taking a seat opposite her.

The woman nodded, her expression serious for once.

“Intis's desserts are indeed not bad, and there's quite a lot of variety. Even if I have some for breakfast every day, it'll take me a month without repetition to finish them all,” she said, biting into the cat tongue biscuit and closing her eyes in bliss. “That's one of the purposes of traveling.”

Lumian seized the moment to probe the woman's background. “You're not from Intis?” he asked.

The woman smiled enigmatically.

“I'm from Loen, but given the current situation, this isn't important.”

What else did Loen have to offer besides steam machinery, factories, and a large army? Lumian, being an Intisian, couldn't help but recall the mocking words that everyone used to taunt the Loen Kingdom—reclining chairs, mint sauce, fried fish and potatoes, and pure snakefruit beer.

But he quickly brushed off the thought and turned his attention to the task at hand.

“I got rid of the monster with the shotgun.”

The woman took a sip of coffee and nodded approvingly.

“Not bad.”

Lumian sensed a strange emotion emanating from her eyes.

He couldn't shake off the strange feeling that he had sensed in their previous interactions. There was something about her that he couldn't quite put his finger on—a mix of facetiousness and hidden emotions that intrigued him.

Undeterred, he pressed on with the matter at hand.

“I obtained an abnormal dark-red object from that monster. Holding it makes me irritable and filled with hostility.

“I think it involves supernatural powers, but it didn't follow me to reality,” he explained.

The woman smiled enigmatically.

“After going in and out so many times, don't you realize that other than your own physical condition, you can't bring anything else over?”

Lumian was taken aback. “Didn't you say that supernatural things are excluded...” he trailed off, realizing that he was out of his depth.

Lumian couldn't shake off the physical discomfort that lingered from his dream, along with the vivid memories that refused to fade away.

After careful consideration, he posed a question.

“You mean that after obtaining supernatural powers through the crimson blob and turning oneself into a Beyonder, the corresponding state that is different from that of a normal person can be brought to reality?”

“Not a lost cause,” she replied nonchalantly, savoring the cream soufflé.

“But won't the corresponding strength weaken because of this?”

Lumian pressed, his brow furrowing. “The injuries I suffered in the dream are much lighter in reality.”

“The conditions brought about by Beyonder characteristics won't change,” the woman explained, meeting Lumian's gaze. “This is why I said that extraordinary items are excluded.”

Beyonder characteristics... Lumian mulled over the term, trying to piece together what his sister had told him about Beyonders.

Obtaining such characteristics would allow one to become a Beyonder, he surmised.

And based on the woman's explanation, he had a hunch about the unique nature of his dream.

That ruin, it's real. Or maybe it was once real, but now it's sunk deep into some big shot's dream and been left to fester. And my dream, it's like a secret passageway. A passageway that's only accessible through the symbols on my chest, and leads straight to that ruin.

Based on my theory, my home in the dream is like a mark left behind by our interaction. It's a reflection of the place where I feel safest, deep in my subconscious. That's why it looks nothing like the wilderness or the ruins that surround it. It's like we're in two different worlds, me and the monsters.

But those monsters, they can't come in. They're stuck in the real ruins while my “home” is a mix of dream and reality. Only those with the special symbols can pass through the corresponding barrier.

The symbols only work for me, and they record the state of my body before I'm brought back to reality. When I wake up, the things that don't involve the supernatural will fade away, but the implications will remain. Even death will work the same way.

So there shouldn't be anything scary waiting for me at home in the dream. But the origin of those symbols and the source of that terrifying voice, they symbolize something dark and horrific...

Lumian sat in silence, watching the lady across from him leisurely devour her breakfast. She didn't seem to mind.

Lumian finally asked, regaining his composure, “May I ask how I should use that dark-red blob? Is it the Beyonder characteristic you mentioned?”

At the critical moment, he could not help but address her respectfully.

The lady set down her coffee and looked at him.

“I can give you a potion formula. Just follow it.”

The generous gift made Lumian uneasy.

“Why are you helping me?”

The lady laughed.

“Would you believe me if I said it was arranged by fate?”

No... Lumian subconsciously replied inwardly.

The abnormality in the village, the pressure of the impending storm, and the desire for superpowers all swirled around Lumian, threatening to overwhelm him. He pushed his unease down and spoke in a low voice, "I do."

Opportunities like this didn't come around often, and Lumian knew he had to act decisively. He couldn't afford to hesitate or have second thoughts.

The lady's smile grew wider, the unclear emotions he had detected in her eyes earlier intensifying.

She pulled out a stack of post-it notes and a silver fountain pen from her black lady's purse and began writing.

Finally, she stopped and tore off the top note and handed it to him.

Lumian snatched it from her hand and read it quickly.

“Hunter potion formula:

“Main ingredient: One Hunter Beyonder characteristic;

“Supplementary ingredients: 80 milliliters of red wine, one Red Chestnut Flower (can be a specimen or substituted with 10 drops of the corresponding essential oil), 5 grams of poplar tree leaf powder, 10 grams of basil;

“Usage: Drink it directly.

Satisfied with his memorization, Lumian carefully folded the note and slipped it into his brown jacket.

Done with that, he asked, unable to contain his curiosity, “What does 'Hunter' mean?”

Hunter in the supernatural sense?

“The corresponding Sequence,” the lady replied, taking a casual sip of her coffee. “You do not know much about mysticism, so let me explain. There are 22 common pathways in the world. To access them, you must obtain ingredients with the corresponding Beyonder characteristics and concoct potions. Each pathway has 10 Sequences, numbered from 9 to 0. The lower the number, the higher the level, and the stronger the ability.”

“The Beyonder characteristic you obtained belongs to the Red Priest pathway. It can only be used to concoct the corresponding Sequence 9 Hunter potion.”

Lumian listened attentively and blurted out, “Then what Sequence does my sister Aurore belong to?”

“She's a Sequence 7 Warlock of The Hermit pathway,” the lady replied coolly.

She did not mention how she knew.

Aurore is already at Sequence 7? That's true. She has already obtained supernatural powers for several years... I'll only be at Sequence 9 after consuming the potion. I'm still quite a distance from her... I only hope that I won't be a burden when we escape Cordu in the future... Lumian couldn't help but ask, “Can I drink higher Sequence Beyonder potions directly? Or should I drink Sequence 9 today and Sequence 8 tomorrow?”

“Theoretically, yes.” The lady added after Lumian revealed a look of joy, “However, most who attempt it end up dead or as a monster. Fewer than one in ten million people succeed.”

“Turn into monsters?” Lumian was alarmed.

The lady chuckled and said, “Didn't your sister warn you about the dangers of the path to transcendence? After drinking the potion, if you can't control the power, you'll either die from a physical breakdown or transform into a monster. Why do you think the one you encountered was in human form?”

No wonder... Lumian finally understood what danger his sister was talking about.

But he was willing to face it.

“Is there no way to reduce this danger?” he asked.

The lady considered him for a moment before answering, “There is. You need a firm will, good physical condition, and some luck. As for the rest, you don't need to know. You're still on the first potion.”

“Good physical condition...” Lumian, who had planned on returning to catch up on sleep and drink the potion later, frowned.

He was still seriously injured in the dream.

The lady opposite him nodded slightly and said, “Take your time. Wait until nightfall and your body has mostly recovered before diving back into your dreams.”

“Uh...” Lumian's mind raced with questions. “So as long as my body in reality is almost healed, the injuries in my dream will completely recover?”

One had to know that his body in reality was only a little sore. It was completely different from the injuries in the dream!

“Yes.” The lady confirmed Lumian's guess.

She continued, “There's much to learn about the potion and the paths of the divine. I'll tell you once you become a Hunter.”

The paths of the divine... Lumian asked in puzzlement, “Why not tell me now?”

The lady laughed.

“If you die or become a monster, it would be a waste of my time to say so much now.”

“...” Lumian was speechless.

Lumian stood up and excused himself, but before he left, he asked one more thing.

“Do you know about the anomaly in the village?”