

Inevitability 591

Chapter 591 Information Gap

Upon hearing Lumian's inquiry, Madam Magician's tone carried a subtle emotion.

“Mr. Door is the ancestor of the Abraham family, the top duke among the five great nobles of the Tudor Empire. It was He who sealed this spaceship. Amon, on the other hand, designed the ritual that regularly siphoned power from the black hole to alleviate the pressure caused by the natural decay of the seal and hasten the black hole's demise.”

Higher in rank than Amon... In the Tudor Empire, Mr. Door was second only to the Blood Emperor? He listened intently.

Madam Magician sighed softly at that moment.

“In a way, Mr. Door can be considered my mentor.”

A mentor? Your mentor is a Fourth Epoch King of Angels and the top noble in the Tudor Empire? A figure from almost two thousand years ago... Lumian hadn't anticipated Madam Magician having such a profound background.

No wonder she earned the position of the Angel of Stars beside Mr. Fool's throne. No wonder she held a Major Arcana card in the Tarot Club!

Madam Magician glanced at Lumian, teasingly adding, “It's true that Mr. Door guided and 'supervised' me in advancing along the divine path, but the method wasn't as virtuous as you might imagine. It was far from good.”

Far from good... Lumian was surprised before connecting the dots.

Combining his experiences, he made a guess.

Madam Magician had once fallen under the corruptive influence of Mr. Door but received assistance from Mr. Fool. Did she join the Tarot Club because of this?

However, from Madam Magician's words, it seems she reconciled with Mr. Door? Otherwise, she wouldn't refer to Him as her mentor. How intriguing and surreal. Just like how I might say in the future that the Angel of Inevitability, Termiboros, was my mentor, Lumian mused inwardly and probed, “Is Mr. Door still active?”

Is He as lively as His peer, Amon?

Madam Magician shook her head.

“He has perished.”

I see... Lumian cast his gaze toward the deep, bottomless sea.

“April Fool's objective is to acquire that spaceship? But it seems they are unaware of the nascent black hole sealed inside...”

It was a formidable entity that not even a true god could completely neutralize. Once released from its seal and allowed to develop, it would compress and absorb everything in its vicinity. Why did the key members of April Fool's, who weren't even at the demigod level, believe they could confront it without fear?

Relying on the spaceship to contain it? That seemed improbable. Only the evil god who created the black hole or an entity at Mr. Fool's level could control it...

Mad Lady even believed that within the seal was an incubating deity or monster of a comparable magnitude...

With these thoughts in mind, Lumian's heart stirred as he inquired in a deep voice, "Were the key members of April Fool's misled? Is the Celestial Worthy's objective to unleash the black hole and trigger an apocalyptic catastrophe ahead of schedule?"

"As long as Beyonders corrupted by Him enter the spaceship, He stands a chance of achieving His goal?"

He really doesn't seem to value the lives of Ultraman, Mad Lady, Bard, and Loki...

However, that is also typical of April Fool's modus operandi. They don't take lives other than their own seriously!

Lumian suddenly felt like laughing. His satisfaction from finishing off Ultraman and Mad Lady intensified.

Madam Magician nodded thoughtfully and remarked, "If you hadn't used all your resources and handled this matter with absolute strength, or if I had arrived ten to twenty seconds later and the grayish-white fog from Mad Lady's body had fully permeated the spaceship, the outcome might have been entirely different. We wouldn't be able to be here and discuss this matter so calmly."

Lumian reflected on the events that had transpired and muttered thoughtfully to himself, "If I hadn't gained temporary authority as the Governor of the Sea and restricted Mad Lady's teleportation, she might have approached the flesh-and-blood 'bird's nest' incubating the black hole before your arrival. She wouldn't have manifested a humanoid form made of grayish-white fog to infiltrate the spacecraft. If that had occurred, the situation might have been even more challenging to handle..."

The reason he obtained temporary authority as the Governor of the Sea was because he utilized Lie to pilfer a portion of the sea's power. This allowed him to resonate with the sea and possess a counterfeit yet highly elevated status.

The ability to use Lie to steal a portion of the sea's power was granted by the Seer pathway's mystical item, which had been imbued with a high-level power of Steal when placed on the ancestor-honoring altar in Milo Village.

The altar could bestow high-level Steal powers on items because it was constructed by Amon...
Constructed by Amon...

Lumian's thoughts suddenly cleared up. He grasped that it wasn't just him and the others sabotaging April Fool's; there were also influential figures in the shadows who didn't want the Celestial Worthy to succeed!

Madam Magician chuckled.

“Have you figured it out? I recognized what was happening when I saw Lie, now endowed with the power of Steal.

“Some time ago, I spied on the altar beneath Milo Village and confirmed its purpose—to gather the spirituality of worshippers and accumulate enough power to trigger the bestowment of the Steal ability. Given Milo Village's population and the number of individuals with the sea bloodline, it can only be bestowed once a year. It can't last more than half a month each time, and it can only be used once or twice.

“Lie's enhanced power far surpasses that.”

Lumian furrowed his brow and asked, “Are you suggesting that the 'Steal' on Lie was directly granted by Amon?”

This hypothesis struck him as absurd, comical, and surreal.

In the past few months, Amon had been a source of terror, causing him mental distress. He nearly perished in the Samaritan Women's Spring. Subsequently, he informed the Tarot Club and aided the Angel of Time in eliminating most of the Amons in Trier. He also wrested a substantial debt from Amon's parasitic form.

Their relationship? It was one of deep-seated enmity! The sentiment was likely mutual.

Yet now, he was being told that Amon had covertly assisted him?

While Lumian understood that Amon's aid wasn't driven by benevolence but rather to thwart the Celestial Worthy's objectives, he couldn't shake the feeling that the world had taken a bizarre turn.

Madam Magician chuckled and explained, “Perhaps, back then, there was an Amon residing within the altar.

“Truth be told, I didn't anticipate that those who once instilled awe, fear, and vigilance in our discussions would occasionally collaborate with us. Of course, don't become complacent. While we may be teammates when facing the evil gods beyond the barrier, that doesn't extend to all matters. Even when dealing with the evil god's followers, it depends on the specific circumstances. They might believe they can handle it alone and use the opportunity to set a trap that could harm you.”

“Alright...” Lumian resisted belief, but he had no choice but to acknowledge the reality before him. The truth was laid bare.

Having been briefed, Lumian mentally reconstructed the sea prayer ritual, refining the spiderweb-like thought pattern without any critical deficiencies.

The corresponding experiences and lessons surfaced in Lumian's mind:

April Fool's biggest failure was not knowing that Franca and I are also members of the Tarot Club, apart from being part of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society. Moreover, the Tarot Club places great importance on matters related to the Celestial Worthy...

There's also an information gap between them and the Celestial Worthy, leading to their downfall...

Have they not considered that their goals might not align with the Celestial Worthy's?

Despite me lacking information as well, I wasn't careless. I didn't underestimate any visible or hidden enemies. Even a lion uses its full strength to hunt a rabbit...

Of course, the crucial aspect is that those holding key information and concealing it are on my side in this operation. What if they become my enemies next time? How should I deal with them...

As these thoughts raced through his mind, Lumian sensed that his digestion of the Conspirer potion had significantly advanced, thanks to the successful hunt and the questions he had formulated. Seizing this opportunity, he summarized his third acting principle: "One of the keys to a conspiracy is information. A good Conspirer must be adept at exploiting information gaps and even take the initiative to create information gaps."

Closing his eyes to assess his body's condition, Lumian felt that another major, successful conspiracy and a period of daily accumulation should allow him to completely digest the Conspirer potion.

And that major conspiracy could be combined with the ritual to advance to Sequence 5 Reaper. No further planning was needed.

The Reaper ritual required a conspiracy to capture a target whose Sequence was higher than his—alive.

When Lumian opened his eyes, Madam Magician transmitted the darkness in her palm to him.

"You'll be in charge of distributing these items. This is something a Hunter needs to learn and do well to advance to a demigod."

"Alright." Lumian was accustomed to distributing spoils of war.

He then added, "But before that, I'd like to meet Bard."

That, too, was a spoil of war.

In the ancient and dilapidated palace in the Nation of the Evernight, Lumian, Franca, Hela, and Gandalf materialized one after another.

They were adorned in their usual attire for Gatherings, with Lumian now assuming the guise of Muggle Aurore.

Gandalf unceremoniously tossed Bard to the ground, not bothering to restrain him.

Bard surveyed the familiar surroundings, devoid of any notions of escape or resistance.

This was the concealed Nation of the Evernight, isolated from the outside world. How could he possibly flee?

And against two demigods, how could he even attempt resistance?

Bard swallowed hard and spoke preemptively, "I was also bewitched by Loki!"

All he could hope for now was that, leveraging his Sequence experience as a Swindler, he could successfully "convince" the two demigods.

Noticing the silence from Hela and Gandalf, Bard added, “I can lead you to Loki’s ancient castle. I know a clue, really!”

At that moment, Lumian Lee, masquerading as Muggle, spoke in a deep voice, “Just kill him and channel his spirit.”

Chapter 592 Bluff

Kill him and channel his spirit?

Bard stared at Lumian Lee, masquerading as a Muggle, a chill running down his spine as his hair stood on end.

He sensed the unmistakable killing intent emanating from Lumian, causing fear to grip him.

However, a suspicion lingered in Bard’s mind; he believed Lumian was trying to manipulate him, deliberately showcasing his anger and hatred to break his psychological defenses.

His suspicion arose because spirit channeling wasn’t the optimal solution.

Celestial Worthy possessed a higher level than many evil gods, and the corruption of those evil gods could lead to a failed spirit channeling, what’s more someone with the Celestial Worthy’s bestowment.

Recognizing this, Bard’s heart settled.

As a Swindler, he maintained a terrified expression, stepping back two paces as he looked at Lumian.

“I’ll spill it all, no lies. You can verify it! Don’t kill me!”

Lumian approached him step by step, brandishing a dagger.

Bard turned to Hela, Gandalf, and Franca, pleading in a “panicked” tone,

“He’s lost his mind, and you’re just going to let him be? Spirit channeling isn’t all-powerful!”

Bard deliberately used “him” as a pronoun, signaling that he knew Lumian wasn’t Muggle, as if urging them not to play along.

In two steps, Lumian arrived in front of Bard, casting his gaze at the April Fool’s key member, who couldn’t temporarily change his appearance back. He raised the dagger in his hand.

Bard sneered inwardly, growing more convinced that Lumian Lee wouldn’t actually end his life for spirit channeling—at least not yet.

If his current actions weren’t an act, Gandalf and Hela would have intervened no matter what. They wouldn’t just stand by!

Bard strained his throat and shouted, as if terrorized, “I’ll genuinely cooperate with you! I’ll assist you in locating Loki and his ancient castle! See, I didn’t even use my powers to resist in such a situation!”

As Bard shouted, he fixed his gaze on Lumian and the dagger's tip, attempting to convey evasion and pleading through his eyes. The former conveyed fear, and the latter was a plea for mercy.

Throughout this process, Bard's heart was filled with mockery, almost void of panic.

Trying to deceive a Swindler?

What a ludicrous notion!

I bet you'll stop after I count to five!

Five, four, three...

Pfft!

Bard's vision suddenly turned blood-red as the dagger thrust into his left eye, piercing through the gap in the eye socket and into his brain.

Impossible!

Absolutely impossible!

Is he truly going to kill me?

Intense pain overwhelmed Bard's mind, prompting him to instinctively raise his right hand and press it against his face. He fought in the opposite direction, striving to put some distance between himself and the dagger, the source of the agonizing damage.

Lumian reached out with his left hand, pinning Bard in place and making his struggles futile.

Then, Lumian leaned forward slightly and whispered into the ear of the April Fool's key member.

Bard glimpsed Muggle's beautiful face, her rosy lips moving as she whispered

—a whisper filled with satisfaction and mockery, “My godson has gnawed on half of Loki's arm and knows a lot about him. I believe that knowledge surpasses yours...”

Surpasses mine... If I had known earlier, I would have utilized my powers... Even in the midst of pain and struggle, Bard was momentarily stunned, feeling frustration, despair, and embarrassment.

Soon, these emotions dissipated. Lumian gripped the dagger embedded in Bard's eye socket and twisted it a few times, crushing the frontal lobe.

Observing Bard, who had now calmed down, Lumian nodded in satisfaction. He withdrew his dagger and earnestly assisted the other party in stemming the bleeding and bandaging the wound, though he skipped the disinfectant.

Only then did Franca approach and click her tongue.

“I thought you were just scaring him.”

That's why she didn't intervene. She had watched as Lumian advanced toward Bard, dagger in hand, witnessing Bard's pleas for mercy.

She believed Hela and Gandalf had similar expectations.

When the dagger pierced Bard's eye socket, Franca was taken aback. It was only then that she realized Lumian was serious!

No, Lumian didn't truly intend to kill Bard. Instead, he planned to employ the April Fool's created prank to deal with him, recreating the original state of I Know Someone.

Without waiting for Lumian's response, Franca asked curiously, "When did you master lobotomy?"

Lumian wiped the blood off the dagger with a white strap and smirked mockingly.

"I learned it from watching the doctor perform surgery on I Know Someone.

"It's such a simple procedure. As a Beyonder skilled in action, if I can't memorize and imitate it after watching it once, it only proves that my brain has been corrupted by the potion."

Impersonating Muggle, Lumian deliberately spoke in his sister's voice, as if she were still alive.

Franca looked at Aurore's face under the hood and listened to her voice. She wasn't angered by the mockery. She only muttered, "The surgery isn't just about inserting and stirring a few times. There are still many key points before and after the procedure. Even during the surgery, if you insert it just a bit deeper, the outcome will be entirely different."

"So be it. If he really dies, we'll commence the spirit channeling." Lumian casually poured the remaining truth serum into the mouth of the stunned Bard, who offered no resistance.

After completing this task, he added, "Madam Hela mentioned that this place can minimize the influence of evil gods."

"It's only minimal, not zero. Besides, what if the problem lies in his spirit, and he self-destructs?" Franca instinctively retorted. This was why Hela hadn't directly pulled Bard into a dream to extract his true answers. After all, the dream might present scenes that shouldn't be seen. This was even more dangerous than simple verbal descriptions.

Only then did Gandalf, draped in a linen robe and a hood, sigh softly.

He couldn't bear to witness Bard's suffering, but he didn't discourage the actions taken. He wasn't the one who had been harmed by April Fool's. He wasn't in a position to criticize the victim's family for their extreme actions.

Before this operation, Hela had briefed Gandalf on Muggle's demise and Lumian Lee's role. The president of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society sympathized with the siblings' plight, but he also blamed himself. He believed that the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society had been unrestrained. As president, he bore a heavy responsibility.

After a moment, Bard, who had undergone a "requiem" and gradually recovered from his pain, started addressing the queries of the people present.

The first to inquire was Gandalf. He peered down at the Dream Stealer and asked, "How did you come to believe in that Celestial Worthy?"

Gandalf and Hela had already gathered intel on Celestial Worthy from Franca and Lumian, and they deemed it crucial.

Bard responded calmly, "From the beginning. I used to be a cultural relic thief and acquired a batch of ancient items. While studying their history to ascertain their value, I deciphered the meaning of some inscriptions..."

Abruptly, Hela cut Bard's narration short and said coldly,

"You don't have to explain the full meaning. Just mention a few keywords."

Bard had no intention of arguing. He remained as docile as a sheep.

"Keywords include: Deception, Fooling, Door of All Doors, Lord of Mysteries..."

As Bard finished speaking, the ancient palace they were in suddenly became misty and unclear.

Simultaneously, Lumian's left chest burned again.

In the next moment, the night sky outside the palace darkened even more, and all the mist vanished.

"Why did I feel like worms were growing in me just now?" Franca felt a lingering fear.

Merely a few names, incomplete honorific names, made her inexplicably uneasy. Every inch of her flesh seemed to come alive, about to transform into worms crawling out of her skin.

One of Bard's initial plans was to answer Lumian and company's questions dishonestly and without reservation. Then, he would take the initiative to reveal all the details regarding Celestial Worthy. He wanted to see if he could secretly corrupt his enemies and shake the Nation of the Evernight's concealments to create a "door" to escape.

"If I could really use this to corrupt Gandalf and Hela, why would they kill me when we're all Celestial Worthy believers? We would definitely work together to deal with Lumian Lee!"

Of course, Bard no longer harbored such thoughts. He had obtained an inevitable peace.

"Descriptions of high-level existences often indicate danger. In this world, ignorance might not be a bad thing." Gandalf sighed and assessed what had just happened.

He then inquired about the follow-up.

Bard's expression remained unchanged as he said, "After deciphering the words, I lost consciousness. When I woke up, I had already transmigrated to this world.

"After adapting to my new body, I instinctively recalled my previous encounters and the words I had deciphered. Then, I saw a thin gray fog emanating from my surroundings and received a revelation from the Celestial Worthy.

"In other words, you believed in that Celestial Worthy as soon as you transmigrated, before the establishment of the Research Society?" Gandalf probed further.

"Yes." Bard's emotions lacked any fluctuations. "Back then, I thought that if I didn't choose to submit, believe in Him, or follow Him, I might die on the spot. When that happened, I might not have a chance to transmigrate and revive. Later, I gradually

realized His greatness. He could even fool the Nation of the Evernight and prevent our problems from being discovered.”

Gandalf pondered for a moment and asked, “How did Loki come to believe in that Celestial Worthy?”

Chapter 593 Fooled

In response to Gandalf's question, Bard recounted the past with a directness that left little room for ambiguity.

“I don't know. He didn't tell me. After the founding of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, I began to notice the guy's actions and demeanor mirroring the influence of the Celestial Worthy. Likewise, he saw the same in me, prompting a mutual inquiry. Eventually, we confirmed each other's intentions, and assembled an April Fool's team.”

Gandalf and Hela probed about the Celestial Worthy, but with no breakthroughs, Lumian, disguised as a Muggle, shifted his gaze to Bard and asked, “What was your crew's aim in disrupting the sea prayer ritual?”

“To control the underwater spaceship. It's our ticket to traversing the cosmos and holding our ground against Angels to some extent...” Bard revealed April Fool's plan.

Lumian's lips curved upward.

“Do you know what's sealed in the depths of that spaceship?”

At this revelation, Franca suddenly grasped the core issue.

Spaceship?

The thing at the bottom of Port Santa is a spaceship?

Isn't this too sci-fi and not mystical enough?

Does this world have everything?

To expedite the interrogation of Bard, a key member of April Fool's, Lumian and Franca had entered the Nation of the Evernight without much communication.

“Spaceship...” Gandalf echoed the term, his tone brimming with unmistakable yearning.

Hela maintained a silence akin to the depths of night.

Bard responded to Lumian's inquiry, “According to our interpretation of the language and the insights from the Celestial Worthy, that spacecraft functions as both a petri dish and an incubation chamber. It's nurturing a high-level creature. Control the spaceship, and you control it. Without that control, the spacecraft alone won't stand a chance against an Angel.”

The smile of “Aurore” became even more alluring.

“Ever wondered why the ancient Angel who sealed the spaceship didn't take control of it? Why didn't They command the high-level creature or destroy it outright?”

Bard fell silent momentarily before articulating, “It might take a considerable time for the high-level creature to mature. Taking control of the spaceship would halt everything. Patience is required until the recent few years—just before the creature is due—before it can be managed.”

Lumian's smile beneath the hood grew brighter.

“If that's the case, the ancient Angel who sealed the high-level creature will definitely reappear. Did you have the confidence to resist an Angel and win the spaceship? Or do you believe the Angel either didn't try to decipher or couldn't decipher the true meaning of those commands?”

“It's been so many years—They might have already perished...” Bard paused.

In his dream, a creature on the altar, potentially the avatar of an ancient Angel, hinted that the Angel might still be observing Milo Village and those waters.

“Why didn't we think to confirm it before embarking on the entire plan...” Bard voiced his doubts, his emotions showing no apparent shifts.

Lumian replied with a smile, “I can tell you that the spaceship isn't sealed with a high-level creature. It's an incomplete, nascent black hole. Once unsealed and piloted away, it will absorb the mystical body housing it, suck you guys in, and completely take shape, tearing apart and devouring the current world.

“Back then, the ancient Angels didn't attempt to control it because it was dangerous, idiot!”

Bard was once again taken aback, as if he had never considered such a possibility.

After a moment, he hesitated and said, “We... might have... been fooled...”

Though Bard's emotions remained unchanging, the blood-colored liquid that trickled from the simple bandage down the bridge of his nose painted a tragic and mournful picture.

Lumian burst into laughter, his back bending slightly.

“Do you only now realize that you've all been fooled by that Celestial Worthy? He provided revelations to mislead you. Through your deaths, He could open the seal and destroy this world to achieve His goals!

“Haha, April Fool's, indeed an organization of fools!”

Bard fell into silence once more, then candidly expressed his thoughts.

“We're fools, truly fools...”

Meanwhile, Gandalf and the others had varied reactions.

Dammit, a black hole? Destroy this world? Franca had thought the news of a spaceship was explosive enough, but she hadn't expected something even more terrifying to follow.

And an entity creating a black hole?

Franca, lacking direct understanding of top-level powers, realized the magnitude of such a great existence.

Previously, she felt she had a sufficient understanding of the world. Now, she admitted frankly, I'm still a f*cking elementary school student!

Gandalf took a deep breath and said, "If I become a god, it would be so convenient for me to conduct research... Black holes..."

Hela retrieved a metal flask from her black widow clothes and took a sip, her thoughts inscrutable.

Lumian's laughter echoed for a moment, providing a brief respite. However, underlying pain still gripped his heart, resonating in the shadows within. It couldn't be eradicated or dismissed.

In the presence of the key members of April Fool's, memories of his sister Aurore's tragic fate couldn't be ignored.

Bard stood there, a silent reminder of a fact deliberately overlooked.

Hence, Lumian couldn't help but utter, "kill him and channel his spirit," resorting to action in a half-truth manner.

Looking at Bard, Lumian inquired, "Do you know if Ultraman and Mad Lady have been to Cordu?"

"Yes," replied Bard. "Part of our original plan was to find Nolfi's child, the sea maid. She lived in Intis's Riston Province. A stopover at Cordu was intended to confirm Muggle's situation and the final outcome of the prank."

At the mention of "prank," a vein on Lumian's forehead throbbed.

"How could you be so sure that Muggle was already dead?"

Hearing Lumian, disguised as a Muggle, pose this question, Gandalf let out another inaudible sigh. Franca sighed inwardly.

Bard shook his head.

"I'm unsure. Mad Lady and Ultraman went. They informed me the village was wiped out. No chance for anyone to make it out alive. They might have even employed divination, spirit channeling, and such to be sure."

"Impossible for anyone to survive?" Lumian smiled. "Am I not human?"

Bard glanced at him and spoke his mind.

"You might not even pass as human anymore."

That's not wrong. I'm now a humanoid Sealed Artifact with self-awareness and fate... Lumian made a self-deprecating remark before adding, "The number of survivors is greater than you can imagine. A certain madame, her husband, butler, and maidservant had fled."

Without giving Bard a chance to respond, Lumian inquired further,

“What was Loki trying to achieve with the Muggle incident?”

“I wasn't deeply involved. Just tossed in a few ideas; not much in the loop,” Bard admitted honestly. “Ultraman might have a clue. He and Loki teamed up in other ventures.”

“In what ventures?” Lumian persisted.

Bard shook his head slowly.

“Not entirely sure about the specifics. It's tied to the Eternal Blazing Sun Church.”

Connected to the Eternal Blazing Sun Church? Ultraman, a Sequence 5 Priest of Light on the Sun pathway... The humanoid Sealed Artifact lost by the church on the betrothal ship... Lumian's instincts kicked in.

“Any key April Fool's members that are not transmigrators?”

They had previously misconstrued April Fool's as a gang of degenerated transmigrators. Yet, as an organization, it naturally expanded.

After all these years, April Fool's likely harbored more key members!

Bard nodded.

“Yes.”

As expected... Lumian shot a glance at Franca, garbed in Assassin attire, seeking confirmation from Bard.

“One of them is a Purifier from the Eternal Blazing Sun Church, and he holds a decent status?”

“Yes,” Bard confirmed again. “Thanks to him, we got wind of a Grade 1 Sealed Artifact we could utilize when we altered our plan. He even assisted in its escape from the seal.”

“And who might this person be?” Franca inquired, stepping in for the absent 007.

“It's a one-way line to Loki,” Bard indicated, revealing his lack of knowledge about the member's true identity.

Franca chuckled, saying, “If the Eternal Blazing Sun Church launches an inquiry, they might stumble upon some leads.”

Grade 1 Sealed Artifacts weren't just lying around. They couldn't be pilfered casually!

Lumian, noting Gandalf and Hela had no more queries, turned to Bard.

“What intel do you have on Loki's ancient castle?”

“It goes by the name Dylan—a charming name,” Bard began. “Loki once told me it's a concealed ancient castle. Impossible to discover or see under normal circumstances. In simpler terms, you can't pinpoint its location through appearance or history.

“I've always envied Loki inheriting such a treasure after transmigration—an ancient castle. Later, he relied on the Celestial Worthy's revelation and the corresponding boon to succeed. I once tried to swindle Castle Dylan for myself, but I failed.”

Chapter 594 Execution

Franca almost chuckled in exasperation at Bard's remark.

April Fool's not only deceived outsiders but also themselves. If they didn't believe in Celestial Worthy, cooperation wouldn't be on the table.

Bard delved into his knowledge about Castle Dylan.

“That ancient castle used to be the domain of a secret organization known as the Secret Order. Loki became a member of the organization when he transmigrated. The story goes that the initial leader of the Secret Order personally constructed the ancient castle and concealed it over a century ago.”

Curious, Franca inquired, “Who's leading the Secret Order now?”

Bard shook his head slowly.

“Loki is in the dark about that too. Only those who've become Bizarro Sorcerers or Sequence 4 demigods within the Secret Order can meet the leader and establish a connection with him. Others merely follow the orders of their direct superiors.

“Loki once contemplated murdering his mentor, his immediate superior in the Secret Order, to gain the Bizarro Sorcerer Beyonder characteristic and stage a grand performance. Yet, due to his comprehension and fear of Bizarro Sorcerers, he never solidified this idea into a concrete plan. Eventually, he gathered all the Bizarro Sorcerer potion ingredients in Castle Dylan and entirely abandoned his initial scheme.

“Do you think a hidden place like Castle Dylan, with its long history, would be quiet, cold, and sinister? Contrary to expectations, Loki informed me that it's quite lively, featuring a grand performance every day.”

A grand performance... Hela recalled the pitch-black ancient castle she had glimpsed in Loki's dream, along with the wax-statue-like guests inside.

Deep in thought, Lumian asked Bard, “How do you suggest we locate Castle Dylan?”

“I'm still missing crucial clues,” Bard admitted sincerely. “If finding Castle Dylan were that straightforward, the current leader of the Secret Order would have seized it and ousted Loki. No, he would've turned Loki into his puppet.”

Lumian intended to inquire more thoroughly with Ludwig later, seeking any information he might have gained after consuming half of Loki's arm.

“What about Hisoka? What insights do you have on Hisoka?” Lumian inquired.

Bard seemed to recollect something.

“That guy doesn't quite fit in. He prefers going solo. The rare instances of collaboration are mostly with Mad Lady.

“We all sense his emotions are pretty unpredictable, swinging between joy and anger. Mad Lady, however, remarked that he's not pure enough.

“He's highly dangerous—on par with Loki. His specific path remains a mystery. I've witnessed him using his abilities twice, both times involving mystical items. It's a poker card that can change its face, showcasing the attributes of Frost and Cut respectively. Word has it that Hisoka sought out an Artisan outside the Research Society to customize it after hunting a Beyonder.”

Regrettably, Mad Lady is dead, and there's no means to commune with her spirit. She undoubtedly held more information about Hisoka... Does not being pure enough mean that Hisoka isn't as unhinged as he appears? Is his occasional madness a deliberate facade? Lumian pondered with a twinge of regret.

Even though Lumian had obtained Mad Lady's remains, her spirit had been severely corrupted by Celestial Worthy. Some of it had even been “washed away” by the power of the sea, completely obliterated.

Lumian sighed quietly and shifted the conversation to a different topic.

“Do you have insights into the sea's power on Ultraman?”

“Indeed.” Bard shared his findings candidly. “I played a role in deciphering the extraterrestrial language, although the Celestial Worthy provided crucial revelations. Additionally, the power of the sea is not exclusive to the offspring of Port Santa. I once encountered two heretics in Lenburg with similar abilities, and I managed to extract corresponding knowledge from them.

“This information greatly aided my decryption efforts, revealing that this pathway is not solely tied to the sea. In fact, only a small portion of it involves the sea.

“The power primarily emanates from the stars and the land beneath our feet. As you all are aware, our world is, after all, a planet.

“The corresponding Sequence 9 is known as Astronomy Aficionado. It focuses on acquiring knowledge of the cosmos, related information, an initial perception of reality, and enhancing one's physique.

“Sequence 8, named Star Worshiper, can decipher the Star Language or the Language of the Stars and receive insights into fate.

“Sequence 7, called Star Sacrificer, gains true powers through sacrificial rituals involving the stars. This encompasses Gravity Abnormality, Weakening Ray, Electromagnetic Attraction, and Cosmic Void.

“Sequence 6 is Navigator. They possess a deeper understanding of space and dimensions, allowing them to locate hidden passageways in the void and navigate and adjust routes between the stars. Navigating ships at sea becomes a straightforward task for them.

“Sequence 5, Tidal Scholar, further masters gravity and can whip up massive waves capable of shattering ships and demolishing docks.

“As for Sequence 4, it's known as Heavybringer. Unfortunately, I'm not too certain about their specific abilities.”

Lumian remained silent, taking a couple of steps back and signaling for Franca and the others to continue questioning.

His primary concern centered around Loki's connection to Hisoka; anything else seemed less crucial.

Franca studied Bard for a moment before inquiring, “Have you recruited other members into April Fool's?”

“Yes,” Bard admitted without hesitation.

After detailing what he knew about the April Fool's members outside the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, Franca asked with curiosity, “Why did you choose the nickname Bard? Considering your past identity and current class, wouldn't Kaitō or Kid be more fitting?”

Bard responded calmly, “My current body was a bard, a wandering artist who often dabbled in thievery and swindling. He met his end when discovered trying to cheat others out of their money, suffering a severe beating.”

Cheat, swindle, and steal—Franca thought. You know everything; it suits you quite well.

Franca turned to Hela and Gandalf, stating, “I have no further questions.”

“Neither do I,” Gandalf acknowledged, recognizing that Bard's life was approaching its end.

Muggle's brother wouldn't let him off the hook!

“Neither do I,” Hela added.

Lumian raised his right hand, generating a dark-green glow at his fingertips.

The light transformed into a strange ray, penetrating Bard's chest.

Weakening Ray!

Lumian still had access to a week's worth of sea power, approaching the level of Sequence 5.

Bard's face contorted, muscles and nerves reacting instinctively.

His chest, close to his neck, rapidly melted and peeled, exposing the flesh beneath.

Seeing this, Gandalf sighed again.

Gandalf sighed, condensing a straight sword with Sunrise Gleam and driving it towards Bard.

The light blade impaled Bard's head, and he crumpled to the ground with a thud, held down by the sword.

Bard writhed like a skinned insect, convulsing as life left his body.

Lumian observed in silence, refraining from intervening as Gandalf freed Bard.

When Bard's breath ceased, and he lay motionless, Lumian turned to Gandalf and Hela.

“Thank you for your assistance.”

“It's our duty. We're all accountable for the harm April Fool's caused to the other members of the Research Society,” Gandalf responded gravely.

Lumian didn't contest. Instead, he disclosed, “Before the operation, I mentioned joining a secret organization before assuming my sister's identity. To seek revenge, I invited members of that secret organization to assist. I believe you all have seen or sensed their presence.”

He strategically linked the appearance of the Tarot Club to himself, safeguarding Franca's identity as a Minor Arcana card holder.

“And which organization is that?” Gandalf inquired curiously.

As per Hela's account, the secret organization exhibited Angel-level power, and the demigod “Cinderella” who appeared at sea was equally formidable.

“The Tarot Club,” Lumian revealed truthfully.

“You're one of the Minor Arcana card holders?” Gandalf deduced.

He had heard about the Tarot Club.

Lumian nodded without denying it.

Curiosity piqued, Franca asked, “Which card represents that 'Cinderella' demigod? And why does her magic have such a dreamy quality? Moreover, it resembles fairy tales from before our transmigration!”

She maintained her role while genuinely expressing curiosity.

Lumian recalled Madam Magician's guidance and grinned.

“Major Arcana card, The Hermit.”

Pausing momentarily, he added, “I’m uncertain about why she can transform your fairy tales into magic. What I do know is that she’s closely tied to Emperor Roselle’s descendant.”

“Descendant of Emperor Roselle’s eldest daughter, Bernadette?” Franca and the others, having read numerous entries from Roselle’s diary, immediately speculated.

“Perhaps, but it’s not Bernadette herself,” Lumian honestly disclosed.

That was the extent of his knowledge.

“Is that so...” Franca, Gandalf, and Hela felt enlightened.

So, it was connected to Emperor Roselle’s faction!

It made sense for the Emperor to create fairytale magic.

After a brief pause, Lumian suggested, “You should probably prevent the Research Society from disseminating those fairy tales.”

“Understood,” Gandalf agreed.

Lumian pondered for a moment before stating, “I’ve concluded my involvement with the Research Society and have joined another secret organization. It’s no longer suitable for me to participate in the Research Society’s gatherings. You may find an opportunity to reveal the truth to the other members.”

Gandalf and Hela exchanged glances and proposed, “You can continue playing the role of Muggle and acquire resources and assistance from the Research Society. We owe it to your sister.”

Chapter 595 Spoils of War

Lumian wasted no time with pleasantries and accepted Gandalf’s invitation without hesitation.

Firstly, within the vast expanse of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society were numerous pathways. Besides the relatively scarce Devils, he gained access to a wealth of knowledge and various items. While these might not surpass what he already possessed in strength, they held the potential to unexpectedly shine in specific situations.

Secondly, this decision provided him with a pretext to continue assuming the role of Aurore as a Muggle. It created the illusion that his sister still existed somewhere in the world.

After the quartet concluded their discussion about the events in the peculiar waters, Bard’s lifeless body underwent a startling transformation. Ephemeral lights coalesced in the corpse’s right hand, causing both flesh and bones to crumble simultaneously.

Eventually, the palm resembled that of a baby—small and pallid.

The pale hue swiftly shifted, adopting a darker shade reminiscent of the ancient palace’s surroundings.

It was a Dream Stealer Beyonder characteristic.

Lumian focused his attention and detected a faint grayish-white fog within the shrunken palm.

He approached Bard's corpse, crouching down to search for additional items.

With this task accomplished, Lumian retrieved the spoils obtained from Mad Lady and Loki from his Traveler's Bag, placing them on the decrepit stone slabs of the ancient palace.

These included: a transparent, almost ethereal crystal, a bracelet with three diamonds flanked by four different-colored gems, a rose-gold ring adorned with crimson, blood-like gems, a simple silver ring, a dark-gold mask capable of concealing the entire face, a featureless small doll bound with white cloth, an intricate but exquisite mechanical music box, and a grayish-white brooch with a metallic gleam resembling lightning.

Accompanied by a relatively thin blank painting album and the Dream Stealer Beyonder characteristic, the total count reached ten items.

Lumian then looked up and addressed Hela and Gandalf, "You can choose—one each."

"It's our duty," Gandalf asserted, signifying the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society's commitment to rectify past errors.

Speaking in Aurore's tone, Lumian, shrouded in his hood, remarked,

"Duty doesn't preclude the choice of spoils. Just because official Beyonders must protect citizens doesn't mean they can't receive rewards."

Gandalf pondered for a moment before turning to Hela. Seeing her lack of objection, he sighed and conceded, "Fine."

Lumian's lips formed a smile as he pointed to each item, providing a concise introduction.

"The illusory transparent stone is a Traveler Beyonder characteristic left behind by Mad Lady, but it's severely corrupted. The thin gray fog emanating from it serves as evidence of this.

"The Dream Stealer Beyonder characteristic is similarly corrupted by that Celestial Worthy, but the severity is not extreme. It's slightly less severe than the remains of most heretics after their deaths.

"That bracelet comes from Loki, known as the Seven-Stone Bracelet. Each diamond corresponds to a teleportation, and each colored gem corresponds to a ten-second Blink. Once used, it's gone. The drawback is that you hear random sounds when you wear it—ranging from a man having an affair to sounds from an unknown creature.

"This golden ring, named Blood Gold, bears an engraved inner loop with a brief sentence—'Controlling flesh and blood means controlling everything.' Its function enables the wearer to control their flesh and blood like a Rose Bishop. Additionally, they can employ three flesh and blood magics—Flesh Bomb, Flesh Cloak, and Flesh

Blood Fusion. The drawback is repeated use may lead to dependence. Ceasing to wear it results in the body collapsing into a pile of flesh and blood, unable to maintain human form. Continual wear may lead to madness and loss of control.

“That silver ring is a semi-finished Ring of the Sea Queen, possessing a high-level Steal ability usable only once. The drawback is that an ancient Angel will take notice of you.

“The dark-gold mask, a possession of Loki, survived his self-destruction. Its exact function remains unknown. Sensing it, one might feel an intense desire to wear it, believing it would grant abnormal power. Let's call it the Demon Mask.

“This featureless white cloth doll, a creation of Mad Lady, corresponds to the Faceless of the Seer pathway. When affixed to your shoulder, adjusting its facial features and figure is akin to altering your own appearance. Simultaneously, it empowers the wearer to master the ability to create Paper Figurine Substitutes. However, only the first paper figurine proves effective. Beyond these functions, it allows the wearer to employ flames for a dynamic leap and develop a certain premonition of danger. Be warned, though—

carrying it around brings weak bad luck. Moreover, one day, you may realize that its face mirrors yours, and you will cease to be yourself.”

“This mechanical music box, discovered on Loki's corpse, is from an unknown pathway or Sequence. It's rumored that the music it plays has the potential to either kill or drive anyone who hears it into madness. However, a prerequisite exists—you must hear the music for at least ten seconds.”

“I just found this blank painting album from Bard. Its precise effects and drawbacks remain unknown, but based on my experience, the depictions on its pages may come to life or exhibit special effects. Notably, only nine pages remain, showing signs of tearing.”

“This brooch, belonging to Mad Lady, appears crafted in anticipation of the loss of the Governor of the Sea's authority and the sea's berserk state. It grants the wearer fish scales, mitigating damage and enabling underwater breathing and movement akin to a fish. Each strike carries the effect of Electric Shock, with a near 100% probability of triggering natural lightning strikes in thunderstorms. Aligned with Sequence 6 or 5 of the Sailor pathway, the negative consequence is a heightened likelihood of being struck by lightning on rainy days, coupled with increased irritability and anxiety after wearing it.”

Lumian concluded the introduction of the spoils of war, his knowledge derived from Madam Magician.

It was evident that for the success of the sea prayer ritual, April Fool's had entrusted most of their mystical items to Mad Lady. Bard had only left behind an ordinary-looking blank painting album. On the other hand, Loki, the leader of April Fool's, had seemingly retained his items privately. Whether it was his nature or a deliberate choice to retrieve them for hunting Ludwig remained unknown.

Gandalf looked at Hela. "Take your pick first."

Hela approached Lumian, carefully inspecting the ten items before singling out Mad Lady's Traveler Beyonder characteristic.

"It's severely corrupted. Whether you decide to keep it or have an Artisan craft items, it's quite dangerous. Leave it to me."

In other words, she suggested that she had a method to handle it and mitigate potential harm.

"Alright." Lumian didn't object.

He respected the wishes of each individual and allowed them to choose whatever they wanted. Of course, the order of selection mattered too. His team would be last, and he would be last.

Hela extended her right hand, and the night outside the ancient palace seemed to stir.

The illusory crystal shrouded in grayish-white fog vanished.

After Hela returned to her spot, Gandalf made his selection.

Franca's heart skipped a beat as she observed the president scrutinizing the remaining nine items. She whispered,

Don't choose the Seven-Stone Bracelet, don't choose the Seven-Stone Bracelet...

That was the teleportation she had been longing for!

The Traveler Beyonder characteristic was too dangerous. She didn't dare to set her sights on it. Although the Seven-Stone Bracelet was an expendable item, its advantage lay in its many uses and its relatively manageable negative effects.

Gandalf's intense gaze fixed on the dark-gold mask, his mutterings barely audible,

"I've got a burning desire to delve into its powers and potential..."

"But it's too risky. I'm itching to put it on now..."

"Yes, the Blood Gold ring aids my experiments into dangerous matters. The blank painting album requires further exploration..."

"The high-level Steal ability is also worth studying... But being noticed by an ancient Angel is no small matter..."

After thorough contemplation, Gandalf turned to Hela and spoke, "Can I leave the silver ring here? I want to arrive half an hour early to study it before every gathering."

"Alright," Hela agreed to Gandalf's request.

Thus, the president of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society opted for the half-finished Ring of the Sea Queen.

Franca let out a sigh of relief and grinned at Gandalf.

“President, you really should've gone down the Reader pathway. You suit their style perfectly.”

Why did he have to pick Warrior just to live up to the title of Gandalf?

Gandalf, the half-giant in a linen robe, glanced at Franca, smiling without uttering a word.

Lumian stowed the remaining items back into his Traveler's Bag, not affording Franca an opportunity to choose first.

At Port Santa, near Solow Motel, inside Loki's rented room.

Lumian received a response from Madam Magician:

“Even I can't decipher the intricate abilities of that dark-gold mask, indicating its exceptional nature. Inquire with Mr. K if he desires it. If not, leave it in my care for now. I'll seal it and await the opportune moment. It might prove useful when the time comes.

“Ma'am Hermit has her eyes on the mechanical music box. Other items hold little significance for her, but this one, at least, is exquisite.

“Mr. Moon expresses interest in the faceless doll; as for the reason, I remain in the dark.

“I'll entrust you with distributing the rest.”

Chapter 596 Lord's Revelation?

In Mr. K's temporary apartment in Port Santa,

Lumian unpacked the remaining spoils of war from his Traveler's Bag, placing them on the coffee table.

He shot a glance at Mr. K, who, now adorned in a black robe with a deep hood, spoke first, “These are the gains from the operation. Perhaps there's a revelation from the Lord among them.”

Mr. K nodded subtly, diverting his attention to the items, his gaze fixating on the dark-gold mask.

In a deep, hoarse voice, he mused, “I sense something special about it. This should be a revelation from the Lord.”

With a swift motion, Mr. K extended his right hand, pulling the strange dark-gold mask into his grasp amidst a sudden gust of wind.

However, the Aurora Order Oracle didn't put the mask on; instead, he discreetly stowed it away in a hidden pocket within his black robe.

Witnessing this, Lumian was momentarily taken aback.

He had been contemplating how to subtly carry out Madam Magician's instructions, aiming to inquire if Mr. K desired the dark-gold mask. Surprisingly, he had spontaneously fabricated a Lord-given revelation as an excuse. Before Lumian could specify which item it was, Mr. K had chosen the dark-gold mask himself.

Could it genuinely be a revelation from the Lord? Hiss... Lumian took a deep breath.

Had Madam Magician sent me to ask Mr. K because she foresaw something or glimpsed something?

These high-ranking figures always prefer to communicate through hints and revelations. Couldn't they be more direct?

Amidst his thoughts, Lumian stowed away the remaining items and earnestly addressed Mr. K,

"I didn't expect the matter to escalate like this. I initially believed that with you and my sister's friends from her past, it would suffice to seek vengeance. Yet, it spiraled into something of a much higher magnitude. Thankfully, my sister's allies were vigilant and leveraged their connections."

The sincerity in the first half of Lumian's statement contrasted with the second half, which explained the influx of demigods, even Angel-level forces, this time. He subtly shifted the blame to Franca and Aurore's associates.

Lumian sensed a high likelihood that Mr. K might not fully buy into his explanation. Disregarding the possibility of the Aurora Order's Oracle Grazing a relatively high Sequence Spectator, Lumian believed that the intentional arrangements and subtle traces left behind by the entity he believed in were sufficient evidence of constant watching, listening, and awareness. As for Sequence 8 of the Shepherd pathway, known as Listeners, they often received revelations from that figure.

Nevertheless, Lumian needed a plausible excuse. He couldn't just tell Mr. K outright, "Yes, I am a member of the Aurora Order, part of the Tarot Club, and also affiliated with the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society. My Major Arcana card holder is an Angel, and I know countless demigods who can lend a hand. Besides worshiping your Lord, I also believe in Mr. Fool. Occasionally, I praise the Sun and say By Steam..."

Wasn't this equivalent to provoking him in his face?

Unspoken truths didn't always need to be voiced.

Mr. K subtly nodded.

"Good job. Dealing with matters involving evil gods demands all your strength."

Then, he added, "After learning that your adversary is tied to an ancient evil god, I've already reported it to the higher-ups. At that time, our Aurora Order's Angels were likely keeping an eye. If anything truly occurred, one or more would have definitely descended."

"..." Lumian's expression froze.

Did the Aurora Order's Angel also observe the spaceship back then?

Isn't this setup too exaggerated? April Fool's isn't even an organization with a single demigod!

Is Celestial Worthy such a taboo when it comes to Madam Magician and the Aurora Order?

It's understandable for the Tarot Club to give it significance, especially considering its connection to Mr. Fool's awakening. But why does the Aurora Order behave as if they're confronting a formidable adversary...

Lumian pushed aside the issue of inviting an Angel and four demigods for his revenge. He couldn't help but sigh at the Aurora Order's exaggerated reaction.

Mr. K fixed his gaze on his subordinate and delivered a passionate lecture, "Just because high-ranking individuals are keeping an eye on us doesn't mean we can be lax and handle things half-heartedly. These individuals have numerous crucial matters to attend to. They might only cast an occasional glance our way. If we don't put in enough effort and work diligently, it could easily lead to complete failure. And in that scenario, death won't be sufficient to atone for our sins."

"Yes, yes, you're right," Lumian echoed Mr. K without any intention of arguing.

Upon returning to Loki's rented apartment, Lumian gathered the remaining five spoils of war and grinned at Franca, Jenna, and Anthony.

"It's finally our turn to choose."

Not wanting to tease the eager Franca any further, Lumian pointed to the dining table where the items were laid out.

"Take your pick first."

"Hehe." Franca smiled sheepishly, shamelessly picking up the Seven-Stone Bracelet. She exclaimed excitedly, "I can teleport too!"

"Aren't you afraid of overhearing something you shouldn't?" Lumian teased.

Franca had already considered this issue.

"It's not like I'll wear it forever. I'll only use it when I need it. And teleportation takes only a short time. If I really hear an unknown voice, the impact will be minimal. I should be fine if I remove it in time.

"Don't worry. The negative effects of Beyonder items similar to charms aren't strong. They can even be considered weak."

Lumian scoffed dismissively.

"Have you forgotten what you have on you?"

"Primordial Demoness figurine! Mirror World Fragment!"

What if she heard the Primordial Demoness's ravings?

Franca cleared her throat and said, "I'm now a member of the Demoness Sect and a believer in the Primordial Demoness. What's wrong with listening to the voice of God? At most, it'll make me excited. When the time comes, heh heh..."

She glanced at Lumian and Jenna, keeping her thoughts to herself.

“I'll get your help!”

Franca immediately added, “Furthermore, my Primordial Demoness figurine and the Mirror World Fragment are stored in the Traveler's Bag. They won't be taken out unless absolutely necessary. It's as if they're sealed.”

Lumian remained silent. He turned to Jenna and Anthony, asking, “Which one of you wants to go first?”

“Anthony. He played a more significant role than me this time,” Jenna replied politely.

Anthony smiled.

“Are you disregarding me as an Intisian man? I still believe in 'lady's first.’”

Considering Jenna's usual Showy Diva demeanor, she might have typically responded with something like, “Those Intisian men who claim 'lady's first' only want to get them in bed. Are you having such thoughts about me too?”

Jenna, despite her lack of overt actions, had a knack for teasing in a crude manner.

However, at this moment, after exchanging glances with Lumian and Franca, she turned to Anthony with sincerity.

“I'm in a dilemma. I want you to help me eliminate an option.”

Anthony didn't decline and assessed the remaining four items.

“The Blood Gold ring enhances my survivability and strengthens my direct attacks. However, whether it's dependency or madness, it's something a Psychiatrist should avoid. Furthermore, I'm now a Hypnotist. I can use Psychological Invisibility and have the protection of Dragon Scales.

“Apart from underwater mobility, this brooch can only be used in close combat. Why would a Hypnotist like me engage in close combat?”

“The Dream Stealer Beyond characteristics and blank painting album aren't bad. If the former is crafted into a mystical item with weak negative effects, it should be very useful. However, that's not a certainty for the moment unless I find a very good Artisan...”

Anthony decided on the blank painting album.

“As an information broker, I'm adept at sketching. Such an item that can create different effects is very suitable for a Hypnotist to observe first before taking action.”

Without needing Madam Magician's explanation, Franca had already used Magic Mirror Divination to confirm the function of the blank painting album: “The objects drawn on it might become alive and stay so for a short period of time. They might also have different effects. The painting paper

will lose its mystical effects after being used once. The negative effect is never to respond to the knocks coming from the painting paper.”

Lumian and Jenna agreed that it was very similar to the abilities of Pixies.

After Anthony stored the painting paper, Jenna seized the Dream Stealer Beyond characteristic without hesitation.

“Why?” Lumian inquired with amusement.

Jenna looked at him and grinned happily.

“It's the most valuable! Among the remaining three items, only it corresponds to a Sequence 5. Even if it fails to become a mystical item, it can be sold for a large sum of money.”

I still owe Franca 45,000 verl d'or. In the future, I might even purchase the Demoness of Pleasure potion formula from her.

“An excellent reason.” Lumian casually glanced at the remaining two items and placed the grayish-white lightning-shaped brooch on his chest. “I want this. In the future, call it the Fury of the Sea.”

He chose the brooch over Blood Gold because, as an Ascetic, he could bear impatience and other emotions. Pure madness was too dangerous for him, given the darkness in his heart.

Lumian tossed the Blood Gold ring to Franca.

“Put it in your Traveler's Bag. Anyone can use it whenever needed. It shouldn't be used often.”

“You won't give it to Madam Magician?” Franca asked in puzzlement.

“Do you think she'll take a fancy to it?” Lumian stuffed the Fury of the Sea into his Traveler's Bag and chuckled. “Her spoils of war are naturally the humanoid Sealed Artifact, but she might return it to the Eternal Blazing Sun Church.”

With that, Lumian turned to Franca, Jenna, and Anthony, “Next, I'm going to do something unsuitable for others to see. Do you want to watch?”

Chapter 597 Too Dirty

Franca's curiosity was piqued by Lumian's words.

“Is there anything we can't see?”

“Are you sure you want to watch? I'm afraid it will deal a strong blow to your mind,” Lumian asked in a teasing tone.

Amused, Franca pointed at herself and retorted, “Me? I'm not a minor. My mind is very mature. Why wouldn't I dare to look? Heh, I'm much more knowledgeable than you, boy!”

Jenna nodded in agreement, silently endorsing Franca's claim.

Without further persuasion, Lumian left the apartment and headed to the room he had rented with a fake ID to monitor himself.

Lugano was staying there with Ludwig.

Franca followed with Jenna and Anthony, muttering, "I thought it was something major. Isn't it just going to your godson? What impact on the mind..."

Lumian signaled for Lugano to retreat temporarily. Then, he retrieved two gruesome items from his Traveler's Bag, forming a humanoid figure with them.

Maintaining an unchanged expression, Lumian looked at Ludwig and pointed at the two parts of Mad Lady's corpse.

"Is it edible?"

Edible... Franca was taken aback.

Her gaze shifted between the repulsive corpse parts and Ludwig's boyish appearance. Suddenly, she felt a wave of nausea, as if her mind had been corrupted by the imagined scene.

Indeed, Lumian's godson gained knowledge or abilities by consuming specific creatures, including humans. Memory, after all, was a form of knowledge!

Franca couldn't suppress her urge to retch, regretting her decision to witness the cannibalistic act.

To make matters worse, she knew the person who had been consumed—Mad Lady. She had interacted with her before.

Jenna's face contorted, clearly struggling to contain her churning stomach acid. Anthony, a seasoned veteran accustomed to witnessing scenes of gore, subconsciously frowned.

Ludwig scrutinized the two bloody corpse parts in Lumian's hands for a moment before slowly shaking his head.

"It's too dirty."

Dirty? Could it be a reference to the severe corruption of the Celestial Worthy? Even you won't dare to swallow it for fear of something happening? Lumian threw Mad Lady's two corpse parts to the ground with regret, summoning a crimson fireball that was nearly white.

Rather than exploding, the fireball adhered to Mad Lady's corpse, burning and compressing it into charred dust.

Amidst the dancing flames and the burning fragrance, Franca and Jenna breathed a sigh of relief.

Lumian pulled up a chair and sat down, addressing Ludwig, who was nonchalantly nibbling on a cupcake, "Wasn't that person's arm dirty?"

He was referring to Loki.

"Just a little. The dirtiest part isn't on the arm," Ludwig commented casually, as if discussing which fish were poisonous and how they should be consumed.

Only then did Lumian get to the point.

“What did you gain from that person's arm?”

“Some knowledge,” Ludwig replied, nonchalantly nibbling on a sponge cake covered in light cream, as if he preferred not to be disturbed while eating.

Lumian, feigning indifference, asked bluntly, “What are they?”

Ludwig's voice alternated between clarity and muffled tones as he replied, “Sequence Knowledge about his pathway... There are two other terms... One is Dylan... and the other is Orville...”

Dylan? Is that the name of Loki's ancient castle? And what's Orville? Lumian's curiosity peaked, prompting him to interrupt Ludwig.

“Apart from the name itself, is there any relevant knowledge?”

Ludwig seized the opportunity to take another bite of cake. After chewing and swallowing, he said, “No, but... these two terms seem to be connected. Orville should be the name of a place, and Dylan is the castle's name.”

Connected... Name of a place... Castle Dylan is in Orville? Where is Orville? Lumian turned to Franca, Jenna, and Anthony, realizing they were clueless, shaking their heads in ignorance.

After a moment of contemplation, Lumian spoke in a deep voice,

“Our next priority is to find information about Orville and Dylan through our respective channels.”

Getting nods of agreement from Franca and the others, Lumian asked Ludwig again, “Anything else?”

“His spirituality is quite abundant, and his quality isn't bad. He doesn't like hard liquor or drinking freely. He only drinks champagne and occasionally has coffee. He's a loyal advocate of tea leaves. He's healthy, has good bowel movement, and urinates normally. He hates the smell of the washroom...” Ludwig shared the information obtained from the half arm.

Franca listened with keen interest, and just as Lumian was about to interject, Ludwig divulged another piece of valuable information:

“He owns Castle Dylan, but he doesn't reside there. He only returns occasionally. He's not the sole proprietor yet. Many areas there aren't accessible to him. Recently, he unlocked a room and acquired a dark-gold mask.

“That mask will grant him immense power, but once he wears it, he'll face terrifying matters.”

Could that dark-gold mask be a relic from the original owner of Castle Dylan? Perhaps a memento from the previous leader of the Secret Order? Lumian nodded thoughtfully.

To him, this information wasn't particularly crucial as the dark-gold mask had already been handed over to Mr. K. Thus, he had no reason to be concerned about it.

Franca, Jenna, and Anthony prepared to return to Trier after the Q&A session with Ludwig, having confirmed that they had gleaned all they could.

Of course, Lumian took responsibility for their return journey. Franca couldn't bring herself to use one of the Seven-Stone Bracelets at the moment.

“By the way,” Lumian looked at Franca, pondering for a moment. “Contact the Eternal Blazing Sun Church and see if they're willing to exchange information about the humanoid Sealed Artifact and its corresponding story. We'll make efforts to facilitate this transaction.”

Upon Bard's mention that he was uncertain about his human status, Lumian realized his resemblance to the humanoid Sealed Artifact. However, Bard retained his rationality and clarity, possessing a relatively independent fate. Otherwise, he could be deemed a walking Grade 0 humanoid Sealed Artifact. This sparked Lumian's curiosity about the humanoid Sealed Artifact, wanting to uncover what had happened to her and why she had transformed in such a manner.

Franca nodded and instinctively said, “But, uh, that lady only mentioned the possibility of returning it, nothing definite.”

“We're merely striving to facilitate the transaction. It's not guaranteed either.” Lumian chuckled.

He quickly sent Franca, Jenna, and Anthony back to Trier Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative before entering Aquina Street. Strolling among the citizens still immersed in the afterglow of the celebration, he made his way towards Solow Motel.

Half of the motel's fifth floor had collapsed, and the fourth floor was severely damaged. Otta, the owner, observed the scene with sorrow and helplessness. He wanted to cry, but the tears wouldn't come.

At a certain point, Noelia of the Fertility Order approached Louis Berry, the adventurer overseeing Solow Motel. She spoke in a formal tone, “Your partner said you'd be responsible for the compensation.”

Lumian retrieved 10,000 gold risot from his Traveler's Bag and handed it to Noelia.

Noelia glanced at his black coin bag and sighed with emotion.

“That's good stuff.”

The combat nun then counted the compensation.

“10,000 risot? That's enough to build two motels like this!”

“How generous. Just as expected from an adventurer who recently bagged a bounty of 300,000 gold risot.”

Lumian brushed off Noelia's teasing and continued, “This is the reward from the Paco family's commission.”

“The Paco family...” Noelia fell silent.

The Paco family's matriarch, the current family head, and his wife—all perished in this conflict.

Lumian pressed on, weaving through the crowd as if on a leisurely stroll.

In the dusk's afterglow, he heard singing, seabirds chirping, and citizens animatedly discussing the past few days.

“Did you see that? In the morning, seabirds came to pay their respects to the Governor of the Sea!

“Is this year's sea prayer ritual that successful?

“That's right. Back then, many vines grew crazily. Many people fainted from joy. This is Earth Mother's recognition of the sea prayer ritual!

“No, that's not right. It represents a bumper harvest. It means this year's fish harvest will fill ship after ship!

“Praise the Earth, praise the Mother of All Things!

“Praise the Governor of the Sea!

Though Lumian wasn't privy to the Church of Earth Mother's method to make citizens view the morning mysticism roundup as a miracle, he sensed joy and delight in everyone's hearts.

Leisurely, he thought, I wonder if the remaining committee members of the Fisheries Guild have finalized the choice for the fake Governor of the Sea. Sure, the real Simon Guiaro is the top contender. However, it doesn't matter who takes the role this year. The power leaked by the spaceship is now in my possession. In the next year or even two, there won't be frequent catastrophes in these waters. The sea creatures will reproduce faster thanks to the 'watering'...

Heh heh, from a certain perspective, I'm the true Governor of the Sea—for just a week...

In the midst of the lively parade and numerous street vendors, Lumian casually located a bar and ordered an undiluted Manzan and a large cup of locally brewed dark-gold malt beer.

Placing the Manzan glass across from the small round table, he lifted his beer, clinking it. Then, he muttered with a smile, “Did you see that? Did you hear that? Their dance, their singing, and the sound of fish multiplying.

“Isn't this the future you desire?”

With that said, Lumian downed a mouthful of dark-gold beer.

Chapter 598 Confrontation and Reconciliation

The night draped the land in darkness, and stars adorned the sky above Port Santa. The festive crowd had dispersed, leaving behind the remnants of celebration—discarded litter and the lingering scent of alcohol.

With the official end of the holiday, the city would soon buzz with work again.

Lumian lingered at the bar until closing time. As he stepped out, the deserted streets welcomed him, illuminated only by sporadic gas lamps.

The late-night air hinted at the approaching winter's chill. Lumian breathed it in, feeling the crisp freshness entering his lungs. The rhythmic crash of waves against the shore added to the night's serenity.

In seemingly high spirits, Lumian, slightly tipsy, walked past the aftermath of the celebration with hands in his pockets, unnoticed in the silent surroundings.

He made his way back to the room rented under a false identity.

Upon opening the door, he found Lugano pacing anxiously in the living room.

“Still up?” Lumian raised an eyebrow.

Lugano, looking like he'd recovered from a serious injury, spoke with a complex expression,

“An hour ago, Captain Noelia of the combat nuns paid you a visit. Not in armor, but a stunning dress. She has quite the figure...”

“And then?” Lumian inquired, a smirk on his face.

Lugano replied with envy, “She left disappointed when I told her you weren't around.”

Lumian chuckled, “What's it got to do with you? Why are you still awake after an hour?”

Lugano coughed awkwardly, “I had a sudden contemplation about my future. Should I return to Trier and pursue a medical career, or should I opt for a different path?”

Ignoring the Doctor's musings, Lumian, with a smile, washed up briefly and retired to his room, succumbing to sleep.

In his dreams, recent events blended into a chaotic tapestry, weaving stranger and more bizarre stories.

At precisely 6 a.m., Lumian awoke and promptly sat up.

His thoughts sharpened as he recalled the dream. Suddenly, a detail struck him:

Disregarding the possibility of the Aurora Order having covertly observed the situation, the crucial aspect of the sea prayer ritual was Amon's utilization of the altar in Milo Village to discreetly imbue Lie with a “Steal” ability.

Without this intervention, the opening of the spaceship's energy passageway would have led to a reversal. Deprived of the sea's power, he couldn't have ensnared Mad Lady with the authority of the Governor of the Sea, delaying her until Madam Magician's arrival.

However, Celestial Worthy, positioned at the pinnacle of the Seer, Apprentice, and Marauder pathways, should possess an in-depth understanding of Marauder abilities. It seemed unlikely that He hadn't considered the possibility of an Amon hiding at the altar, granting “Steal” powers.

It made sense that He hadn't shared this knowledge with April Fool's; they were expendable tools, and excessive information might weaken their resolve during the operation. But the overall plan shouldn't have crumbled due to this.

Were Celestial Worthy's intentions more intricate than they seemed? Had He secretly achieved a goal, or did Amon and His unseen ally orchestrate events in advance?

Had Amon truly kept watch over the altar in Milo Village without pause, last year's sea prayer ritual might not have failed. There remains the prospect that He wanted to derive amusement from April Fool's antics.

The chaos wrought by April Fool's last year was perhaps understandable. Shouldn't the most straightforward approach this year involve discreetly allowing the completion of the Ring of the Sea Queen during the ancestor honoring ritual? Subsequently, events could unfold with Ultraman assuming the guise of the incoming Governor of the Sea, only to be dumbfounded when the sea sacrifice ritual succeeded!

Why the convoluted path? What was the purpose behind these seemingly unnecessary steps?

There must be something I'm missing...

Lumian massaged his temples and rose from the bed.

The revelation didn't surprise him. It would be abnormal if he quickly unraveled the true motives of every participant in such complex scenarios involving high-level entities.

Regardless, his goal was accomplished, and the perilous black hole in the spaceship remained sealed. The rest was not his concern. If he could decipher it, great. If not, he could always write to Madam Magician to provide a timely reminder.

After a jog around the still-slumbering Port Santa, Lumian penned a letter to Madam Magician, detailing his reflections.

As Lumian finished, Lugano, who had been out gathering breakfast for Ludwig, returned to his quarters.

Taking a moment to contemplate, Lumian handed over 1,000 gold risot to Lugano. With a composed tone, he stated, "I'll be away for a few days. Take care of Ludwig. When I return, this commission will be completely over."

When the time came, Lumian planned on taking a boat to the Southern Continent. Lumian intended to conspire and make preparations along the way. His aim was to be ready for the final conspiracy and advance to Sequence 5 upon reaching his destination in the Southern Continent.

Without prying into his employer's destination, Lugano nervously asked, "Will there be any danger in the next few days?"

"It's done," Lumian replied with a smile. "If any other danger arises, go to the Fertility Order and seek protection. Isn't that what you've been anticipating?"

Lugano grinned sheepishly, reassured by Lumian's demeanor.

Under the shining sun of Port Santa, with delicious food and passionate women, staying a few more days seemed like a pleasant prospect!

A two-story relay carriage raced through the village towns scattered across turquoise pastures, making its way towards the base of the Pyraez mountain range.

Maintaining his disguise as the adventurer Louis Berry, Lumian occupied a window seat in the carriage, silently observing the passing scenery.

Each turquoise pasture was adorned with flocks of sheep, resembling scattered clouds. Shepherds, clad in practical and mobile robes, strolled amidst the grazing animals.

Some had their own shacks, while others utilized small, wheeled shepherd's huts for mobility.

Occasionally, local villagers attempted to drive away the incoming shepherds, only to be met with sly smiles or placated with money and supplies.

Faced with determined locals, the shepherds, arriving from the mountain pass, reluctantly moved to more desolate areas, contending with the watchful eyes of wild wolves and other creatures...

The scenes spoken of by the Cordu shepherds presented themselves vividly to Lumian, searing a memory in his mind.

Two days later, the relay carriage halted at the foot of the Pyraez mountain range, pausing in a small town outside the mountain pass.

Lumian changed into a black tweed coat, preparing to venture into the mountain alone.

As he ascended the mountain ridge, the cold wind intensified, rendering the wilderness almost devoid of life.

Navigating the sparsely vegetated mountainous terrain, Lumian followed the trails left by shepherds and merchants. Under the birdless gray sky, the desolate landscape featured withered trees and a meager stream. Winter's solitude permeated the air.

In the cold solitude, it took him nearly three days to traverse the Dariège mountain range and reach the river outside Cordu.

Circling the towering forest, Lumian promptly spotted the blood-colored pillar, emanating the aura of a mountain peak despite its modest height.

As Lumian gazed, footsteps approached from ahead.

A middle-aged man, clad in a leather coat and clasping his hands together, appeared.

Trembling in the cold wind, the forest ranger shouted, "Don't go any further. That village is gone!"

Lumian's eyes moved beyond the ranger to the collapsed and burned structures in the distance.

After a brief pause, he inquired in a deep voice, "What happened to that village?"

The forest ranger glanced around and lowered his voice, "They said they believed in demons. The villagers went crazy, burned down their houses, and walked into the abyss.

"Look, would a normal village be like this?"

Lumian fell silent for a long time.

Seeing this, the forest ranger sincerely said, "In any case, those old men instructed me to prevent anyone from entering this village. They said that it's bad luck; it would provoke the demons."

Lumian remained silent, refraining from further inquiry.

Staring at the unfamiliar yet oddly familiar ruins, he turned away from the village entrance. Step by step, he approached the nearest alpine pasture, the wind howling around him.

The grass here had completely withered, blown away by the wind, leaving behind barren patches of brown soil.

Lumian surveyed the ruins of Cordu, then located a shack abandoned by the shepherds. Inside, he lay down, closing his eyes and remaining motionless.

If only everything that had transpired before could be dismissed as a dream.

When he woke, the alpine pasture was vibrant green once more, birds returned to the sky, and Ol' Tavern bustled with farmers and herdsmen. His sister persistently urged him to study, while Reimund, Ava, and the others pondered uncertain futures, unaware of the life awaiting them...

The sun shone brightly, yet the air in Port Santa had begun to carry a chill.

Abruptly, Lumian stood before Lugano and Ludwig.

“You're finally back!” Lugano exclaimed, relief evident in his voice, as if he had encountered a savior.

Ludwig's appetite had surged once more, and the 1,000 risot had disappeared faster than anticipated.

Another week, and Lugano would have to contemplate using his own funds.

He couldn't allow the child to go hungry; he might resort to eating him!

Lumian chuckled in response, saying, “The commission is over. I'll pay the balance now. Do you want my help to teleport back to Trier, or do you prefer taking a boat yourself or crossing the Dariège mountain range?”

Lugano fell silent, seemingly grappling with a decision.

599 If You Have “Power,” Use It

Chapter 599 If You Have “Power,” Use It

Lumian didn't hurry Lugano. He preferred to observe the Doctor's decision-making.

After a pause, Lugano gathered his courage and inquired, “Will you be bringing Ludwig along in the future?”

“Of course,” Lumian replied, glancing sideways at Ludwig, who was devouring a roasted octopus.

Had he not received the 0-01 information from the Church of Knowledge, he wouldn't have considered keeping such a child around. However, Ludwig had proven his usefulness.

In the future, he might serve as another Loki trap.

Lugano swallowed and offered, “I can assist you in caring for Ludwig, so you won't need to factor him in when dealing with matters—unlike how you could simply leave whenever you pleased in the past.”

As anticipated... Lumian wasn't taken aback by Lugano's proposal.

He raised his chin slightly and inquired, "Reason?"

Lugano smiled sheepishly and explained, "During this journey, I've witnessed much and faced attacks. It made me realize that Sequence 8s are still insignificant in the mysticism world. They're ill-equipped to handle risks. Yes, if I return to Trier and discreetly wield my Doctor powers, I'll undoubtedly attain middle-class status. It's not inconceivable to ascend to high society, but I fear that garnering too much fame will draw the attention of official Beyonders. Trier isn't as lenient as Port Santa, which is more accommodating to wild Beyonders.

"Furthermore, those dangerous Beyonders are always lurking around us. I refuse to be defenseless the next time I'm targeted."

"If you refrain from participating in mysticism gatherings and solely run a clinic as a doctor, you wouldn't be entangled in dangerous affairs. You could easily handle ordinary thieves and bandits," Lumian countered nonchalantly.

Lugano shook his head.

"The Beyer who left me his relics, enabling me to become a Planter, once warned me that once I enter the mysticism world, escape is impossible. Beyer incidents will always surround us. If I'm fortunate, I might survive until natural death, but if I'm unlucky, I'll end up like him.

"At first, I didn't fully believe it, but the events of the past six months have increasingly convinced me of its truth. I did nothing, yet Rue Anarchie collapsed, and a peculiar tree sprouted. Before you hired me, I dreamed of becoming a figure in a painting, unable to return to reality. Upon waking up, I found myself wanted. This time, all I did was care for Ludwig, staying clear of any involvement, yet I was still senselessly attacked..."

Mm... Lumian's expression grew more peculiar as he listened.

I seem to be the common denominator in all your tales...

Yet, you persist in following me...

Is this another instance of Beyonders encountering mysticism incidents? You didn't encounter those incidents, but me...

Lugano continued, "I've also witnessed Beyer powers like teleportation and tsunamis. Being just a Sequence 8 no longer satisfies me. I believe I'll find more opportunities by following you."

Lumian gazed at Lugano, unsure if someone had influenced him to insist on following or if Ludwig had somehow "tamed" him to be his "nanny."

Initially, Lumian thought Lugano, as a Beyer of the Planter pathway, had ties to the Church of Earth Mother. However, despite paying close attention, he hadn't observed any additional communication between his guide and the Fertility Order or the Church of Earth Mother's clergyman. Furthermore, Lugano seemed like a stranger.

Seeing Lumian stay silent, Lugano smiled ingratiatingly and proposed, "I have a gift for languages. I can self-learn Dutanese from the Southern Continent. As long as you pay me 300 verl d'or a month and promise me a share of the spoils, I can continue to be your guide, private doctor, child caregiver, and be half a fighter."

"Sure." Lumian handed over a total of 10,000 verl d'or. "This is the final 5,000 verl d'or from before. Additionally, you were attacked. As per our agreement, I'll pay you an extra 5,000 verl d'or, making it a total of 10,000."

Lugano gladly accepted the payment and began packing.

Lumian seized the moment to count his cash, confirming he still possessed 1,000 verl d'or in gold, 76,000 verl d'or in gold coins, along with other coins, banknotes, and the remaining 2,000 gold risot yet to be spent.

As long as he refrained from acquiring Beyonder characteristics, potion formulas, mystical items, or high-end mysticism knowledge, the money he carried could sustain him for a considerable time.

The following morning, Lumian boarded the ship bound for Feynapotter, adopting the guise of the adventurer Louis Berry. Approaching the first-class suite, he turned to Ludwig, posing a thoughtful question, "In your memories, or rather, Loki's memories, are there any peculiar creatures? They resemble lizards but are quite small. They can crawl into a human's mouth, appearing transparent and blurry, suspected to be Spirit Body. They have brownish-green scales and dark-green eyes."

This description deviated significantly from the Starlight Lizards transformed by the Children of the Sea.

Ludwig shook his head.

"No, it's not in the Batings Black Insect's memories either."

Lumian fell silent, observing Lugano as he opened the suite door with the mannerisms of a servant.

Another hour passed, and amidst a whistle, the ship departed Port Santa.

After nearly two hours of sailing, the weather gradually worsened. The waves surged, and the strong winds compelled passengers on the deck to retreat to their cabins.

Observing the dusky sky, the dark clouds stirred by the wind, and the rising waves, many passengers, sailing for the first time, felt a sense of anxiety.

Noticing the confidence of the sailors beside them, they sought reassurance, "This is a common occurrence at sea. It's not dangerous, right?"

A Port Santa native, working as a sailor, replied with a smile, "It's relatively common, but it can be a bit dangerous. If the storm intensifies, we might need to seek shelter in a nearby port. But don't worry. This year's sea prayer ritual was a success. The current Governor of the Sea will protect us and prevent any shipwrecks!"

Governor of the Sea... The passengers became even more uneasy upon hearing the sailor's response.

They had taken part in various sea prayer rituals and celebrations in Port Santa. While enjoyable, they didn't truly believe that the Governor of the Sea could exert any significant influence on the waves.

Amidst their unease, they were astonished to find that the rising waves suddenly subsided.

Despite the dark clouds and strong winds, the seawater seemed to be pressed down by an invisible force, showing no noticeable fluctuations.

The Port Santa natives erupted in cheers.

“Long live the Governor! Praise the Governor of the Sea!”

Witnessing this, the passengers exchanged glances, momentarily speechless.

In the first-class suite, Lumian relaxed in a recliner, sipping undiluted Manzan. On his lap lay a Southern Continent Dutanese introductory textbook.

Clenching his right hand into a fist, he pulled it downward.

A section of the dark clouds in the sky descended, forming a formidable funnel.

Sunlight penetrated the massive hole, brightening the cabin and highlighting Lumian's book.

Retracting his right hand, Lumian flipped through a page of the book. He found the Governor of the Sea's abilities truly advantageous at sea.

Unfortunately, he could only use it for one more day.

Late at night in Trier, Angoulême returned to his residence and habitually switched on the radio transceiver.

Before long, a telegram arrived.

Upon seeing “Hidden Blade,” Angoulême frowned.

“Two bits of good news and a spot of bad news. Which one do you want first?”

“I know. You must want to hear the good news first. I'll get straight to it.

“The first piece of good news is that the humanoid Sealed Artifact has been located and secured. You don't have to worry about the business trip to Feynapotter. You can focus on investigating the Mirror People matter in peace.

“The second piece of good news is that after communication, we've confirmed that the faction controlling the humanoid Sealed Artifact might return it to you. We're willing to facilitate the matter, but you'll need to provide all the information about the humanoid Sealed Artifact in exchange. Of course, it's just a possibility, nothing set in stone. You won't need to make a substantial payment until we reach an agreement.

“Bad news. Heh heh, there's a traitor in your Church. The humanoid Sealed Artifact was lost because of a mole! We're certain of this.

“Go, 007. Your chance to render meritorious service has arrived!”

After reading it in one go, Angoulême felt a sense of relief. This was because after the humanoid Sealed Artifact was lost, the Church's upper echelons suspected a traitor and conducted an investigation, but to no avail. There was indeed an issue with the case leading to the loss of the humanoid Sealed Artifact, but the five Purifiers in charge of that case had been cleared of any wrongdoing during the investigation. They hadn't performed well back then and had merely encountered an accident.

It seems that the mole has concealed himself well... Angoulême muttered to himself.

Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative, Apartment 702, 9 Rue Orosai.

Franca sat by the bed and chatted in the telegram group, waiting for Jenna to return.

Her female companion would visit the Quartier de la Maison d'Opéra once a week to watch a theater performance and only return at midnight. However, the exact day she went was uncertain. Furthermore, she would disguise herself to prevent others from noticing her travel patterns.

Anthony, who lived nearby, had been busy infiltrating a circle of psychology enthusiasts, hoping to come into contact with a true Psychiatrist.

I seem to be the only one with time on my hands. I haven't received any feedback about Mirror People... Franca wasn't the kind of person who insisted on having something on her hands. She excelled in finding joy in life.

While Franca thought about Jenna, Jenna—who had just finished watching the last play—put on a hat with a black veil and stood up to leave the theater, where many spectators were still lingering.

At the exit, she patiently queued up and moved out.

Suddenly, Jenna sensed a slight tremor from one of the items on her.

Instinctively, she reached in and realized that it was the Mirror World Fragment from the Tamara family's tomb.

Chapter 600 Correct Reaction

Has something happened to the Mirror World Fragment? Jenna was taken aback for a moment before she tensed up.

This was unprecedented. The Mirror World Fragment had never exhibited such behavior before, leaving Jenna puzzled as to its sudden activity. Her mind raced, attempting to decipher its significance.

Could there be a disturbance in the special Mirror World itself?

Or perhaps someone in close proximity to me is closely involved with the special Mirror World?

Could this be a lead in Franca's Mirror People investigations?

Jenna's instincts urged her to scan her surroundings, searching for the source of the Mirror World Fragment's disturbance.

Jenna controlled herself just in time as a realization hit her: If this phenomenon was caused by someone closely tied to the special Mirror World, there was a high chance that the “sensation” was

mutual. In simpler terms, while the fragment trembled slightly, there should be some anomaly on the person's body, detectable only by themselves. They, too, were searching for the source of the problem.

Under such circumstances, hastily surveying her surroundings might lead to discovery by the other party. A thunderous strike might follow.

Maintaining her composure, Jenna slowly moved out the door, her eyes fixed on the road ahead.

During this process, like many spectators, she turned her head slightly and glanced at the wall clock in the theater's foyer to confirm the time: 11:05 p.m.

After noting the time, Jenna returned to the foyer through the exit.

The spectators around her dispersed, and the place gradually became less crowded.

Jenna's Mirror World Fragment fell silent, no longer trembling abnormally.

Just now, there was no one in the foyer, and the Mirror World Fragment didn't tremble when I watched the theater performance... This means that for the abnormality to happen, both parties need to be close to each other, no more than five meters apart, like when we were squeezing for the exit in the foyer. Now, is everything back to normal because the distance between them has widened again? Jenna's thoughts raced as she fully displayed her theatrical acting skills. Like ordinary spectators, she left the foyer and arrived on the street. She boarded a rental carriage belonging to the Imperial Carriage Company and paid 2.5 verl d'or in advance, her heart aching.

If the subway and public carriages were still running at this hour, she wouldn't have taken a rental carriage back to Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative from Quartier de la Maison d'Opéra.

Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative, Apartment 702, 9 Rue Orosai.

Jenna recounted her encounter to Franca and asked, "Did the Mirror World Fragment on you tremble slightly around 11:05?"

"No," Franca replied with unusual certainty.

Without waiting for Jenna to make a judgment, she smiled awkwardly and quickly added, "I don't think so. As you know, my Mirror World Fragment is stored in my Traveler's Bag. Even if there's a tremor, I can't sense it."

As Jenna couldn't help but roll her eyes, Franca tersely acknowledged and said, "Do you suspect that the abnormality in the special Mirror World caused a general change? If that's the case, even if the item is in the Traveler's Bag, I should be able to sense it spiritually. It's impossible to completely ignore it."

"Besides, when we put these two fragments together, there's never been a tremor. The probability of me encountering a Mirror People is very high. Or is it a member of a specific branch of the Tamara family?" Jenna said as she walked to the full-body mirror in the living room. She stroked the surface and whispered the secret subject she wanted to inquire about.

The full-body mirror's surface quickly darkened, surging with illusory water waves.

Jenna began Magic Mirror Divination.

“At approximately 23:05 last night, the area within a ten-meter radius of me...

“At approximately 23:05 last night, the area within a ten-meter radius of me...

After repeating it three times, the deep, dark mirror lit up.

In the light, Jenna saw herself in a bonnet, the theater exit connected to the theater foyer, and the audience and attendants standing within ten meters of her.

The spirit world faithfully recorded all this information.

The reflection in the mirror held a dynamic quality, not static or rigid. Jenna swiftly observed a woman standing a few meters ahead, abruptly turning to survey the people around her.

Donned in a black veiled hat, the lady, seemingly in her thirties, sported light eyebrows, bright yellowish eyes, and a white complexion from makeup. While not conventionally beautiful, she exuded elegance through her well-chosen attire.

Despite her refined appearance, the lady appeared to lose her composure, scanning the surroundings as if searching for a lost lover.

“There's something off about her. She reacted to the Mirror World Fragment,” Franca remarked as she joined Jenna, analyzing the image in the full-body mirror. “But it's been over an hour, and she hasn't initiated any counter-divination. Is she careless or utterly unfamiliar with the process?”

Jenna nodded.

“Can you discern anything else?”

“Nothing more.” Franca suddenly slapped her forehead. “Gosh, we should've asked Anthony to take a look. A Spectator would surely glean more information.”

“You're right...” Jenna was caught off guard.

They still weren't used to seeking Anthony's assistance.

Jenna suggested, “Let's get Anthony tomorrow morning. Calling him over this late might lead to misunderstandings. Besides, it's not an urgent matter.”

“Yes, he might get the wrong idea,” Franca quickly realized.

The next morning, after observing the scene through the Magic Mirror Divination, Anthony pondered and commented, “Her clothes were custom-

made, suggesting a well-off family background... Despite looking a bit lost after surveying the surroundings, she may lack knowledge about the Mirror World and its corresponding fragments. This contradicts her ability to make the Mirror World Fragment tremble. The answer often lies in the point of contradiction... Her walking style indicates good etiquette training, but her status at home isn't particularly high.”

Franca couldn't help but twitch her lips as she listened to the newly advanced Hypnotist dissect the target layer by layer. It felt like she had no secrets left from him.

Spectators are truly terrifying!

On the other hand, Jenna listened attentively, finding similarities with character analysis in drama acting class but more concrete and detailed.

In a daze, she felt transported back to Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons, listening to her teacher's lecture.

“These characteristics won't help us locate her directly. They can only offer certain clues,” Anthony concluded.

“Understood. Character profiling,” Franca replied in a professional tone.

Anthony took out a piece of paper, picked up a pencil, and began sketching based on his impressions, intending to track her through various channels.

Casually, Franca asked, “How did you deduce that the lady's clothes were custom-made?”

Having once been a man and transformed into a woman with a potion, she remained fixated on the beauty of clothing and dresses. She didn't care about the store or tailor.

Jenna couldn't tell either, as before becoming a Witch, she hadn't reached the level to customize her clothes.

Anthony looked up at the two Demonesses.

“After becoming a Spectator, especially as an information broker, I've deliberately honed my observation skills. I recognize the materials and characteristics of most of Trier's ready-to-wear shops and the styles of many famous tailors. The lady's dress clearly doesn't come from any ready-to-wear shops.”

Franca and Jenna revealed somewhat embarrassed expressions. Fortunately, Anthony was engrossed in his sketch and hadn't noticed their reactions.

Port Santa.

Nolfi, clad in a blouse and a light-colored jacket, escorted Batna to the dock.

Batna, sporting a half top hat, adjusted his rapier and cautiously inquired, “Are you really planning to stay here?”

Nolfi calmly responded, “I'm already a combat nun of the Fertility Order.

“It's just now dawning on me that the sea prayer ritual isn't about gaining power and making a pact with an evil god. It's about protection. It's an act of self-sacrifice.

“In the past, members of the Fisheries Guild used their influence and wealth to entice others into becoming the Governor of the Sea and Maidens of the Sea. Now, they've pledged to the Earth Mother's Church and the Fertility Order. Going forward, they'll inform potential candidates of the possible challenges and consequences

beforehand, allowing them to make their own choices. I want to stay here and oversee this.”

“That's good too.” Batna sighed. “Unfortunately, my destiny lies in sea adventures, and I can't remain in one place.”

The lovely and endearing Nolfi nodded.

“I understand.”

She asked sincerely, “Do you wish to have a child here?”

“No, n-never mind,” Batna stammered. “I'm not mentally prepared to be someone else's father.”

He didn't want his child to turn into a humanoid lizard in the future.

Nolfi expressed regretfully, “Alright.”

Waving her hand, she turned around and walked away from the dock.

After a few steps, she abruptly turned back, revealing a bright and beautiful smile.

“Regardless, I'm grateful that you could accompany me out to sea.”

Without waiting for Batna's response, Nolfi redirected her gaze and hastened her pace, leaving the dock.

Batna stood there, Nolfi's final smile lingering in his mind. Her words of joy echoed in his ears, and he suddenly felt a sense of loss.

After Nolfi's figure vanished from the dock, the adventurer slowly boarded the ship returning to Port Farim.

In the evening, inside the ship's bar, Lumian raised a glass of amber sugar wine and addressed the patrons at the bar counter, “Ladies and gentlemen, I'm actually a magician. I can showcase an illusionary magic trick for you right now.”

He gestured towards the window.

“Look outside.”

Instinctively, the patrons glanced out the window and noticed that the surrounding waves had surged to a height of more than ten meters at some point, resembling a mountain.

Just as they blinked, the terror-inspiring scene disappeared once again.

Clap! Clap! Clap! The patrons applauded Lumian's brilliant magic trick.