

Inevitability 391

Chapter 391 Idiots

The figures entering the ancient palace were Black Earth and Bax. Black Earth sported a furry hat and a thick leather mask, while Bax, on the other hand, had opted for just shorts and a brass mask.

Upon spotting Hela, they acknowledged her with a slight nod as a greeting.

Their eyes then roved over Franca, who hadn't tagged her code name, and Muggle, enveloped in a dreamy mist.

“Who's this?” Black Earth, clad like a Hunter from the mountains, pointed at Franca, a note of confusion in his voice.

“Hidden Blade. I rushed and forgot to tag myself,” Franca replied.

Black Earth and Bax promptly dropped their suspicions and relaxed.

In a situation like this emergency gathering, it was perfectly normal for Hidden Blade to slip up.

This was her style!

Soon after, other members of the April Fool's team arrived one by one, but Lumian didn't see the five most suspicious targets— I Know Someone, Hisoka, Bard, Mad Lady, and Ultraman.

His expression darkened gradually, sensing that Loki had been resurrected and the problematic members had been alerted.

The dozen or so individuals gathered here were potential pawns. If Loki and his gang went too far and were discovered by other members of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, they could be used as scapegoats for the investigation.

There was nothing to find fault with them, thus ensuring the six true believers in the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings remained concealed.

At that moment, Black Earth and the rest started to realize that something was amiss.

Why were there so few attendees at the emergency gathering?

The agreed time had already passed, and typically, at least half of the society should have shown up by now.

“Hela, what's going on?” Bax, wearing nothing but a mask and shorts, asked in a deep voice.

Lumian sneered, looking at them as if they were a bunch of fools.

If Loki and his crew were evil, then these people were simply fools. They believed they were clever and had uncovered the truth, thinking they were indulging in pre-apocalypse pleasures. In reality, they were just being used as pawns and shields.

Lumian was willing to bet that Loki, I Know Someone, and the other core members of the April Fool's team would mock these fools during their private gatherings.

Hela's tone remained as cold as ice as she began, "I summoned you to this gathering because Loki betrayed us."

Black Earth, Bax, and the others were taken aback. They glanced around, but Loki was nowhere to be seen.

Hela continued, "He believes in an evil god and led I Know Someone and the others to harm numerous Research Society members."

"Such accusations require evidence," Bax instinctively retorted.

With the Lie earring on, Lumian spoke in Aurore's voice, "I'm the evidence!"

"You must have seen me buy the Soul Summoning Spell. This caused a mental problem and nearly caused me to lose control. Fortunately, I found someone to help me in time and sealed my split personality.

"Before this, I've been seeking treatment from I Know Someone, but instead of improving, my condition only worsened.

"I approached them to reason with them, but they ended up planning to murder me!"

Black Earth fell silent for a moment before saying, "I remember that you bought it from Mad Lady. They lied to you because transmigration should be a matter between two parties, not a one-sided reason. Otherwise, why did you transmigrate to this world and happen to possess such people? The original bodies must have done something to establish the connection between the two worlds. Therefore, before figuring out what caused you to transmigrate, finding the remnant soul of the original body and asking might gain something unexpected.

"Muggle, weren't you homesick back then? How could you believe such a reason?"

As they heard this, some of the April Fool's team members present couldn't help but show teasing and mocking expressions in their eyes.

Muggle had fallen for a trick that could only fool children!

None of them had been fooled by Mad Lady. Even if she claimed to have tried and achieved certain results, it couldn't be considered a clue.

Mad Lady... Lumian repeated the code name inwardly.

A chuckle escaped him as he continued, "I was indeed blinded by the desire to return home, but you weren't any better.

"Take a look. Are Loki, Mad Lady, and Bard here?"

"They know what they're doing, and they understand that if they're exposed, they have to leave the Research Society immediately. But you, fools, and idiots, don't know anything and are still cooperating with them!

"Even pigs and dogs are smarter than you!"

The absence of Loki and the others was like Muggle's mocking arrow, piercing the hearts and minds of Black Earth and the other April Fool's team members.

Some of them erupted in anger, feeling humiliated and wanting to retort. Others swayed in despair and confusion, while some felt as if countless insects were gnawing at their hearts. The pain was palpable.

Witnessing this, Franca entered Instigation mode and delivered a decisive blow.

“Don't you understand? You're discarded pawns, abandoned targets, mere agents who have lost their usefulness!

“You've never been core members of April Fool's. You've never earned Loki's trust. They only mock you behind your backs!

“Now that Loki and the others have been exposed, they can hunt down the Research Society members without fear. Who do you think will be the easiest for them to locate and target?

“The only thing you can do is recall the details of your dealings with Loki and the others, including the real-life pranks you executed, so that we can eliminate these traitors as soon as possible.

“Remember, leniency comes with honesty, resistance comes with severity.”

Black Earth, Bax, and the others followed Hidden Blade's logic and realized the grim possibility. They exchanged glances, their hearts clearly wavering. The few who had witnessed Loki and the others' capabilities couldn't help but tremble slightly.

Finally, Franca dropped a bombshell.

“Don't think you can escape the hunt just because you can relocate. Let me tell you, Muggle's experience indicates that Loki and the others seem to have a way to track Research Society members within a certain range through some mystical connection.

“I'll share the specific method with everyone at the next official gathering.”

Black Earth gritted his teeth and said, “There are too many details. I don't think I can recall them all in just a few hours.”

The other April Fool's team members nodded in agreement.

Hela thought for a moment and replied, “Go back, write down all the details, and send them to me. “Remember, pack your belongings and stay at a motel or hotel at least five kilometers away.”

Bax and the others let out sighs of relief and agreed.

Shortly after, Lumian noticed their eyes closing, as if they had fallen asleep while standing.

He and Franca exchanged thoughtful glances and then realized that Madame Hela's eyes had lost focus before closing as well.

After a moment, Hela opened her eyes and said to Lumian and Franca, “There are no hidden Loki helpers or believers in the Celestial Worthy.”

This is a precaution in case Loki had risked leaving an accomplice to gather intelligence... Franca came to a realization.

In the next instant, Black Earth, Bax, and the others awakened simultaneously, reciting the incantation discreetly as they left the ancient and decaying palace.

Lumian dispelled the Niese Face, took off the Lie earring, and turned to Hela.

“Every time we use the incantation at a gathering, we should be tainted by the Sealed Artifacts' Concealment aura, right?”

“Can we use this to track down Mad Lady and the others?”

Hela shook her head.

“They no longer have the corresponding auras.”

Clearly, she had tried it before.

Lumian remained silent, exhaling slowly and silently.

The trio left the Nation of the Evernight and returned to the uninhabited mine beneath Trier.

Hela put away the Wraith Beyonder characteristic and spoke to Lumian and Franca.

“If we can't uncover Loki and truly eliminate him, you can stay in Trier's market district for another three months at most. When that time comes, regardless of any unfinished business, you'll have to consider relocating.”

“Why three months?” Franca inquired, her confusion apparent.

Staying even another week seemed perilous.

Hela provided a simple explanation.

“While Loki has been resurrected with his Beyonder characteristics, he has lost all his marionettes. A Marionettist won't rashly appear and attack others without a marionette, unless they are excessively confident and perceive you as weak. And you've already demonstrated significant strength.

“For a Marionettist without a marionette, acquiring a suitable and powerful marionette requires planning, luck, and frequent replacements. You should have a window of three to six months.”

“Understood,” Franca replied, deciding to inform Madam Judgment that if no progress was made within two months, she would request permission to abandon the Iron and Blood Cross Order mission and relocate.

Lumian nodded in agreement.

He contemplated whether he could digest the Pyromaniac potion within three months and gather the Conspirer potion formula and main ingredients.

At that moment, Hela pointed at Loki's mushy flesh, twisted maggots, and said, "The dead worms are excellent spiritual ingredients that can be used for many things. However, they also come with hidden issues. They have been corrupted to a certain extent, posing unknown dangers to you."

Franca recalled her terrifying experience of almost becoming a marionette and shook her head, indicating she didn't want them.

Lumian gazed at the countless maggots and the mushy flesh for a moment before suddenly summoning the crimson fireball floating on his shoulder. He directed it towards Loki's remains.

Instead of exploding, the fireball ignited fiercely, casting a crimson glow.

As he watched the maggots and flesh burn, Lumian felt as though he had digested the Pyromaniac potion once more.

This came from his experience of being controlled by Loki and using the near-loss of control to ignite his own body, triggering the resonance of the Blood Emperor's aura.

This led Lumian to formulate his own acting principle for Pyromaniac: Pyromaniacs aren't arsonists. Only by daring to set themselves ablaze can they set others ablaze!

Chapter 392 Switching Pathways

The digestion of the Pyromaniac potion progressed much faster than Lumian had expected. This quick reaction was likely due to the activation of Blood Emperor Alista Tudor's aura without proper protection, akin to setting a blaze in Trier. The flames burned even the Saint Viève Cathedral and the patriarchal cathedral of the God of Steam and Machinery Church.

Hela watched the flesh and maggots consumed by the crimson flames for a moment before turning to Franca.

"Can we now discuss the clues about transmigration?"

Franca tersely acknowledged her words and gathered her thoughts.

"Ciel had previously attempted a unique summoning ritual, which inadvertently brought forth a shadow suspected to be from my homeland, the one I share with Muggle. He even formed a contract with this entity.

"After discovering this, I had Ciel summon the shadow again to communicate with it.

"The shadow's language is remarkably similar to that of my homeland. When asked about its origin, it said, 'The Blood Son of Heaven disrupted the netherworld, and the Underworld Daoist sacrificed himself to enter the river.'"

Franca translated the last sentence into Intisian.

Hela listened attentively and then turned her gaze to Lumian.

"Could this be the apparition of Blood Emperor Alista Tudor?"

“Underworld Daoist was the one who dragged Him back?”

“That's our hypothesis,” Lumian replied succinctly, indicating that Franca was also aware of the Samaritan Women's Spring. There was no need for excessive secrecy.

“Underworld Daoist...” Hela murmured the term softly.

Franca continued to recount her and Lumian's theories, suspecting that the illusionary river behind the spring might connect to the original world of her and the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society members.

Hela remained silent, her dark eyes gleaming with a subtle brilliance, as though concealing a galaxy.

“That covers most of it. Once we've dealt with the traitors in the Research Society, I'll share this information with everyone,” Franca said after a brief pause. She also reminded Hela, “Apart from April Fool's, Loki's allies might be lurking in other teams. They tend to participate in activities without playing pranks and only reveal themselves during crucial moments.”

Hela nodded slightly and replied, “I'll discuss how to handle this with Gandalf and the others.”

The woman then turned her gaze to Lumian.

“If there's nothing else, I'll take you back to the surface.”

Lumian withdrew his gaze from the flames and let out a deep breath.

“I'll take care of this.”

He crouched down and placed his hands in front of Loki's lifeless body.

Rumble. Accompanied by a muted explosion and a slight tremor in the ground, the earth, carrying flesh, blood, and maggots, suddenly sank into the mire and rocks.

Franca nodded in realization.

This way, any remaining corruption on Loki's corpse wouldn't be exposed to cave adventurers who might pass by later.

She assisted in carrying the corpses of the two marionettes over, contemplating whether to collect the Wraith's teeth and nails.

These were excellent spiritual ingredients that could be used to forge Beyond weapons.

If the Wraith had lost control and transformed into a monster, Franca wouldn't feel any psychological burden dealing with his corpse. However, he still retained his human form.

Considering that she didn't lack offensive weapons or poison for coating them, Franca simply harvested the powder from the translucent Wraith and absorbed its residual spirituality.

After removing the clothes bestowed by the evil god and checking for any clues, Franca tossed the two corpses into the blazing pit.

Once she had completed this task, she turned to Hela and asked with curiosity,

“Madame Hela, have you advanced to Sequence 4 and become a demigod?”

Otherwise, how could she have subdued Loki so effortlessly?

“Yes,” Hela confirmed with a nod.

Franca pondered for a moment and probed further, “You used to follow the Corpse Collector pathway, but this time, you displayed the power of the Evernight pathway. Did you use a mystical item?”

Was it similar to using a Sealed Artifact to enable everyone to enter the Nation of the Evernight in Concealment and participate in the gathering?

The Corpse Collector pathway was also known as the Death pathway.

Hela's voice was icy as she replied, “I've switched to Sequence 4 Nightwatcher of the Evernight pathway.”

“Why?” Franca was intrigued by Hela's choice.

While she had once contemplated switching to the neighboring Hunter pathway when advancing to Sequence 4, it was mainly to restore her body to its male form. Under usual circumstances, sticking to a single pathway until the end was generally the better choice. After all, the acting acquired in the earlier Sequences were deeply ingrained in that pathway, making it easier and safer to become a Sequence 4 Beyond of the same pathway.

Of course, if one couldn't find the Sequence 4 potion formula and main ingredient for their pathway, they might consider switching to a neighboring pathway. It wouldn't necessarily lead to half-madness, and they could gain a mix of unique abilities.

Franca had never seen any indication from Hela of wanting to switch pathways. When they discussed and exchanged information at the Research Society, Hela primarily focused on topics related to the Corpse Collector domain. Most of the materials and items gathered and sold were concentrated in this pathway.

Could it be that the Sequence 4 potion formula, main ingredients, or corresponding rituals of the Corpse Collector pathway proved impractical? Franca speculated, drawing on her extensive knowledge of mysticism.

Hela's pale face softened.

She gazed into the darkness beyond the abandoned mine, her voice taking on a contemplative tone.

“If I continued along the Death pathway, the deity I believe in would eventually transform me into a crucial vessel for specific moments.”

At this point, Hela wore a rare smile and spoke with a distant look in her eyes.

“It's already a challenge for Her to maintain Her humanity. So, I shouldn't burden Her any further.”

Franca was initially perplexed but began to grasp Madame Hela's reasoning for switching pathways.

Hela gave her a brief look and added, “If I can advance to Sequence 3, I should either revert to the Death pathway or switch to the Warrior pathway.”

“The upper ranks of the Evernight pathway are facing a severe resource shortage.”

“Wow,” Franca couldn't help but envision Hela wielding various Sequence abilities from the Evernight, Corpse Collector, and Warrior pathways. She found it both impressive and formidable.

She, too, felt a sense of excitement about the possibility of acquiring the abilities of a Demoness and a Hunter in the future.

Meanwhile, Lumian incinerated Loki's mutated remains and filled the pit.

Hela promptly obscured the area in darkness.

When Lumian and Franca regained consciousness, they found themselves outside the abandoned mine near the entrance to Underground Trier on Rue Anarchie.

In the distance, they could hear faint movements coming from Rue des Blouses Blanches.

“Phew, this is the most dangerous situation I've encountered since becoming a Beyonder,” Franca said, exhaling deeply and speaking with emotion. “If Loki hadn't used me as bait to lure you here, there's a high chance I would have become a marionette.”

Lumian tersely acknowledged her words and remained silent.

He took a step forward and began to walk down the street.

Franca followed him and asked curiously, “Did Loki say anything when he tried to disrupt your mind with his trash talk? Although many of his words may be lies, they might contain valuable information.”

For example, the suspicion that every member of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society possessed the lingering aura of the Celestial Worthy.

Lumian remained silent for a few moments before responding.

“He recounted how they harmed Aurore, how they repeatedly disclosed her mental state and psychiatric treatment process, and how they shamelessly mocked her...”

His explanation was concise, but the simplicity of his words couldn't mask the anger that rose in him again.

“Huh?” Franca was initially surprised but quickly grasped the gravity of the situation. “That Psychiatrist, I Know Someone?”

Lumian nodded slowly.

Franca contemplated the situation carefully, her anger growing with each passing thought.

“Dammit! How can they be so evil? I fully support you in tearing them apart, dismembering them, skinning them, and stuffing them with grass!” After several seconds of contemplation, she unleashed a curse.

Lumian remained silent, seemingly weighing the feasibility of such actions.

Franca glanced at him and hesitantly suggested, "When you faced the other April Fools' team members earlier, you held back and didn't kill them directly..."

Lumian chuckled.

"Why should I kill those idiots? It's more agonizing, humiliating, and regretful for these individuals who believe they're clever when they realize how Loki and the others manipulated them. It brings me greater satisfaction than killing them.

"In the future, whenever anyone mentions Loki, it will be akin to insulting their intelligence to their faces, and they won't be able to escape it."

Franca breathed a sigh of relief.

She said to Lumian, "Rue des Blouses Blanches seems quite lively. I plan to stay at Jenna's tonight. Heh heh.

"Yes, I'll be informing my Major Arcana card holder briefly about this matter. I'll convey that if Loki isn't completely eliminated within two months, I would like to request a transfer out of the market district. You, too, can apply to take charge of the Iron and Blood Cross Order's branch elsewhere."

"I'll also write to my Major Arcana card holder," Lumian assured her, indicating that he wouldn't underestimate the potential harm Loki could cause.

Lumian had always maintained a clear distinction between personal matters and official matters. Whether dealing with the padre or investigating Loki, he had never considered seeking Madam Magician's assistance. However, this time, his use of the Blood Emperor's aura had caused quite a commotion, and it would be necessary to report it later.

Seeing that Lumian remained rational, Franca felt at ease. She waved farewell and stealthily made her way toward Quartier du Jardin Botanique.

Lumian averted his gaze and entered Auberge du Coq Doré, walking along the still-warm street.

He had no desire to encounter the official Beyonders who might be searching for clues on Rue des Blouses Blanches at this late hour.

As he pushed open the door to Room 207, Lumian spotted a figure inside.

It was Madam Magician, dressed in an orange waist-length dress and holding a wide-brimmed hat adorned with flowers.

"Were you waiting for me?" Lumian inquired almost instinctively.

Magician smiled.

"What else would I be doing?"

"How did you know I would come back here?" Lumian closed the door.

Magician smiled and said, "This is a revelation of fate.

“Now, tell me, why did you unleash the Blood Emperor's aura?”

Chapter 393 Information About Celestial Worthy

Lumian was taken aback.

“Did it cause a huge commotion?”

He knew that once the Blood Emperor's aura was activated, it would undoubtedly attract the attention of nearby official Beyonders and powerful figures. It would be akin to setting Saint Viève Cathedral on fire. The commotion wouldn't be small, but he never expected this to catch the attention of Madam Magician, who didn't seem to be in Trier, for her to rush over.

He had intended to write a letter and report this matter.

Madam Magician nodded seriously.

“Very. It even led some people to believe that the door to Fourth Epoch Trier had opened.”

The commotion is even greater than I had imagined. As expected of Blood Emperor Alista Tudor... Lumian wasn't vexed or surprised; instead, he calmly sat on the edge of the bed.

It had already happened, so there was no point in feeling vexed or surprised. Moreover, even if he had to do it again, he would still do it.

Lumian began recounting how he had posed as his sister to infiltrate the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society and determine if there was anything amiss with the person who had sold her the Soul Summoning Spell. He continued until Loki lost control and died, but no Beyonder characteristics emerged. It was suspected that there was a way for him to revive. There was also the honorific name of an evil god that Hela and the Two of Cups had pieced together.

Magician didn't interrupt, but the smile on her face had vanished at some point in time.

“Do I need to recite the honorific name's four lines intermittently, or can I just say them?” Lumian finally asked.

Madam Magician's voice was calm as she replied, “Just say it. It won't be a problem as long as you don't use ancient Hermes, Jotun, and other unprotected Beyonder languages.”

Lumian subconsciously surveyed the room and realized that it had grown dimmer. Although the crimson moonlight could penetrate the glass window, it seemed to be obstructed by an invisible, soundproof, and deep curtain.

He then repeated Franca's translated honorific name.

With that said, he saw Madam Magician fall silent, as if she had transformed into a statue.

“What's wrong with that?” Lumian probed.

Magician pondered for a moment and looked at him.

“You're saying that you relied on the brink of losing control from your anger to trigger the resonance of the Blood Emperor's aura and create a commotion that can break through the three layers of the thin fog's concealment?”

“That's right,” Lumian replied, still feeling a lingering fear as he recalled the situation. “Normally, once my emotions exceed the limit, I would recall the cues left behind by Madam Susie. However, even the corresponding memories became intermittent and vague, preventing the cues from having the desired effect. In fact, if I hadn't held out hope when I was first controlled and instead tried to activate the Blood Emperor's aura immediately, Loki probably wouldn't have been able to truly stop me. When the control deepened, it wouldn't have worked. I could only rely on such passive reactions...”

Madam Magician wore a thoughtful expression and didn't respond.

“Is there a problem with this part of the situation?” Lumian asked bluntly.

Magician nodded slightly and said, “There's nothing wrong with this detail. It's very reasonable. It's a normal development of the situation back then. The problem is that you just obtained the Blood Emperor's aura not long ago, so it came in handy.”

Lumian was taken aback for a few seconds before blurting out, “Could Amon have foreseen my encounter tonight by stuffing the Earth Blood ore into my pocket? Is His purpose to help me?”

Help that nearly got me killed?

“This might be just one of the goals, and it's not His,” Madam Magician said with a soft sigh. “It's the goal of the one who's roughly equivalent to His father.”

Lumian was taken aback once more.

“The one the Aurora Order believes in? The one who inherited half of the Ancient Sun God's inheritance?”

For some reason, Mr. K's maniacal laughter echoed in his mind.

Piousness is the only way out!

Madam Magician muttered to herself, “Previously, I thought I wanted to involve you more deeply in matters related to the Sauron family, the Iron and Blood Cross Order, and the Fourth Epoch Trier. Now, it seems that I'll have to include disrupting that entity's plan...”

Seeing that Lumian still didn't understand why it involved the deity believed in by the Aurora Order, Magician explained, “Do you remember when you thought accepting another Major Arcana card holder's commission was a normal and reasonable matter? You didn't need to tell me?”

“I remember,” Lumian replied, not seeing any problem with that. “It's true that I made a mistake, but it has nothing to do with that person. It's a manifestation of my true thoughts.”

Madam Magician chuckled.

“Coincidentally, I didn't meet Miss Justice during that time, so there was an information gap.”

Lumian's eyes flickered as he caught a whiff of a conspiracy.

Madam Magician continued, “The combination of two coincidences might not be coincidental. Think about the complete honorific name of that entity.”

“I can't recall,” Lumian admitted. “Madam Justice made a psychological cue. I can only recall it if I pray for Mr. Fool's angelic protection.”

“There's no rush. When you can recall, you'll naturally understand the source of the problem,” Magician warned him simply. “You have to be vigilant once you encounter too many coincidences.”

Lumian nodded solemnly.

Madam Magician consoled him, “There's no need to be too nervous, let alone reject contact with Mr. K. This time, with that entity's arrangements so obvious, He's telling us that He knows, that He is watching and listening.

“This also means that He holds no ill intentions for the time being. Otherwise, not only would you be finished, but I would also be in danger.”

Lumian was burdened with numerous issues. He couldn't afford to fret at such a high level. It was pointless to fret. After all, he relied on the Tarot Club the most.

He then inquired, “Madam, which evil god does Loki and company believe in?”

Only by clarifying the evil god's domain and characteristics could he better guard against and deal with His believers in the future.

Magician fell silent for several seconds, so silent that even a Beyonder as bold as Lumian couldn't help but feel his heart race.

Eventually, she let out a sigh and remarked, “Actually, I have mentioned that evil god to you.”

“Huh?” Lumian had no impression of such a thing.

Madam Magician fell silent for a few seconds before saying, “I've told you before, Mr. Fool is facing off against an ancient deity. This outcome holds the power to shape our destinies and determine whether our world can survive the impending apocalypse.

“That ancient deity is known as the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings.”

“It's actually Mr. Fool's enemy...” Lumian hadn't anticipated such a revelation.

Me branded by Mr. Fool... Aurore, possibly brought to this world by the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings... Loki and his associates, who are devout followers of the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, sold the Soul Summoning Spell to Aurore, triggering a series of catastrophic events... Mr. Fool is in direct opposition to the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings...

A torrent of information flooded Lumian's mind, leaving him feeling like he was on the verge of unraveling a truth that was still missing crucial details.

Madam Magician pondered for a moment before continuing.

“I've also mentioned that if you address Mr. Fool using anything other than his three-lined honorific name or attempt to invoke him without following the proper ritual, I can't guarantee that he will be the one who responds. It might even lead to perilous encounters.

“Now, I can offer you a clear answer. Under those circumstances, the response you receive could very well be from the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings.”

Praying to Mr. Fool in an incorrect manner might gain a response from the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings... Lumian was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information. His head felt like it was about to burst.

Then, a crucial detail caught his attention.

The title “The King of Yellow and Black” in Mr. Fool's honorific name bore a striking resemblance to Franca's translation of the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings!

With this revelation, a chilling sensation washed over Lumian.

He hesitated for a few seconds before deciding to inquire, “What's the connection between Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings?”

Madam Magician offered a wry smile in response.

“What I know isn't that detailed or precise. For example, after the one the Aurora Order believes in inherited half of the Ancient Sun God's inheritance, the Ancient Sun God was resurrected in some way.”

Lumian grasped the general idea and let out a relieved sigh.

“It seems to mirror Aurore's association with Roche Louise Sanson.”

This facilitated his understanding.

Madam Magician seemed taken aback.

Almost instinctively, she reached out as if attempting to retrieve a drink from thin air, but she restrained herself in the end.

Lumian recounted the entire incident, a hint of pain and deep confusion in his voice.

“What could this Celestial Worthy be planning? Aurore was just a Sequence 7. Even if Roche Louise Sanson and her family are devout followers of Inevitability, they wouldn't be able to do anything of significance...”

Madam Magician sighed once more.

“Perhaps He intends to hasten the arrival of the apocalypse and allow the evil gods beyond the barrier to invade more easily.

“In that case, in order to protect this world and us, its inhabitants, Mr. Fool might consider abandoning the confrontation and permitting the Celestial Worthy's return intact.”

Lumian listened in a daze, a sudden thought racing through his mind.

What would happen if Mr. Fool indeed chose to stop resisting the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings?

Magician didn't delve further into the topic.

“I can't share more information at this moment. In short, pursuing Loki and his associates is both your personal vendetta and a shared mission of our Tarot Club. If you're confident, take action on your own. If not, feel free to seek assistance from other Major Arcana card holders at any time to eliminate the minions of the Celestial Worthy to the best of your ability.”

With that, the woman stood up, and the room suddenly transformed into a celestial spectacle, filled with twinkling stars.

It felt as if Lumian had been transported into the vast and dazzling cosmos.

The stars revolved continuously, as if conveying a message. Madam Magician observed them for a moment before remarking, “It's true that divination doesn't reveal Loki's whereabouts or identity after his resurrection, and the others lack sufficient information.

“Once Hela has organized the relevant data, provide me with a copy.”

Chapter 394 Eye of the Storm

Lumian was also waiting with anticipation for the abandoned April Fool's team members to recall useful details. He nodded and replied, “Got it.”

Madam Magician fixed her gaze on him for a few moments, lost in thought.

“In the future, if I assign you a mission that seems clearly problematic, you have the option to either reject it or discuss it face-to-face with me while discreetly reaching out to other Major Arcana card holders.”

“Why?” Lumian was a little confused.

By doing so, isn't Madam Magician implying that something might happen to her?

Magician chuckled self-deprecatingly.

“Because I'm a high-risk individual, susceptible to the influence of the Celestial Worthy.

“The Celestial Worthy holds the highest position in the Seer, Marauder, and Apprentice pathways. The higher the corresponding Beyonder Sequence, the more susceptible one is to His influence. Everyone carries an Oldest One within them, you see. And as a high-level Beyonder of the Apprentice pathway and a believer in The Fool, it's natural for me to occasionally be led astray, fooled, or deceived by the Celestial Worthy.

“Of course, Mr. Fool himself also stands at the pinnacle of these three pathways, which is why he opposes the Celestial Worthy. So, you need not worry about me. Most of the time, I'm under Mr. Fool's influence. There won't be anything wrong with my condition, but occasional anomalies might occur.”

It's akin to praying without a ritual or invoking a name beyond those three lines; all of that can draw the Celestial Worthy's attention and invite His response, potentially planting hidden dangers... High-ranking individuals in the Seer, Marauder, and Apprentice pathways are closer to the Celestial Worthy and Mr. Fool. Even if one follows all the usual procedures, there's still a chance that something might go wrong... Lumian grasped Madam Magician's instructions before realizing that her words were revealing mysticism information that defied common sense.

Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings could simultaneously hold the pinnacle of three pathways!

Normally, reaching Sequence 0 in a pathway marked one as a true god. So what title did the individual at the peak of three pathways bear? A great existence?

For the first time, Lumian began to comprehend that Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings might surpass even true gods like the Eternal Blazing Sun.

Similarly, Amon's father, the Ancient Sun God, must belong to this echelon. After all, half of His inheritance had given rise to the one the Aurora Order believed in.

Soon, Lumian remembered Madam Magician's distinct descriptions of different deities.

Merely knowing of Their existence and invoking Their honorific names could corrupt certain deities, causing Them to undergo mutations or face peril.

Some deities could be mentioned in general terms, as long as one refrained from uttering Their honorific names beyond the three lines of Beyonder language, thus avoiding attracting Their attention.

This likely represents the division among deities... Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings occupy three neighboring and interchangeable pathways. Is this a hidden requirement for mastering a composite pathway? Lumian dared not probe further, fearing that knowing too much might lead to unintended consequences.

As for Madam Magician belonging to the Apprentice pathway, he had anticipated it. Aurore's grimoires had mentioned that Sequence 9 Apprentices in this pathway excelled at opening doors. Sequence 7s were known as Astrologers, aligning with Madam Magician's usual behavior and her occasional references to “astrology,” “divination,” and “fate.”

“Understood,” Lumian replied. He went on to explain his plan: if he failed to eliminate Loki within two months, he intended to use the Iron and Blood Cross Order's internal processes to relocate from the market district, as well as the problem about concealing the sealed mark on his body.

Magician was very understanding.

“No problem. Although you can also write to me and use yourself as bait, Loki might have the patience to wait a few more months, and I can't always be with you.

“As for the issue of the seal, if you don't actively activate it, only Beyonders of the Seer, Apprentice, and Marauder pathways who believe in the Celestial Worthy can sense it directly. This is different from the uncontrollable aura of the Celestial Worthy.

“If you need something quickly, seek angelic protection from Mr. Fool or write to me. I'll craft a charm that can safeguard secrets.

“That's the best way to manage the Celestial Worthy's aura on the Two of Cups for now. Fortunately, evil gods like the Mother Tree of Desire no longer pay special attention to people like them.”

Lumian breathed a sigh of relief and inquired, “Can I share the information you just mentioned about the Celestial Worthy with the Two of Cups?”

Magician declined his request, explaining, “Her Major Arcana card holder will give her a simplified explanation, but it won't be as clear as what I just said. She doesn't know enough either. If you reveal everything I shared with you, it could put her in danger.”

Lumian didn't press further and watched as Madam Magician used starlight to create a dreamy door. She stepped through it and disappeared.

The room's soundproof glass receded to its original state, and the crimson moonlight poured through the window, casting a glow on the table with the carbide lamp.

Lumian settled by the bed, his mind racing, and he couldn't help but recall Loki's description of his exploits against Aurore.

Taking a deep breath, he decided on his next course of action: digesting the Pyromaniac potion!

Quartier du Jardin Botanique, Rue Pasteur.

As dawn broke, Franca and Jenna made their way back to the market district along this street.

For the time being, Franca hadn't figured out how to broach the subject of the dangerous situation from last night with Jenna. She used the excuse that Jenna's brother was at home and might overhear them, so she decided to delay the conversation until tonight.

When they returned to Avenue du Marché, Jenna waved goodbye and headed towards Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons.

However, before she could enter the modified brick-red three-story building, she noticed graffiti in a corner, almost resembling the work of a child.

It served as a sign that the Purifiers were calling for an urgent meeting, complete with time and location details.

Jenna naturally averted her gaze and entered Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons.

After about fifteen minutes, in her role as the boss's lover, she left through the back door without any hindrance and arrived at a secluded alley near Église Saint-Robert.

Before long, Valentine and Imre appeared.

The former didn't waste time with pleasantries and got straight to the point, asking, "Have you received any news about the terrifying aura from last night?"

Jenna was perplexed.

"What terrifying aura?"

"You didn't sense it?" Imre, who had some Southern Continent heritage, inquired with a furrowed brow. "You didn't experience any nightmares?"

Jenna shook her head.

"I wasn't in the market district last night. I went home to visit my brother."

"Is that so..." Imre examined Jenna's expression and concluded that she was telling the truth.

She genuinely had no knowledge of the terrifying aura.

The two Purifiers briefly recounted the sudden appearance of a terrifying and violent aura on Rue des Blouses Blanches the previous night, urging Jenna to be more vigilant towards anyone displaying unusual behavior lately.

Jenna agreed and asked with curiosity, "Was that aura very noticeable? Why were you able to sense it even from the cathedral?"

"It's hard to describe," Imre admitted. "If you ever have the chance to experience it, you'll understand." He himself couldn't fully grasp the extent of the influence of the terrifying aura.

After bidding farewell to the two Purifiers and returning to Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons, Jenna's thoughts turned to Franca, who had acted strangely last night.

She had cryptically mentioned danger and advised Jenna to go home for a while. Eventually, she had come to share her bed late at night, explaining that something had occurred on Rue des Blouses Blanches and that she couldn't return...

That terrifying aura had appeared on Rue des Blouses Blanches... Jenna nodded, piecing things together.

Meanwhile, Franca finished her coffee and returned to her apartment on Rue des Blouses Blanches, which had returned to its usual state.

However, upon opening the door to Apartment 601, she noticed that the invisible "spider silk" she had concealed in the crack had fallen.

This could only mean one thing—someone had entered!

In the next instant, she spotted someone sitting in her recliner.

It was Gardner Martin, a man with distinct facial features, brownish-red eyes, and a genial demeanor. A few gray strands of hair adorned his temples.

Startled, Franca exclaimed, “Why are you here?”

She was relieved that she hadn't returned with Lumian.

Gardner Martin asked, bemused, “What's your take on the aura from last night?”

“What aura?” Franca was perplexed.

Gardner Martin, dressed in a formal suit without a bow tie, examined Franca closely and explained, “A terrifying aura reeking of blood and rust.”

“When did this happen?” Franca recalled and shook her head. “I was at Jenna's house last night. I wasn't in the market district.”

Gardner Martin nodded slowly and smiled.

“No wonder you didn't sense it.”

Apart from Ciel, Madame Hela, and me dealing with Loki, did anything else happen last night? Franca walked to the coffee table in confusion, picked up her cup, and took a sip of water.

“What happened?”

Gardner Martin stood up and approached the window, looking down at Rue des Blouses Blanches.

“Late last night, a violent and terrifying aura emerged from Building 6 on this street. It lasted nearly ten seconds.”

Building 6... Building 6? Franca nearly choked on her own saliva.

Isn't that the safe house I had rented through a Loen merchant who had already left Trier?

Isn't that where I fought Loki last night?

Could Madame Hela or Loki have caused the commotion?

Or was it Ciel?

Franca quickly regained her composure before Gardner Martin turned around.

She felt as though she had missed many crucial details due to her fainting.

Rue Anarchie, Auberge du Coq Doré.

Lumian, who had just returned from his morning exercises, had just changed into fresh clothes and was making his way to the first-floor hall when he encountered Anthony Reid, who had been deeply engrossed in his investigation regarding General Philip's widow and child.

The Psychiatrist glanced at Lumian and inquired, “What happened in the market district last night? I've had numerous individuals attempting to buy information related to it from me.”

Lumian chuckled.

“Perhaps a strange aura erupted from Rue des Blouses Blanches.”

Chapter 395 Progress on the Other Side

Anthony Reid, the middle-aged psychiatrist, observed Lumian's smile and mused, “Your performance suggests that this matter is personal to you.”

Dammit, you can tell from that? Lumian had thought his smile, expression, and body language appeared normal. His response hadn't been exceptional, but he hadn't made any obvious mistakes.

Anthony Reid continued, “Your smile and actions betrayed a sense of smugness.

“And your reaction tells me this matter is deeply intertwined with you.”

Could it be discerned even without mind reading? It wasn't until that moment that Lumian realized his seemingly ordinary expressions and actions might conceal hidden information in the eyes of a Psychiatrist.

Anthony Reid calmly advised, “I'm telling you directly how I've interpreted your cues. In the future, when you find yourself facing a Psychiatrist and wish to deceive them, it's best to prepare your emotions in advance and mentally rehearse your narrative as if it were genuine.

“If you'd rather not discuss the strange aura on Rue des Blouses Blanches, that's perfectly fine. I don't have the energy to gather information and trade it for money.”

Lumian contemplated Anthony's words and nodded gently. He then inquired, “How's your investigation into General Philip going? Do you require our assistance?”

Anthony Reid glanced around, confirming there were no passersby in the hall at this late hour, and Madame Fels was at a considerable distance. He whispered, “General Philip's widow, child, and his closest friends during his lifetime don't seem to be a concern. They are leading normal lives.

“However, I've discovered that General Philip's widow donates a substantial sum to a charitable organization called Dreamseekers every quarter. The total donation amounts to nearly half of their apparent family assets.”

Lumian pondered for a moment and asked, “Quite generous. What can you tell me about the Dreamseekers charity?”

Anthony Reid replied, “That's the subject of my next investigation. At present, I only know that their mission is to assist talented young individuals who have come to Trier to pursue their dreams but have encountered temporary hardships. They are not affiliated with the two Churches or established by government entities. It's a private charity primarily funded by donations from high society.”

Lumian smiled and issued a warning with a hint of mockery, “Be cautious when delving into the Dreamseekers. Of course, if you happen to be reckless, it won't matter. At the very least, I'm already aware that if you were to suddenly vanish or meet an untimely demise, the source of the trouble likely stems from that charitable organization.”

Anthony Reid stroked his light-yellow hair.

“Don't worry, I'm timid and value my life. I duck for cover at the sound of gunfire. If I ever sense danger, I won't be too proud to seek your assistance. Besides, this is what you promised me.”

Without waiting for a reply, he continued, “Guillaume Bénét's wife has been residing at 20 Rue des Terraces in the library district and hasn't attempted to relocate.

“I've bribed some ordinary folks around her. Recently, they've informed me that a mysterious man occasionally visits her late at night, raising suspicions of an affair.”

Condiment Beauty Paulina... Her decision to stay put on Rue des Terraces likely means she feels more secure now. Combined with the neighborhood rumors, there's a strong likelihood that she has reestablished contact with Bouvard Pont-Péro of the Sinners organization... Lumian smiled once more.

“Instruct your informants to compile a summary of the mysterious man's visitation patterns. This way, we can catch them in the act more precisely.”

It was imperative to apprehend the Sinners' liaison, Bouvard Pont-Péro!

Only then could Lumian hope to trace the Sinners organization and locate Roche Louise Sanson's family.

Initially, he had hoped to start his investigation with the Sanson family name, possibly targeting Jacques Sanson, who had once run for parliament in the market district. However, he soon realized that Sanson was a common surname in Intis, and Jacques Sanson's family connections appeared straightforward. There were no apparent issues on the surface, and there were no reports of disappearances involving his sister, daughter, or other relatives.

After much contemplation, Lumian concluded that, for the time being, his focus needed to shift to the Sinners, an organization dedicated to the belief in Inevitability. His goal was to locate someone connected to the original Aurore's body.

He couldn't shake the feeling that there were still mysteries surrounding Loki and the others who had targeted Aurore. It was impossible that the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings had directly sent a revelation instructing Loki and the others to guide Muggle into using the Soul Summoning Spell on herself, right?

Such a direct involvement didn't align with the typical status of a deity, and considering the Celestial Worthy's ongoing conflict with Mr. Fool, his condition shouldn't be that favorable.

Moreover, Aurore had never participated in the April Fool's team's real-life gatherings. How then could Loki determine that her original body was a follower of an evil god?

Lumian contemplated two possibilities. Either Aurore had long been tormented by Roche Louise Sanson's lingering will and sought help from I Know Someone, inadvertently revealing her secret and drawing their attention, or one of the core members of the April Fool's team had a close connection to the Sinners organization and stumbled upon the matters related to Roche Louise Sanson.

Anthony Reid nodded in approval as he observed Lumian's patience in waiting for the mysterious man who had visited Guillaume Bénét's wife to provide more clues.

Avenue du Marché, Salle de Bal Brise.

Just as Lumian reached the staircase, he spotted Sarkota waiting there.

“The Boss is upstairs,” Sarkota whispered.

He had been a part of Baron Brignais' operation for a long time, but he had no inkling about the true identity of the elusive Boss of the Savoie Mob. By the time Ciel had taken over Salle de Bal Brise, the Boss had made two visits!

What's the Boss doing here? Lumian's mind raced as he quickly recalled the events of the past two days. A rough idea began to form.

Ascending the staircase to the second floor, he spotted Gardner Martin, impeccably dressed in formal attire, sans bow tie, leisurely savoring his coffee.

Gardner Martin put down his cup and asked with a smile, “Where did you go?”

Lumian responded with candor.

“I had a chat with Anthony Reid, the information broker. I assigned him a mission: keeping tabs on the widow of Guillaume Bénét, the enemy I just dispatched, and observing her associates.

“I suspect that Guillaume Bénét might be backed by a secret organization that worships an evil deity.”

Gardner Martin chuckled and remarked, “You're not leaving any room for mercy, are you? You're even more ruthless than I thought. Yes, we can enlist the authorities' assistance to deal with these secret organizations of evil gods.”

Without allowing Lumian a chance to reply, he inquired further, “Did you sense that menacing and terrifying presence last night?”

Lumian nodded honestly.

“I felt it.”

I was present at the scene...

Recalling the sensation coursing through his veins when he resonated with the Blood Emperor's aura, he added,

“Back then, my blood seemed to be on fire.

“I wanted to investigate the origin of that aura, but the official Beyonders were quicker and sealed off Rue des Blouses Blanches.”

Gardner Martin appreciated Lumian's forthrightness.

“When the official Beyonders are less vigilant, pay a visit to 6 Rue des Blouses Blanches and do some digging. You might stumble upon something.”

“Alright,” Lumian agreed readily.

A return to the crime scene promised its own brand of intrigue.

Late at night, 3 Rue des Blouses Blanches, Apartment 601, Franca's room.

Sitting beside the typewriter and radio transceiver, the Demoness of Pleasure perused the information before turning to Jenna, who sat by her bedside.

“The gist of the matter is that Ciel has stumbled upon a new enemy. This guy is a Sequence 5 Marionettist of the Seer pathway, a member of Bureau 8. He's sinister and powerful. Not only did he detect our surveillance, but he also traced us back and launched an ambush...”

Franca skipped over the part about the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society and recounted the entire incident.

In this narrative, Hela's identity had been that of a formidable Beyonder hired through a mysticism gathering.

Franca spread her hands and said, “I was out cold and unaware of the terrifying and violent aura that permeated the scene. When I came to, we were all underground. The Marionettist, who went by the code name Loki, was already dead. Ciel was incinerating his body, and that woman was watching.”

Jenna was astounded by the capabilities and performance of a Marionettist. She tensed, feeling the summer night grow colder.

Seeing Jenna's reaction, Franca seized the moment to add, “But there's something even more chilling!”

She proceeded to recount everything she knew, sending shivers down Jenna's spine. Jenna involuntarily took a few steps closer to Franca.

“Dammit, what else have you guys been up to that I don't know about?” Jenna mustered her courage, spewing out a few choice expletives.

“It's not us, it's Ciel!” Franca was about to delve into the horror when a message crackled through the radio transceiver.

The intricate analyzer automatically translated it, spitting out a piece of paper through a connected mechanical typewriter.

Franca picked it up and saw it was from 007.

“Hidden Blade, do you have any information about the terrifying aura in the market district last night?”

Franca typed out her response,

“I don't reside in the market district. Why would I know anything about it?”

007 quickly replied, “Most of the information you provide and the favors you ask from me are related to or within the vicinity of the market district. If you haven't set foot there in the past six months, I'll eat my own hat!”

Franca chuckled dryly and responded, under Jenna's watchful gaze. "I do have some knowledge about this incident.

"But I can't spill the beans right now. You'll get the scoop at our next gathering."

As Franca conversed with 007, Lumian was resting in Room 207 of the Auberge du Coq Doré.

For the moment, he refrained from finding any acting possibilities. Despite having received treatment from Madame Hela and no longer teetering on the brink of losing control, as well as the auto-recovery at 6 a.m., there were lingering mental issues that required time and rest to slowly mend. Additionally, he needed to wait for Madame Hela to extract "confessions" from the April Fool's team members.

Just before midnight, the pure silver skull emerged from the shadows, its teeth gripping a thick stack of papers.

Chapter 396 Pure Evil

Lumian expressed his gratitude and took the stack of papers. He lit the carbide lamp and quickly skimmed through the "confessions."

Hela had already thoroughly read through them and had made notes on the essential information. This saved Lumian a lot of time. Besides, he didn't know much about the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society's history. If he were the one making the choice, he might struggle to grasp the key points accurately.

After nearly an hour of reading, Lumian had a rough understanding of the overall situation.

"There aren't many April Fool's members, and they don't meet often or play pranks frequently. They mainly operate in three areas: Trier, the coastal province of Gaia in the Feynapotter Kingdom, and the West Balam region of the Southern Continent.

"The core members involved in the gatherings in Trier are Loki, I Know Someone, and Mad Lady.

"In the Gaia Province, during the sea prayer rituals at Port Santa, the April Fool's team members who pulled pranks were Bard, Ultraman, and Mad Lady. Bard and Ultraman incited local college students to march in Torres, the capital of Gaia Province...

"In the pranks that took place in the Southern Continent's West Balam, the core members involved were Hisoka and Mad Lady.

"At a private gathering in Trier, Loki jokingly mentioned that he had inherited an ancient castle.

"At another Trier gathering, I Know Someone suddenly felt inspired and wanted to hypnotize certain psychiatrists to make them 'conceive' a solution to treat certain mental illnesses by destroying the frontal lobe..."

Madam Susie's accusation of malicious treatment that would forever “calm” patients turns out to be a prank by I Know Someone... That's true. Only someone from another world could skip previous speculations and come up with such an idea...

His sole purpose was to see if the psychiatrists of this world were as foolish, bigoted, and despicable as to create an absurd tragedy that would leave a mark on medical history... The dozens or hundreds of patients who had completely lost their “souls” would never expect their tragic encounter to stem from an inhumane prank...

Loki and I Know Someone are worse than I imagined... Lumian couldn't help but shake his head as he read the last page of the “confessions.”

He believed that he had already witnessed the worst side of humanity during his tramp days. People had committed heinous acts for food, to escape trouble, to vent their emotions—they had murdered other tramps, sold companions to the mines while they were asleep, abducted children from the streets, bullied the weak, and humiliated them in various ways. Some had formed gangs and chased away other tramps every day, turning a blind eye to their suffering.

But now, Lumian realized that these evils were clearly inferior to those of Loki, I Know Someone, and the other core members of April Fool's. They were on a whole other level.

“Even demons from the Abyss would have to address them as godfathers when they see them. Compared to them, the padre can be considered a saint,” Lumian muttered, setting fire to these people repeatedly in his mind.

He exhaled and extracted useful information from these “confessions” and Madame Hela's markings.

At least eight members of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society are suspected to have perished as a direct or indirect result of pranks by the April Fool's team...

I Know Someone, like Loki, participates in every private gathering in Trier, but he has never been to Feynapotter's Gaia Province or West Balam. This suggests he likely resides in Trier as well...

Similarly, Bard and Ultraman are suspected to be in Feynapotter's Gaia Province. Hisoka is located in the Southern Continent's West Balam...

Mad Lady participates in private gatherings everywhere, and these gatherings occur within a month after an agreement is made. This implies that Mad Lady has a teleportation-like ability or item...

The joke about Loki inheriting the ancient castle aligns with his dream. Perhaps I can start with investigating the appearance of the ancient castle to find Loki's whereabouts...

I Know Someone displayed extensive medical knowledge at gatherings, not limited to the psychological domain... He was either a formidable general practitioner before transmigrating or possessed the body of a senior doctor. Could such a person be usually a doctor in disguise? He has the qualifications and ability to impersonate and earn a large sum of money...

Bard loves to collect Emperor Roselle's diary pages and mock him in various ways. Could he have written Emperor Roselle's Secret Chronicles?

Ultraman and Hisoka keep a relatively low profile during the gatherings, leaving no details worth pondering...

Based on this information, Lumian finalized his next course of investigation.

Firstly, he wanted to find the ancient castle from Loki's dream. Secondly, he aimed to delve into the medical profession, seeking clues about I Know Someone. Thirdly, he planned to wait for the next gathering to confirm whether the author of Emperor Roselle's Secret Chronicles was among the current Research Society members before pursuing the original author.

As for the others, he would consider them after dealing with these matters and gaining something more valuable.

Lumian summoned the Rabbit of Knowledge and had it copy the information before sending it to Madam Magician.

“What's this?” Jenna looked at the pure silver skull emerging from the darkness, a little afraid to meet the pale-white flames in its eye sockets.

Franca smiled awkwardly and said, “This is the messenger of that formidable lady. She helped us organize the accomplices' statements.”

Franca snatched the thick piece of paper from the skull's mouth, not wanting Jenna to see the firsthand information.

Revealing it would expose the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society!

Jenna looked at the pure silver skull disappearing into the darkness and asked in confusion and curiosity, “What's a messenger?”

“It's like a postman in the world of mysticism. It's a postman for private use,” Franca explained simply.

Jenna shifted her gaze to Franca.

“Do you have one?”

Franca fell silent.

“This can only be obtained by a specific pathway at a specific Sequence or with their help.”

“Oh, you don't...” Jenna deciphered Franca's words.

Intrigued, she asked, “At which Sequence in the Demoness pathway does one need to reach before they can have a messenger?”

Franca fell silent again.

“Not even at Sequence 4 that I know of.”

With that, she muttered under her breath, “You can switch to the Hunter pathway with your provocative abilities.”

Jenna chuckled and thought for a moment.

“The last time I helped Ciel read about spirit world creatures, I seemed to have noticed a description of a few spirit world creatures that said they were 'suitable as messengers.' Can we summon them and sign a messenger contract?”

“No, uh, it's not impossible.” Franca suddenly realized that she could use Mr. Fool's power to summon creatures from the spirit world and ask Him to be a witness to the contract, just like Ciel's contract ability.

Seeing Franca deep in thought, Jenna waited silently.

After a moment, Franca nodded slowly.

“I've come up with an idea. We'll try it later.”

She then said to Jenna, “I'll sort out these statements. Don't stay up too late. You still have to go to Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons tomorrow morning.”

Jenna didn't inquire further and left Franca's bedroom.

Franca let out a sigh of relief and took a telegram that had just been received.

It also came from 007.

“Hidden Blade, when are you moving out of the market district?”

“Ever since you arrived here, all kinds of troubles have been happening one after another. I'm about to become a real 007. I suspect you're the walking source of disaster!”

“Pfft!” Franca spat and muttered to herself, “Is the problem me? It's Ciel!”

Ever since Lumian arrived in the market district, her life hadn't been as leisurely as before.

The incident with Loki had just subsided, and the small cracks on her skin had yet to fully heal. She had to go to Trocadéro tomorrow afternoon to interact with the participants of the Red House Café's female orgy and the woman suspected to be a member of the Demoness Sect.

Around 9 a.m., Lumian, having completed his morning exercise and breakfast, found himself with a rare moment of leisure.

On the Iron and Blood Cross Order's side, he awaited Poufer Sauron's next summoning. Concerning the Sinners organization, he patiently gathered information without alerting the occasional mysterious visitor. Anthony Reid would handle matters related to Hugues Artois, but his assistance wasn't needed yet. It proved challenging to discreetly tail Franca during the Bliss Society investigations as she needed to make contact with the Demoness Sect. Lumian had leads on Loki's ancient castle and I Know Someone, but lacked a clear breakthrough.

After careful consideration, Lumian decided that acting as a Pyromaniac was the best course of action. However, the market district was in a delicate state, closely monitored by numerous high-ranking individuals. Finding a safe opportunity was crucial.

Should I take the opportunity to report to Mr. K and inquire if he has a suitable mission for me to act as a Pyromaniac... Lost in thought, he walked past the Salle de Gristmill on Rue Anarchie's other side.

The establishment was under Lumian's ownership, currently overseen by the bounty hunter Lugano Toscano and Louis of the Savoie Mob.

After a brief moment of reflection, Lumian decided to enter the Salle de Gristmill.

The dance hall was closed at that time, and every waiter greeted Lumian respectfully but kept their distance.

Lumian quickly spotted Lugano Toscano, the well-built bounty hunter with sharp features, thick eyebrows, and large eyes. He was dressed in a simple formal suit and a black top hat.

Holding a magazine, he smiled at Lumian. "Boss, what brings you here?"

Lumian didn't respond immediately. His attention was drawn to the magazine in Lugano's hand. "What magazine are you reading?"

"Basics of Medicine," Lugano replied, displaying the book.

Basics of Medicine... Lumian's eyebrows twitched. "Why are you reading such books?"

He could understand if it was the First Aid Manual.

Lugano smiled and explained, "My next Sequence is Doctor. Although the potion will directly grant me corresponding Beyonder powers, having more medical knowledge will enhance my abilities. Plus, I aim to pose as a genuine doctor to earn some extra income."

Stumbling on the acting method coincidentally... Doctor... Lumian's heart stirred as he asked, "Have you ever heard of frontal lobe removal surgery?"

Chapter 397 Execution Ground

Lugano cast a puzzled glance at Lumian.

"You've heard about this surgery too?"

After a moment of thought, he forced a smile.

"As expected of you. You're knowledgeable and have a wide range of interests. You even know about such cutting-edge surgeries."

"Seems like you know a lot," Lumian brushed off Lugano's ingratiating.

Lugano nodded quickly.

"I've read in several magazines that doctors believe the essence of such surgery is to destroy the patient's brain, and it's irreversible. In other words, while it appears to cure the patient's madness, it leaves him with lower intelligence and eternally calm, devoid of emotional fluctuations.

“They believe that if we don't use this surgery, there's still a chance of recovery from the madness through other methods, but once they become stupid, there's no hope of recovery.”

Intis still has many doctors with high academic standards who dare to speak the truth. Their professional ethics aren't bad either... Lumian nodded inwardly.

After confirming that Lugano had a certain understanding of the medical world, he casually asked, “Any strange medical cases recently?”

Lugano pondered for a moment and slowly shook his head.

“Nothing out of the ordinary.”

Just as Lumian was about to change the subject, Lugano added, “If you insist on something strange, there's a folklore that's been trending on a small scale recently.”

“Medical-related folklore?” Lumian discerned the underlying meaning in Lugano's words.

Lugano, with his brown hair and eyes, replied with a smile, “Sort of.

“It's probably because a group of Trier citizens believe that the blood shed by a death row inmate carries the last vestiges of life's resilience. If you eat some bread dipped in it, it can treat various illnesses. This infuriated many medical columnists, who called it a retro, bloody, and foolish act. In comparison, going to the cathedral to seek protection might be more effective.”

“Why haven't I heard of such folklore?” Lumian found the Trier citizens' actions indescribable. They weren't just foolish.

Lugano chuckled.

“Boss, that's normal. I've never heard of it before either. It's a folklore that only appeared in the past two to three months. Perhaps it's brought about by some foreigners. More and more people are believing it.”

Lumian chatted with the bounty hunter, who had saved up to purchase the Doctor main ingredient, for a while longer, gaining a vague understanding of Trier's medical world.

Shortly before noon, having filled his stomach, he turned onto Rue des Blouses Blanches and entered Apartment 3.

Throughout this process, Lumian didn't conceal his curiosity. He carefully examined 6 Rue des Blouses Blanches, but found no traces.

He knocked on Apartment 601's door and tossed the Lie earring to Franca, whose flaxen-colored hair was tied up in a simple ponytail.

This companion had to interact with the Demoness Sect in the afternoon again. She had to revert to her previous appearance.

“What took you so long?” Franca precisely caught the silver earring. “Didn't you receive the information from Madame Hela? I've been waiting for you to come and discuss it.”

A soft chuckle escaped Lumian's lips.

“Why are you even more anxious than me?”

After closing the door, he sat on the sofa and recounted the key information and corresponding guesses he had extracted from the information. Franca chimed in from time to time, offering her opinions.

Towards the end, Lumian recounted the bounty hunter Lugano Toscano's description of Trier's medical world and the strange folklore.

Franca's expression turned odd.

“Is there a problem?” Lumian wasn't alarmed but delighted.

Franca confirmed succinctly, “The rumor that eating bread stained with the blood of death row inmates can treat illnesses is very similar to ancient folklore back home, but that was many years ago. Ever since education was made universal, such folklore has basically disappeared.

“In the original folklore, steamed buns dyed red by the blood of death row inmates could treat severe lung ailments, provided they were eaten while they were still hot.”

Lumian raised his right eyebrow.

He had found the strange folklore giving him an indescribable feeling.

It felt like a prank!

This was the style of April Fool's!

“I Know Someone came up with it?” Lumian suddenly felt a surge of excitement.

A Psychiatrist capable of hypnosis could make such folklore appear and spread without anyone knowing!

Franca nodded solemnly.

“I Know Someone is also from your sister's and my homeland. Otherwise, your sister wouldn't have trusted him and sought treatment for her psychological problems.

“His code name and the language he knows bear witness to this. Besides him and Black Earth, the other members of April Fool's might not be aware of that ancient folklore.”

“Loki doesn't know either?” Lumian asked in surprise.

“I'm not sure.” Franca frowned. “I'm not familiar with him, and he has never revealed his identity as a fellow countryman. If he hadn't recited the four-lined honorific name in the language of your sister and me, I wouldn't have known that he knew it. I

always thought that their team's Emperor Roselle diary entries were translated by I Know Someone and Black Earth.”

A mischievous grin curved Lumian's lips.

“If it's really a folklore prank created by I Know Someone, I'll go to the execution ground in the prison district and watch.”

The prison district, also known as Quartier du Red Hat, officially numbered 4, was one of the oldest urban districts. It boasted Intis's most renowned prison, Saint-Maar Prison, hence the district's name.

Near Saint-Maar Prison stood one of Trier's busiest execution grounds—Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground.

“Be careful. Psychiatrists are more cautious than Marionettists,” Franca warned.

Although I Know Someone wasn't a Beyonder of the Seer, Marauder, or Apprentice pathways and couldn't discover the seal on Lumian's body even if he believed in the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, Lumian still felt that he couldn't be careless. He got back the Lie earring and briefly changed his appearance. He was worried that the resurrected Loki had already communicated with I Know Someone about his and Franca's real appearance.

Franca took back the Lie earring and asked curiously, “What was up with that terrifying aura from that day?”

Lumian chuckled.

“We'll need to start with Madame Hela and me searching for the Samaritan Women's Spring.”

“...” Franca was taken aback for a moment before cursing. “Dammit! How many details did you leave out?”

“It depends on when it comes up.” Lumian briefly mentioned how the Blood Emperor's aura had corroded his flesh.

Franca had already forgotten her anger. She carefully observed Lumian's raised right palm and finally noticed the indistinct marks that seemed to have been squeezed beyond recognition.

“Wow, you actually have the aura of a true god on you. Although it's just an empty shell, it's still the aura of a true god. Furthermore, it's a true god of the same pathway.” Franca sighed enviously, wishing she could have one for herself.

She then looked at Lumian's bandaged left hand.

“What's on this one?”

“Nothing. It's just to attract attention,” Lumian replied with a smile.

Franca was stunned for two seconds.

“You're so sinister! If you advance to a Conspirer, your digestion speed will definitely be very fast!”

“I hope the outcome is as good as your blessings,” Lumian replied without modesty.

In the afternoon, Lumian took a public carriage to the north bank of the Srenzo River and arrived at the Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground in the prison district.

One of Trier's citizens' hobbies was watching the execution of criminals. Although it wasn't the weekend, there were still many people gathered here. There were even many vendors setting up stalls or traversing among them, hawking food and drinks.

Among them, there was no shortage of gorgeously dressed street girls seeking business, as well as a group of authors who had deliberately come to take a stroll.

If not for the name “Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground” written at the intersection and the gallows and beheading platform standing in the distance, Lumian would have suspected that he had come to the wrong place and entered a nearby market. It was bustling and noisy.

Stepping on the muddy ground, Lumian concealed himself in the crowd and circled the execution ground as if he were strolling through a market.

He didn't spot anyone suspicious, but he saw a dozen or so men and women with bread in their hands crowding in front. Their clothes were old, and some of them could be considered crude.

After a while, the crowd suddenly stirred, squeezing to the sides of the road leading to the execution ground to welcome the procession from Saint-Maar Prison.

Lumian didn't join in the bustle, but he heard cheers, whistles, and women shouting, “I'm willing to marry you.”

The latter wasn't a proposal, but a jest about past folklore. In the classical era before Emperor Roselle, if a death row inmate received a proposal while walking from prison to the execution ground and he agreed, he would receive a change in sentence and survive. However, not all death row inmates would accept it. Some valued looks very much, while others had dignity. They all chose death to uphold their ideals.

The two most renowned cases involved a handsome death row inmate who rejected the proposal of a woman, believing her appearance to be a nightmare. On the other hand, a beautiful girl, faced with an executioner's courtship, gave up the opportunity to save herself, believing it was an insult to love and marriage.

Lumian squeezed into the front row of onlookers and saw two death row inmates standing at the firing point.

They were relatively young, no more than 30 years old. They wore standard prison uniforms—red short shirts, yellow pants, and green hats. Their feet dragged iron balls, and their hands were tied behind their backs with iron chains.

One of the men had black hair and blue eyes, while the other had brown hair and brown eyes. They were good-looking, but their gazes were filled with hatred.

Upon seeing the execution gunmen reach their designated positions and raise their rifles, the two death row inmates shouted, "Long live freedom!"

"Return to glory!"

After shouting, the two of them glared at each other angrily and collapsed amidst the gunshots, blood gushing out.

The people holding the bread were excited, but they were stopped by the soldiers in front of them and couldn't rush to the firing point.

Once the condition of the two death row inmates was confirmed, the soldiers left in formation. The bread-wielding citizens charged towards the blood-stained soil.

Lumian didn't look at them. Instead, he observed his surroundings to see who was enjoying this absurd comedy.

Chapter 398 Human Blood Bread

Some of the citizens of Trier were curious and began asking around for the reason behind the commotion, while others watched with excitement. Lumian couldn't discern who was genuinely enjoying the prank's results and who was simply caught up in the fun.

This was a part of Trier's folklore. Lumian believed that even a formidable, higher-Sequence psychiatrist like Madam Susie wouldn't be able to pinpoint the source of the commotion, identify the prankster, or distinguish the intentional misguidance from the innocent bystanders.

Although Lumian had anticipated this, he couldn't help but let out a sigh.

"You Trierians..."

No wonder the April Fool's team held their private gatherings here. It was like a homecoming.

Lumian abandoned his observations and casually singled out a middle-aged man who was using rye bread to soak up the blood left behind by the death row inmates. He waited until the man made a dash for an exit of the Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground before quietly following behind.

In a secluded alley devoid of barricades, Lumian took a few steps forward, blocking the path of the middle-aged man in a tattered linen shirt.

Raising his bandaged left palm, Lumian inquired, as if he were a mobster giving a condescending glance to an ordinary citizen.

"What have you got there?"

The gaunt middle-aged man with short black hair replied timidly, "It's bread stained with the blood of death row inmates."

"And what's the purpose of this?" Lumian adopted the tone of a curious monster with a touch of intrigue.

The middle-aged man's fear was palpable.

"I-It can treat illnesses."

“Who told you it could treat illnesses?” This was Lumian's main question.

The middle-aged man answered in a daze, “I heard it from Guillaume, who lives across the street. He said that his coworker's child got better after eating this kind of human blood bread.”

The child of a coworker's neighbor... Lumian regarded it as nothing more than a rumor. Tracing its origin would be challenging.

He studied the middle-aged man clutching the blood-stained bread and asked with contemplation, “Is someone in your family sick too?”

“Yes.” The middle-aged man instantly looked downtrodden and filled with despair.

He glanced at the blood-stained bread in his hand, a glimmer of hope in his eyes.

Lumian remained silent for a moment before responding, “What did the doctor say?”

The middle-aged man lowered his head slightly, his gaze fixed on the blood bread.

“He said there's no cure, and I don't have the money to...”

Lumian didn't press further. He turned silently, allowing the middle-aged man to pass through the barricade with his blood-soaked bread and continue down the secluded alley.

He moved slowly, retracing his steps back to the Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground, and noticed that the “market” was still in full swing. Many citizens had taken advantage of the situation to have picnics, sing, and dance, turning it into an impromptu gathering.

Lumian took cover behind the trees on the edge of the square, sitting in the shadows, and continued to silently observe the people coming and going.

As time passed, the bustling “market” in the execution ground gradually quieted down. The sun had dipped below the horizon, casting the surroundings into darkness.

Lumian remained hidden, keeping an eye on the departing citizens and vendors. However, he didn't identify any suspicious individuals.

With the arrival of the dark night, the Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground was deserted, bathed in the eerie light of the crimson moon. Lumian slowly rose to his feet, preparing to depart.

Suddenly, he caught sight of a dark figure leaping over the side fence and swiftly infiltrating the execution ground.

Lumian froze and pressed further into the shadows of the tree.

The slender figure, adorned with a top hat, made his way to the area where the death row inmates had met their end. He knelt down, reached out, and collected the soil stained with their blood.

Could this person also believe in the healing properties of death row inmates' blood? His actions and agility suggest he might be a Beyonder... Lumian silently watched the mysterious figure.

Before long, the tall, thin figure in the top hat straightened up, holding a mound of blood-soaked soil.

Rather than immediately leaving the Rois execution grounds, he ventured deeper, heading towards the gallows.

Under the crimson moonlight, the figure buried the blood-stained soil beneath the gallows. He seemed to scrutinize the plants growing there, as if searching for something.

In Trocadéro Town, inside the Red House Café with its vibrant mushroom-like roof,

Franca, sporting black hair, brown eyes, and hunting attire, placed her dinner order: beef seasoned with coarse salt, red wine, fries, Feysac omelet, quail bisque with a few slices of ham.

Earlier that afternoon, she had engaged in a lively conversation with a group of ladies and could sense the longing and desire in their eyes.

Simultaneously, she felt someone secretly observing her, prompting her to stay until nightfall.

As Franca neared the end of her dinner, a woman descended from the second floor.

It was the Demoness who had tailed Franca previously. Today, her long orange-red hair cascaded down her back, and she wore a white man's shirt, brown dungarees, and dark brown boots that accentuated her perfect figure. Her appearance was exquisite and clean, with an aura that was both pure and slightly wild.

Without hesitation, the woman, presumably a member of the Demoness Sect, walked straight toward Franca, pulled out a chair, and sat opposite her.

Franca deliberately assessed the Demoness's appearance and figure with a masculine gaze. She smiled and watched as the woman sat down, waiting for her to speak.

“Why are you here again?” the orange-red-haired Demoness inquired, studying Franca closely.

Franca smiled and replied, “Trocadéro Wine is my favorite wine. The scenery and atmosphere here are quite appealing.”

Noticing the Demoness's disbelief, Franca added with a sly smile, “Besides, I've heard...”

She lowered her voice and insinuated, “There are female orgies here.”

The eyes of the Demoness with long orange-red hair flickered.

“Who told you that?”

Franca looked at the Demoness's face and said provocatively, “Once, I encountered a nymphomaniac who tried to ambush me, but I handled him. He claimed to be a peripheral member of an organization called the Bliss Society. The core members of this organization are lesbians, and they are trying to connect with participants in the female orgies at the Red House Café, looking to recruit new members.”

Franca wasn't sure if the Demoness Sect had any ties to the Bliss Society. After all, it wasn't inconceivable for organizations worshipping evil gods to form alliances to some extent, similar to how Hugues Artois had numerous heretics under his influence. Therefore, she “confessed” this information to gauge the reaction of the person sitting across from her.

As she spoke, she prepared herself for any potential surprise attacks.

The Demoness with long orange-red hair's expression shifted slightly, becoming more serious.

The hostility and wariness in her eyes diminished, but there was a clear sense of repulsion.

Oh, does she view the participants of these female gatherings as her lovers and is unwilling to let me, possibly once a man, near them? Franca couldn't help but mimic Lumian's tone inwardly and playfully tease.

She was reasonably certain that the other party had never heard of the Bliss Society, but she had detected some signs.

The Demoness sitting across from Franca fell into deep thought, appearing to consider a potential issue.

After more than ten seconds, she unconsciously brushed back her long orange-red hair and asked cautiously, "Are you here to investigate the Bliss Society, or are you interested in joining the orgy?"

Franca's laugh drew astonished looks from the surrounding customers, who were clearly taken aback by her stunning expression.

"Both," Franca replied, meeting the orange-red eyes of the Demoness. "But if I had to choose, I'd prefer attending the orgy. How can people like us resist such a tempting party? Wouldn't you agree?"

In this way, Franca subtly indicated that she had deduced that the other person was also a Demoness and likely a former male Assassin.

She also hinted at her own history as a man to deter any sudden attacks.

The Demoness, now dressed as a man, seemed to resist this notion but remained silent, clearly captivated by Franca's presence and aura.

Leaning forward, Franca asked in a more masculine tone, "What should I call you?"

The Demoness hesitated briefly before responding somberly, "I'm Browns Sauron. And you?"

Sauron... Another member of the Sauron family? Franca suddenly recalled that Lumian's recent mission under the Iron and Blood Cross Order involved interactions with members of the Sauron family.

She didn't conceal her true name and smiled. "Franca Roland."

Browns Sauron let out a silent sigh and continued, "Our party places great importance on the privacy and safety of all members. We can't allow problematic individuals to join. If you're truly interested, you'll need to undergo an audit."

Franca didn't mind at all. She toyed with the buttons on her shirt and inquired with a grin, "So, where should we start this audit?"

Prison district, Rois Comprehensive Execution Ground.

Under the crimson moonlight, the tall, slender figure in the top hat carefully unearthed a few handfuls of weeds from the ground beneath the gallows.

The roots of these weeds emitted an eerie, blood-red glow, appearing especially otherworldly in the moon's dim light.

This tall, thin figure had a prominent nose bridge, fair skin, and impeccably groomed medium-length black hair. His eyes were a striking shade of red, and he possessed a certain androgynous allure.

Clad in a white shirt, a vibrant red bow tie, and a sleek black suit, he gazed with fascination at the peculiar weeds in his hand. He was on the verge of rising to leave the execution grounds.

However, at that very moment, a curious male voice broke the silence.

“What are you digging?”

The lanky figure, who had been crouched beneath the gallows, looked up in astonishment. To his surprise, he realized that, at some unnoticeable point in time, a figure had materialized before him, peering down with a penetrating gaze.

This new arrival had blond hair and eyes as blue as serene lakes. He wore a simple white shirt and a black vest, giving him a youthful and refreshing appearance.

How did he manage to approach me without detection? I didn't pick up on any scent or movement! The lanky figure's heart raced with alarm and trepidation.

Chapter 399 Mandrake

The lanky figure, though startled, sprang into action.

In a swift motion, he launched a powerful kick with his knee, lunging at Lumian, leaving only a blur behind.

Rather than reaching out with his right hand, which was gripping the strange weeds, he extended his nails, etched with mystical symbols and patterns, appearing hard and razor-sharp.

Darkness surrounding Lumian seemed to awaken, converging into pitch-black chains that aimed to ensnare him in place.

Lumian's gaze remained resolute as he observed the rapidly approaching figure. He emitted a soft harrumph.

Two beams of brilliant white light shot forth from his nostrils, striking the target before he could evade in time.

The tall, slender figure suddenly crumpled to the ground, unconscious.

The illusory chains, formed from darkness, disintegrated into nothingness.

Lumian, donning a different visage, grinned and shook his head. “You actually opted for an attack rather than fleeing.”

Utilizing spirit world traversal, he teleported to close the distance with his target discreetly, preventing him from sensing the impending danger. When they were within mere meters of each other, escape or counterattack became impossible. At worst, both parties would sustain injuries. Hence, Lumian still had time for a “greeting.” If the other party cooperated and answered civilly, there might be no need for a confrontation.

It was akin to a phrase frequently espoused by the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society:

Encouraging compliance through good morals!

Lumian carefully observed for a few moments and confirmed that the tall, thin figure had indeed fainted.

He bent down to examine the peculiar blood-red rooted weeds. Apart from their extraordinary spiritual properties, they seemed rather ordinary.

After some contemplation, Lumian hoisted the unconscious figure and shook him vigorously.

As the target began to stir, Lumian released his grip and stepped back.

Based on the previous skirmish, Lumian suspected that the other party was a Mid-Sequence Beyonder from the Apothecary pathway, specifically Sequence 7, known as Vampire. This meant that any human who consumed the corresponding potion to advance would eventually undergo a transformation into another species.

Aurore possessed substantial knowledge about Vampires' characteristics and abilities, as the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society included two individuals known as Sanguines, one of whom bore the code name "Headmaster."

Hence, Lumian deduced the target's identity based on his swift reflexes, formidable nails, and the dark shackles-like spells he wielded.

Since he wasn't a Psychiatrist and didn't possess any similar items, they weren't truly enemies. The best course of action was to engage in a friendly and cooperative conversation.

As soon as the lanky figure regained consciousness, he sprang to his feet and scanned his surroundings with a wary gaze. His eyes fell upon a blond youth standing by the gallows, dressed in a crisp outfit and wearing a friendly smile.

Instinctively, he considered launching an attack, but a rational thought held him back.

The other party had clearly demonstrated the ability to subdue him effortlessly, with the power to end his life or sell him at any moment. However, instead of harm, he had chosen to awaken him!

This implied an absence of immediate malice. Moreover, it indicated a profound confidence in his own capabilities, as if he were unafraid of any resistance or escape.

The lanky figure recalled the other party's sudden appearance and the peculiar white beams. He couldn't help but feel that even if the barons or even viscounts from his family were to confront him, the outcome wouldn't be so swift and one-sided.

Coupled with his ignorance of the two white beams' nature and the corresponding pathway, he suspected that the individual before him had surpassed his expectations in terms of Sequence.

"What do you want?" the lanky figure inquired in a deep voice.

Lumian remained composed, ready to employ the Spell of Harrumph if necessary.

"Are you a Vampire?"

"Sanguine," the lanky figure emphasized.

Lumian cast his eyes skyward at the crimson moon and inquired with a smile, "Which family?"

Though he possessed no knowledge of the numerous Vampire families or the renowned last names, it didn't prevent him from assuming the role of an ancient being, wise and well-traveled.

Sensing the fear in the lanky figure's demeanor, Lumian seized the opportunity to play this role, drawing inspiration from figures like the ancient monster Amon, who had lived for eons.

"I hail from the Bruch family," the tall, slender figure declared with pride. "My name is La Nou Bruch."

What kind of family is this? I've never heard of them... Lumian nodded slightly and said, "Ah, the Bruch family."

He glanced at the strange weed in La Nou's hand. "What is this?"

"It's Mandrake," La Nou responded truthfully, believing that such a potent Beyonder wouldn't have much interest in a plant primarily used for spiritual purposes.

You mustn't merely answer my questions one by one. Be proactive and provide context and your reasons for being here. How can I maintain my image like this? Lumian chided him internally as he thought rapidly.

"Did you come specifically to retrieve it because this herb holds unique significance for you?"

La Nou hesitated for a moment before succumbing to his fear.

"Yes, the lotion made from it can help me withstand the spirituality surge during the full moon."

Spirituality surge... Lumian recalled some details from Aurore's grimoires: The Headmaster of the Academy team had sought a solution to the spirituality surge during the full moon within the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, but had found none.

According to Sanguine accounts, after the awakening of the Ancestor of the ancient species a few years ago and Her reclamation of authority from the Evernight Goddess, all Sanguines had become unstable during the full moon.

This wasn't the madness that afflicted the Mutants, but a form of sublimation. Nevertheless, the sudden surge in spirituality, akin to a rising tide, placed a substantial burden on the Vampires' bodies. Some experienced hallucinations or unnecessary danger due to their heightened spiritual perception during this period.

Lumian regarded La Nou with interest and asked, "Mandrake can suppress the spirituality surge during the full moon?"

"The few Sanguines I've encountered seem to be unaware of this."

The entire Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society was unaware!

La Nou didn't hide his smugness.

“I believe I may be the first to have made this discovery. Mandrake is a plant that thrives beneath the corpses of hanged individuals. It appears to draw power from some sort of earthbound divine influence.”

Spiritual plants associated with the earth domain? Lumian inquired thoughtfully, “How did you stumble upon this revelation?”

Observing that such a formidable Beyonder was ignorant of the origins and applications of Mandrake, La Nou's smile broadened.

“At first, there were rumors circulating about the plants that grew beneath the bodies of the hanged being able to treat various ailments. Given that every Sanguine is an Apothecary, I couldn't entirely dismiss these rumors. So, I decided to give it a shot. I crafted a Mandrake lotion and found that it remarkably suppressed spirituality fluctuations.”

Rumor... Rumors once again... Lumian suppressed his frown.

“Do you happen to know where these rumors originated?”

“I'm afraid not,” La Nou replied with a shake of his head. “In Trier, rumors abound. For example, in recent months, I was concerned that the reckless harvesting of Mandrake by uninformed citizens might disrupt its growth. However, new rumors have surfaced, with people now chasing after blood-soaked soil from death row inmates.”

“It's indeed a challenge to trace the origins of rumors in Trier,” Lumian remarked, a touch of resignation in his voice.

“Why did you bring soil stained with the blood of a death row inmate to the gallows?”

La Nou proudly displayed his findings.

“I've discovered that Mandrake flourishes beneath the bodies of hanged individuals. While it's most effective, hanging people isn't a common occurrence. However, by using the blood of other death row inmates to nourish it, Mandrake can still grow. Although it's not as potent, it gets the job done.”

Lumian nodded thoughtfully, considering another aspect of the issue.

“Who initially gave the Mandrake its name? Wasn't it merely a rumor in the beginning?”

When it came to topics within his apparent “profession,” La Nou spoke confidently.

“This plant has borne its name for quite some time, though no one had discovered its medicinal value until now. It was primarily utilized as a spiritual ingredient and as a component in certain spells...”

At this juncture, La Nou suddenly fell into a momentary stupor.

“Why haven't my ancestors, the illustrious Apothecaries, attempted to concoct lotions with Mandrake? They aren't confined to traditional knowledge; they explore ingredients based on principles and develop new lotions...”

“Perhaps they did try, but there was no spiritual surge in those times?”

Could it be that Mandrake possessed some mystical power triggered by the spirituality surge accompanying the full moon? Lumian, not being an Apothecary or a Mysticologist, couldn't arrive at a conclusive answer. All he could do was speculate based on La Nou's musings.

He changed the subject.

“Why did you refrain from reporting the Mandrake's utility to your elders? It could hold great significance for the entire Sanguine community.”

La Nou stammered, “There are still some issues with the lotions I've crafted. I'm uncertain if the toxicity of Mandrake can be entirely neutralized. I plan to verify this before informing the higher-ups. Only then can I have a clear chance at ascending to the rank of baron.”

“What issues have you encountered?” Lumian queried, part-curious and partly assisting the Headmaster of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society.

La Nou adjusted his long, black hair and expressed his concerns with a mix of confusion and apprehension.

“Whenever I consume the various Mandrake-based lotions, it's akin to ingesting poisonous mushrooms. I witness an abundance of flowers blooming on the ground, with countless tiny figures dancing amidst them. I find myself covered in mushrooms.

“The illusions vary somewhat each time, but recurring elements persist.”

Could it be that your preemptive entry into the illusion mitigates the adverse effects of your spirituality surge state? Is that why you believe Mandrake can suppress this phenomenon? Lumian silently pondered.

Without further ado, he activated his spirit world traversal ability and vanished from La Nou's view.

A Sequence 5 Traveler or an item of similar nature? La Nou heaved a sigh of relief, hazarding a rough guess as to why the other party could appear beside him before he could react.

Coupled with the strange white beams, such a figure was undoubtedly formidable below the demigod level.

Chapter 400 Transferring Burdens

The street lamps outside the window had already lit up. Franca gazed at Browns Sauron and spoke, “I've already mentioned my name. I reside in the market district and hold a significant position within the Savoie Mob. That's all I can reveal. You're free to investigate me as you wish. In any case, I have two objectives. Firstly, I intend to probe into the Bliss Society and eliminate any hidden threats. Secondly, I plan to take the opportunity to gain insight into the female gathering.”

Franca couldn't help but smile at her last statement.

Her strategy for the day involved connecting with people genuinely—a tactic she had devised with Lumian. If the Demoness at the Red House Café approached her, she would “confess” her intentions and assess if the other party had any ties to the Bliss Society.

Franca had even discussed specific details with Anthony Reid, a Psychiatrist, to prevent herself from reacting excessively. If that happened, it could do more harm than good.

According to Anthony Reid's suggestion, she was “candid,” but not completely forthcoming. Revealing that she was once a man, had transformed into a Demoness of Pleasure, and was infiltrating the Savoie Mob to join the Iron and Blood Cross Order and eventually return to her original gender would not only fail to gain trust but also raise suspicions of ulterior motives due to her excessive honesty.

Thus, she only disclosed her identity and primary motives on the surface, leaving the rest hidden in the details, allowing the other party to uncover and investigate on their own.

Information gathered through effort was much more credible than mere words!

Browns Sauron fixed his gaze on Franca's eyes and remarked, “With the strength you've demonstrated, why limit yourself to being a mob leader?”

“For something of great importance, I believe you would have done the same,” Franca replied cryptically, hinting that she had also discerned the other party's path, approximate Sequence, and original circumstances.

With that, she raised her hand to touch the silver-white earring fastened to her right earlobe and added with a grin, “I forgot to mention that this isn't my true appearance. My disguise is quite effective. Otherwise, why did you lose track of me the last time?”

Browns glanced at the silver earring, nodding in comprehension.

Instead of delving deeper into Franca's identity, the conversation shifted toward the topic of the Bliss Society.

Franca could discern that the Demoness placed significant importance on the Red House Café's female orgies and was cautious about any organizations or individuals with hidden agendas.

Are you telling me that you genuinely form romantic connections with some of the participants in these orgies and have developed feelings for them? If this continues, you're bound to encounter trouble sooner or later. It's perfectly natural to have emotions, but seeking them in such gatherings is a sign of a narrow perspective... Can't you completely separate the spiritual from the physical? When there's too much spiritual connection, the desire for physical intimacy grows. Conversely, with too much physical intimacy, it's inevitable for souls to draw closer... As an observer, Franca offered her critique of Browns Sauron's situation, drawing from the knowledge and experiences of two lifetimes that had led to her philosophical reflections.

This insight allowed her to grasp her first principle as a Demoness of Pleasure to some extent.

She didn't withhold any information. On the one hand, she suspected that the Demoness Sect had fostered such an “innocent” and emotionally driven Demoness because they had their sights set on

the Sauron family. On the other hand, she recounted the general activities and abilities of the Bliss Society.

Upon hearing the name “Sex Addict” and its corresponding behavior, Browns Sauron's expression grew serious and cautious.

Franca knew when to conclude the conversation. She finished her after-dinner liqueur, rose gracefully, put on her blue bonnet, and departed from the Red House Café.

As she entered the rental carriage and returned to the market district, her mind raced, analyzing potential vulnerabilities.

I need to persuade Jenna to move out. But having her stay in my apartment might reveal my true gender. I must remind her not to display her Assassin and Instigator abilities for the time being...

The issue with Ciel is that if Browns Sauron and Poufer Sauron frequently interact, they might discover that the affluent merchant's generous scion is, in reality, the leader of the market district's mob, exposing the Iron and Blood Cross Order's hidden agenda. Yes, Browns is affiliated with the Demoness Sect and doesn't share the same interests as the Sauron family. There is a significant likelihood that she would conceal this fact and exploit it...

Browns is brimming with emotions. Is she preparing for the “affliction” of a Sequence 5?

“...”

Rue du Rossignol, market district.

Lumian “teleported” back to his safe house.

While waiting for Franca to return Lie to him and allow him to revert to his original appearance, he contemplated the rumors circulating about the human blood bread.

It would have been manageable if I had discovered it from the outset, but now it's already widely believed. Hundreds or perhaps thousands of people have bought into it. Tracing it back to the source will be extremely challenging. Moreover, even if I locate the origin, the person responsible may be filled with false information and unable to identify their source... Finding a skilled Psychiatrist who can hypnotize people is quite a task...

The Mandrake rumor La Nou Bruch had heard appears suspicious...

After careful consideration, Lumian decided not to dwell on it. He would report it to Madam Magician and explore the possibility of hiring someone like Madam Susie or even a high-ranking Psychiatrist such as Madam Justice to investigate the source of the rumors.

They were experts in similar operations and possessed all the abilities of “I Know Someone,” and even more!

The matter concerning the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings was a shared mission of the Tarot Club.

Likewise, Lumian intended to burden the Major Arcana card holders with the other clue. Given his abilities, it was practically impossible for him to investigate it further.

He believed that since Loki was operating within Bureau 8, there was a chance he had either subtly influenced some of his colleagues or been discovered by them. All these were potential leads.

However, based on his experiences dealing with a Marionettist, Lumian recalled the events at the Alone Bar and the puppet show in the basement. It wasn't as murky as he had initially thought. It exuded an aura of malevolence, obscurity, and terror, and he could distinctly perceive the tangible danger concealed within the various details.

He suspected that most of the spectators at the marionette theater were, in fact, marionettes themselves, fitting the bar's name: Alone!

It seemed that there was only one living person amidst the marionettes!

Of course, this was somewhat exaggerated. It was evident that a few Bureau 8 members were working as bartenders and waitstaff at the Alone Bar, including Loki and Leah.

Nevertheless, Beyonders capable of manipulating an entire theater filled with marionettes were far more powerful than Loki. They likely exceeded Sequence 5 and might even be demigods of the Seer pathway.

Regardless of Lumian's confidence, he didn't believe he could uncover any clues in a bar protected by a demigod. He didn't dare to attempt it.

Only the Major Arcana card holders of the Tarot Club could conduct a thorough investigation in that direction!

Without hesitation, Lumian unfolded a letter and began reporting his findings to Madam Magician.

As the "doll" messenger was summoned, it cast a glance at Lumian and remarked, "Do you enjoy dressing up?"

Is that because I'm wearing a new face? Lumian smiled and replied, "It's a necessity in certain situations. Disguises help ensure that one remains unrecognized when carrying out certain tasks."

The messenger nodded slowly.

"No wonder you can't tell I'm different every day."

Lumian gazed at the light-golden attire of the "doll" messenger, unsure whether to offer a truthful response or a white lie.

In what way is it different from before?

Observing Lumian's silence, the messenger snatched the letter and stated sharply, "My hair is smoother, my skin is more elastic, and my dress is new..."

With those words, the messenger's voice gradually faded away as it dissolved into the candlelight.

Lumian let out a sigh and muttered to himself, Perhaps the more familiar I become with someone, the less I notice their subtle changes...

It was akin to Franca, who appeared so relaxed around him that she didn't feel the need to rack her brains on many things.

If one had to rack their brains and be on edge when interacting with others, their mental state would inevitably deteriorate over time.

Seeing that it was time, Lumian left Rue du Rossignol and arrived at Apartment 601, 3 Rue des Blouses Blanches. He knocked on the door, and Jenna opened it, looking surprised.

“Who might you be?”

Lumian scoffed. “Can't you still not tell from my gait?”

“Dammit, your aura, which makes others want to beat you up, will make your disguise useless!” Jenna knew that Lumian possessed a mystical item capable of altering his appearance.

Once Lumian entered the living room, he glanced around.

“Where's Franca?”

“She hasn't returned from her visit to the Red House Café,” Jenna replied, already aware that Franca had intentions of engaging with a member of the Demoness Sect. She had also heard her companion mention the secret organization's animosity towards female Assassins.

Lumian stroked Franca's Mirror Substitution in his arms and settled into an armchair when he saw that nothing was amiss.

This was Jenna's usual spot.

Jenna rolled her eyes at him and perched on the armrest of a nearby chair. She asked thoughtfully,

“Why do you have so many enemies? How many of them are there?”

Lumian had briefly recounted the Cordu disaster but had omitted much of his past. He replied simply, “The Soul Summoning Spell that caused my sister's problem was acquired from an organization called April Fool's. They intentionally sold it to my sister. My current objective is to locate their key members and execute them one by one.”

Jenna pursed her lips, refraining from delving into the specifics to avoid upsetting Lumian.

“How can I assist?” she inquired earnestly.

Lumian pondered for a moment and replied, “Your dedication to becoming a Witch is the greatest assistance you can provide me.”

Not only were the core members of April Fool's formidable, but they also had no boundaries. Jenna could only participate in the pursuit of these individuals after becoming a Witch and gaining the ability to create a Mirror Substitution of herself.

Internally seething with anger, Jenna refrained from voicing her frustration. She quietly observed Lumian for a few seconds and remarked, “I sense that you're more exhausted than before...”

Lumian subconsciously smiled.

“But I'm also more motivated.”

“But isn't this too intense? Franca mentioned that a constantly tense string is prone to snapping. The best approach is to alternate between tension and relaxation,” Jenna expressed her concern.

Lumian gave a self-deprecating smile.

“But they won't allow me to relax. They're determined to kill me themselves.”

Noticing Jenna's confusion, he added with a cold expression, “They haven't reported me to the authorities despite knowing that I'm a wanted criminal. It's clear they want me to remain in the market district until they finalize their plan and make all the necessary preparations.”