

Inevitability 651

Chapter 651 An Unfulfilled Conspiracy

In the beige, four-story patrol team building, Camus had managed to break free from the poker card's influence. He discovered Sow sprawled in a pool of blood, brutally torn apart by two zombie-like undead creatures.

In neighboring rooms, another patrol team member, under Twanaku's control, put up a stubborn resistance. His comrades had already fallen victim to the relentless assault.

Camus, catching his breath, hadn't anticipated stumbling upon an assassination plot within the patrol team, putting his own life at risk.

His gaze fixed on Deputy Captain Reaza, a middle-aged man in a sleek black suit controlling the undead creatures. Confused, Camus inquired, "How did Sow end up joining the Rose School of Thought?"

"And why are so many members under their control?"

Despite Camus resisting the poker card's influence, Jenna's earlier shout lingered in his mind.

Reaza, surveying the scene of blood and undead, responded after a moment of contemplation, "It's likely Twanaku's doing."

Twanaku... Camus recalled the questions raised by Louis Berry.

Was Twanaku truly responsible for the serial murders four years ago?

Could he be a Devil in disguise?

Frowning, Camus grumbled, "Keeping a Zombie on the team was already a significant risk. Just because he can show restraint doesn't clear him from suspicion of being a Rose School of Thought member. He might indulge at specific times."

Reaza, with a stern demeanor, spoke in a deep voice, "We'd confirmed he defected from the Rose School of Thought. He believes in The Fool."

"The Fool, the temperance faction?" Camus asked in surprise,

not expecting such a revelation.

In the dream's interrogation room, housed within the ancient and crumbling palace of the Nation of the Evernight, Hisoka couldn't contain his amusement at Lumian's question.

"If you had sought the Tarot Club's assistance, I could have killed you!"

Hisoka's laughter reverberated, and his black shadow danced on the wall, morphing into curved goat horns and colossal bat wings.

Lumian caught a whiff of a conspiracy and asked in confusion and curiosity, "Why do you think so?"

Hisoka rose, a murderous glint materializing in his eyes.

“If you involve the Tarot Club, they'll undoubtedly seek my aid in your investigation.”

At this point, Hisoka's lips curled into an unusually flamboyant smile.

No longer conscious in the dream, he revealed his innermost self.

Lumian raised an eyebrow, asking, “Are you a Minor Arcana card holder?”

Hisoka shook his head, replying with a radiant smile, “I'm a member of the temperance faction, a devotee of Mr. Fool.”

The Devil burst into laughter, bowing and exclaiming, “Praise The Fool!”

Lumian, finding it absurd and amusing, instinctively analyzed the situation.

Hisoka is actually a member of the Rose School of Thought's temperance faction? A flamboyant and malicious Devil is actually a member of the temperance faction?

Logically speaking, this was clearly impossible!

Yet, in this dream crafted by Hela, unless Hisoka possessed unique abilities to deceive, lying was unlikely.

The only plausible explanation: he had infiltrated the temperance faction through deception and deceit!

On the surface, Hisoka seemed to be a Beyonder of the Prisoner pathway, displaying a level of restraint. As a non-core member of the temperance faction, he might have gone unnoticed with his issues.

Right, is this why the Matani patrol team allowed a Prisoner pathway Beyonder to join?

This was more than four years ago. Back then, Hisoka was merely a Sequence 8 Lunatic of the Prisoner pathway, not yet a Mid-Sequence Beyonder. As a peripheral member of the temperance faction, he likely operated without much scrutiny.

Moreover, he probably joined the temperance faction before this, when he was weaker and less noticeable.

Later, he faked receiving resources from the temperance faction and the Rose School of Thought's attack to advance. In reality, did he rely on the Mother Tree of Desire's boons? Where did those resources go? Were they secretly sold or crafted into a mystical item? That poker card?

Why did he infiltrate the temperance faction and worship Mr. Fool?

His main goal clearly isn't resources...

Faith in Mr. Fool...

With this in mind, Lumian suddenly had a guess.

Hisoka's true aim was to infiltrate the Church of The Fool through a certain pathway and have faith in Mr. Fool!

This revelation came from Celestial Worthy!

Hisoka genuinely believes in the Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings. However, that Celestial Worthy is resisting Mr. Fool. He can clearly influence the Seer, Apprentice, and Marauder pathways...

Hisoka used a specific technique during prayer. On the surface, he seemed to be praying to Mr. Fool, but in reality, did he receive a message from that Celestial Worthy? This way, he wouldn't face the risk of a false premise...

That's very likely... Madam Magician mentioned that if I don't follow the procedures when praying to Mr. Fool, the response might not be from him, but from the Celestial Worthy...

Why did Celestial Worthy make Hisoka do this?

Marauder... Steal... Could It be that He intends to gradually steal Mr. Fool's identity and faith through this method?

When many believers genuinely believe in Mr. Fool, but they equate him as the Celestial Worthy, the Celestial Worthy becomes The Fool?

Hiss, the more I think about it, the more terrifying it becomes...

Hisoka can't do it alone. There must be many others who share similar beliefs...

Impressive. If the Celestial Worthy usually gathers followers, the Tarot Club would wipe them out at the slightest hint. Yet, if their followers outwardly professed faith in Mr. Fool, not only would they escape destruction, but they'd also gain protection...

How devious...

Lumian swiftly deduced the situation, sensing the ominous pressure from the hidden Celestial Worthy.

Once marked by Him, failure could creep in unnoticed and strike him down unexpectedly!

Considering this, Lumian recalled Port Pylos and grasped Hisoka's confidence. He also comprehended why Hisoka had opted to remain and wait patiently.

Freshly arrived in the Southern Continent and stepping into Port Pylos for the first time, Lumian lacked resources, companions, and even knowledge of Dutanese. There was a high likelihood that he'd seek aid from the Tarot Club standing behind him.

The Major Arcana card holders of the Tarot Club wouldn't personally intervene without a clear target due to the uncertain timeframe. They would likely dispatch a Minor Arcana card holder familiar with the Southern Continent or a faction member to assist.

Under these circumstances, who better to meet the requirements than Twanaku Tupián, a Church of The Fool's temperance faction member from Matani, well-versed in the local situation, holding the appropriate official status, and reaching Sequence 6.

In that scenario, Lumian and Hisoka would investigate Hisoka. The other party would gradually grasp the situation, assess potential traps and their effectiveness. Hisoka could then seize the opportunity for a surprise attack, assault the mind, and trigger desires!

Contemplating this, Lumian acknowledged that if he failed to detect Hisoka's malice during the investigation, the chances of succumbing to Hisoka's hands were 100%. He'd be a spectator as the Devil faced off against Termiboros in the form of a soul fragment.

Hisoka, informed by Loki, should have made preparations to deal with the dangerous creature within the seal. Perhaps relying on the Nois family's Demon or his status as a Blessed of the Mother Tree of Desire.

Thankfully, Madam Magician kept reminding me that a Hunter can't rely on high-ranking individuals behind an organization for everything. I need to hone my skills, familiarize myself with conspiracies and battles. Otherwise, I might have sought guidance from the Tarot Club as soon as I arrived in Port Pyro...

That would have been dangerous...

Grande Soeur and Emperor Roselle both mentioned that the most dangerous places are often the safest. Now, I must add that those who seem the safest and most reliable might pose the greatest risk...

It's not that they're no longer trustworthy, but the enemy will exploit this sense of security.

Yes, Madam Magician has also emphasized that if anything seems awry with her orders and suggestions, I should ignore them. Quickly contacting the other Major Arcana card holders to confirm the situation is crucial.

Lumian gazed at the flamboyant Hisoka and smiled.

"If I hadn't received help from a special trace expert, if Hidden Blade hadn't been more familiar with your persona, and if I hadn't had a Psychiatrist to profile you, and ultimately failed to find any clues or direction, I would have sought the Tarot Club's help and looked for a guide familiar with the local situation."

Hisoka fell into silence. After a few moments, he spoke up, "I get everything else, but why the sudden need for a special trace expert?"

Lumian chuckled.

"Because it's a gift from a true god."

The more time Lumian spent with Ludwig, the more he felt that letting such a dangerous individual escape the Church's control wasn't a decision a high-ranking member of the Church of Knowledge would make. There had to be a revelation from the God of Knowledge and Wisdom.

Certainly, Lumian couldn't be sure. As far as he knew, the Knowledge pathway, also known as the Reader pathway, excelled in prophecies at high Sequence.

Hisoka fell into silence for a moment before unleashing a roar, much like a wild wolf howling beneath the moon.

Lumian reviewed the entire incident, realizing that this revenge was a clash of conspiracies. Unfortunately, Hisoka didn't grasp his personality and style well enough, nor did he comprehend his companions. He could only rely on the sea prayer ritual and Loki's first death as a guide.

Consequently, there was a deviation, shattering his expectations despite a high likelihood of success.

Phew... Lumian exhaled and inquired, "Who were the ones causing havoc on the patrol team's side?"

Chapter 652 "Extreme Joy Begets Sorrow"

Upon hearing Lumian's question, Hisoka's lips curved into a smile.

"Those are a few Fallen, under my control."

"Fallen?" Lumian could understand the literal meaning, but he didn't grasp the situation.

Simultaneously, he criticized Hisoka.

This is truly a dream. Emotions change so quickly.

Hisoka reminisced, "A Desire Apostle can plant a seed in others' hearts when their emotions and desires clearly fluctuate, causing corresponding problems to worsen. Gradually, they lose control and degenerate.

"When combined with my special abilities, I can make those humans unable to escape my control and obey only me for a long period through repeated depravities."

It's akin to injecting addictive psychiatric drugs, but more mystical? Lumian searched for analogous examples from an easy-to-understand perspective.

Suddenly, he recalled Naboredisley's description of Demons: "Demon in body, Demon in mind..."

Could this be a manifestation of the Demon within the mind? Is Hisoka's distinctiveness reflected in this aspect? Could it be that the individual from the temperance faction liaising with him has been tainted by his influence, causing them to withhold reporting any irregularities? Lumian gazed thoughtfully at Hisoka and inquired, "Indeed, as one would expect from an Apostle of Desire, a Demon that seduces the darkness of the mind. Is this a ritual for ascending to a Demon?"

"Just acclimating for now," Hisoka didn't refute, yet he sensed the current situation was far from ideal. It felt more like a rehearsal.

"You seem quite assured. Following the incident in Tizamo Town at year's end, you likely ascended to a Desire Apostle. It's only been a year, and you're already contemplating becoming a demigod?" Lumian mused briefly before questioning, "Is it because you finally appeased that Demon from the Nois family and acquired that thing?"

Even in his reverie, Hisoka appeared hesitant to disclose this matter. He responded with a hint of reluctance, "Yes."

Lumian refrained from provoking Hisoka for the time being, ensuring the dream didn't end prematurely. He altered his question.

“Where is that thing?”

When Hisoka transformed into a Devil, his attire ruptured, and nothing unusual dropped.

Hisoka's countenance contorted as he responded, “I-in Tizamo Town.”

Concealed in his body's hometown, Tizamo Town... If it's significant, why doesn't he carry it with him? Lumian's curiosity about the two pranks orchestrated by Hisoka in Tizamo Town and the gold mine city, Devise, intensified.

After a brief pause of contemplation, Lumian inquired, “You staged a prank in Devise just to pilfer a batch of gold?”

“Yes,” Hisoka affirmed.

Have you consumed too many novels like the Gold Heist? Were you in dire need of such a large sum of money back then? Yes, for criminals, it's quite normal to plan an operation to snatch gold when necessary. Unlike me, who relies on hunting and the gifts of villains... Just as Lumian thought it was trivial, he suddenly considered something.

Franca has been accumulating gold for future sacrifices to the Armored Shadow, Chen Tu...

Could Hisoka have orchestrated a prank to obtain a substantial amount of gold for a similar sacrifice? Lumian scrutinized Hisoka and probed, “Did you offer the gold as a sacrifice to the Nois family's Demon?”

Hisoka replied nonchalantly, “In Tizamo Town.”

“What's in Tizamo Town?” Lumian asked.

Hisoka appeared to snap out of his daze and exclaimed with a contorted expression, “Dream Festival, Dream Festival!”

His shadow surged to life, leaping onto him and shrouding him.

Hisoka reverted to pitch-black, transforming into a viscous, repulsive, and malevolent liquid that spread swiftly in all directions, as if determined to corrupt the interrogation room, Lumian, and the entire dream.

Lumian promptly exited the dream and observed Hisoka, who lay asleep on the ground, displaying signs of Devilification once more. Furthermore, he seemed somewhat translucent.

This key member of April Fool's was teetering on the brink of losing control!

Without hesitation, Lumian materialized a longsword crafted from blazing white flames in his hand.

The Hisoka figure before him emitted a myriad of colors, with the pale-white mark on the bridge of his nose being the least conspicuous.

Weakness Investigation!

Paleness signified a vulnerability.

Lumian hoisted the flaming sword, gripping it with both hands, and thrust downward, vanishing into the pale-white hue.

The Devil-like armor, resilient flesh, and steel-like bones bestowed by Zombie endured only a second before being pierced.

Lumian withdrew his blazing-white flaming sword and thrust down again.

Pfft!

This time, it penetrated deeper.

Lumian extracted the blazing-white flaming sword once more and leaped up, adding his weight to the downward thrust.

Pfft!

Lumian genuflected, and the flaming sword plunged into Hisoka's brain, transforming into scattered flames that obliterated all weakness.

Lumian withdrew his hands and stood up.

Hisoka's body, displaying signs of Devilification, twitched a few times before settling.

Adjacent to the bridge of his nose, a two-finger-wide wound appeared grotesquely abnormal. Its surface was charred and contracted, while flames surged from within.

The Devil had lost his life.

How resilient. He managed to withstand three strikes like this... Lumian gazed at Hisoka's corpse and silently sighed.

In that moment, Hisoka's corpse swiftly turned transparent, and his light brown skin gradually faded to pale-white.

Wraith... Transforming into a genuine wraith after death? Just as these thoughts crossed Lumian's mind, his surroundings abruptly darkened.

In the depths of the darkness, a serene chant resonated, soothing one's body and mind, inducing a reluctance to do anything but lie still.

All escape was tranquility.

Hisoka's wraith form halted its transformation, gradually gaining a tangible quality.

Finally, he perished completely.

What a formidable adversary to vanquish... If his wraith transformation hadn't been halted, could he have endured as a true wraith, evolving into an evil spirit in the future? Lumian glanced at Hela beside him and spoke once more, "Thank you."

He refrained from elaborating his conversation with Hisoka, recognizing that they had spoken in the dream created by Hela. She must be aware of it.

"Loki is the only one left," Hela said coldly, her gaze fixed on Hisoka's lifeless form.

Lumian fell silent for a few seconds before stating, "He can't be resurrected more than a few times."

"At most one more time," Hela replied with certainty.

Another time... Lumian tersely acknowledged.

Before long, Hisoka's Beyonder characteristic manifested, blending with the remaining goat horns above his head, transforming into a whimsical and flamboyant cluster of black crystals.

Various crystals extended in all directions, sharp and crooked. Multiple illusory, translucent faces emerged from each black crystal, their expressions alternating between malevolence, pain, madness, and confusion.

A Desire Apostle Beyonder characteristic corrupted by a Wraith boon? Lumian perceived it as more corrupting and perilous than the Serial Killer Beyonder characteristic from before.

He pointed at the Beyonder characteristic and Hisoka's lifeless body, addressing Hela, "Can I take them all?"

"Okay," Hela responded without objections.

In an old warehouse on an abandoned dock in Port Pylos, Franca, Anthony, and Jenna had already gathered, awaiting Lumian's return.

Amidst their conversation, a figure outlined itself in the sunlight streaming through a high window. It was Lumian, wearing a golden straw hat and disguised as Louis Berry.

Pa!

Lumian tossed Hisoka's corpse to the ground.

Immediately after, he retrieved the Beyonder characteristic from his Traveler's Bag and placed them near the corpse without touching them.

Only then did he smile at Franca, Jenna, and Anthony.

"It's settled."

"Is it really Hisoka?" Franca couldn't believe it could be so straightforward.

"It's him," Lumian briefly explained the situation. "He was overconfident and believed there's a high chance of killing me. He chose to stay and wait for an opportunity."

"What gave him the confidence?" Franca's eyes widened.

Since everyone present held a Minor Arcana card, Lumian didn't hold anything back. He recounted the situation, omitting the most perilous details.

"Can that really happen... Luckily, you didn't seek guidance from the Tarot Club." Jenna felt a lingering fear.

Franca sighed and commented, "I didn't think our collaboration alone would be sufficient."

Lumian pointed at the Beyonder characteristic and stated, "There's too much corruption, and it's very dangerous. I plan to seek Madam Magician's help and find a suitable Artisan to transform it into a Sealed Artifact. Everyone has the right to use it."

Lumian found it too sinister and corrupting. It couldn't become a mystical item with relatively mild negative effects. It could only be the kind that required sealing.

“Absolutely.” Franca was filled with anticipation as she imagined the potential abilities of a Sealed Artifact.

She suddenly recalled something and quickly blurted out, “Your Pride Armor is still in my possession. Tsk, you've really gotten the most out of it.”

Lumian chuckled.

“How can I face Devils without a Warrior? I've always wanted to use the Pride Armor, but I didn't expect Hisoka to choose the most convenient place like the bathroom.”

It was a confined, tight space with a certain degree of flexibility.

Franca retrieved the Pride Armor from her Traveler's Bag and placed it on the ground.

Suddenly, the air in the old warehouse froze.

The silver-white full-body armor turned to face Lumian, condensing into a broadsword of light. Then, it knelt on one knee and thrust into the ground.

Wh— Lumian's pupils dilated as his figure abruptly faded, disappearing from his spot.

The broadsword of light split open, transforming into a devastating storm that engulfed the surroundings, obliterating numerous wooden crates.

Wh— Franca, Jenna, and Anthony couldn't dodge in time and were shattered into fragments by the Hurricane of Light, reflecting brilliance.

“Dammit! Isn't this too vengeful? How much time has passed?!” Franca cursed from a corner of the warehouse.

Chapter 653 Lumian's Choice

Franca emerged from the shadows, exhaling a sigh of relief as she saw the silver-white full-body armor return to silence following Lumian's departure from the warehouse and the absence of weak targets.

With caution, she approached, making sure not to position herself behind the Pride Armor, finally standing face to face with it.

The Pride Armor remained motionless.

Franca extended her hands, barely lifting the silver-white full-body armor and tucking it back into her Traveler's Bag. Only then did she relax and call out, “It's all right, it's all right.”

Jenna emerged from a dark corner on the other side, and Anthony suddenly appeared at the warehouse door, seemingly prepared to roll and escape at any moment.

In a matter of seconds, Lumian somersaulted back from a high window, eliciting a chuckle from Franca.

“Damn it, we managed Hisoka just fine, but our own Sealed Artifact nearly wiped us out. Good thing we had substitutes. Otherwise, we might have been severely injured, if not dead,” she remarked.

Jenna commented calmly, “This could be a funny story for Ghost Face.”

Having moved out of the market district, she now had plenty of free time. Though she still owed Franca a large sum of money, she had enough assets to cover it. Thus, while completing the Tarot Club mission and trying to act, she could afford to watch a play once a week, buy magazines, newspapers, and books she had longed for but couldn't justify purchasing, and indulge in department stores and certain restaurants she had once yearned for.

Franca let out a hollow laugh.

“Who would have thought this armor would hold such a grudge? Hey Lumian, what did you do to it?”

she inquired, directing the subsequent questions to Lumian.

Lumian spread his hands.

“Wasn't it just a backstab?”

“I thought it would be fine after disengaging and waiting for it to calm down.”

Franca nodded repeatedly, offering him a way out.

“That's right, I thought so too.

“It's all because of that armor! It doesn't feel like armor at all!”

After a moment of pondering, Franca said, “I wonder when it will forget that you stabbed it in the back. For now, you'll have to leave it with me.”

“Alright,” Lumian said, feeling a twinge of regret. Such a useful Sealed Artifact was temporarily unusable.

He glanced at Hisoka's severely damaged corpse and the seemingly unscathed Beyond character characteristic, stowing them away in his Traveler's Bag. He said seriously, “I hope that the operation against the Minister of Industry will commence after the Sealed Artifact is completed. Though its negative effects will undoubtedly be severe, Desire Apostle and Wraith are definitely very useful, even if they can only unleash a portion of their abilities.”

“Indeed,” Franca replied, filled with anticipation.

She then turned to Lumian and asked, “Hisoka is already dead. You've achieved your goal in the Southern Continent. Where are you going next? Are you returning to Trier with us?”

Lumian shook his head, as if he had already considered the answer to this question.

“I plan to stay in the Southern Continent for a while longer.”

“Why? To investigate Tizamo Town and the Hisoka matter? That doesn't seem necessary,” Jenna expressed her confusion.

Lumian chuckled.

“This is a Hunter's paradise, don't you think?”

Without waiting for Franca and the others to inquire further, Lumian explained seriously, “After all that has transpired, I've come to realize something. For a Hunter to act well and digest swiftly, they must undergo diverse experiences.

“What I mean is, a Hunter's path is more straightforward compared to other paths. It's unlike Demonesses who must navigate pleasure, pain, while contemplating abstract and philosophical concepts which are often more intricate.

“As long as a Hunter is immersed in chaos, conflict, and constant combat, they can excel. Combat is akin to hunting. Chaos and conflict invariably breed numerous conspiracies. Provocation smoothens these conspiracies, arson secures victory in battle, and the aftermath of such incidents reaps the lives of enemies and the spoils of victory.”

Observing Franca, Jenna, and Anthony's puzzled expressions, Lumian smiled and continued, “It's been just over half a year since I ascended from Sequence 9 to Sequence 5. Why?

“Because I've been either passively or actively embroiled in a series of events. Through perpetual chaos, disputes, and battles, I've grasped the principles of performance and found opportunities to act.”

“In essence, a Hunter doesn't engage in elaborate acting before reaching High-Sequence Beyonder status. Though I possess some insight into fate due to my characteristics, it's also linked to determination and willpower. It's an integral part of combat.

“Hunters are forged in the crucible of blood and fire. They thrive amidst chaos and conflict. If I aim to grow stronger, I must pursue these elements. The Southern Continent offers precisely that.”

Thus, Lumian could swiftly assimilate the Reaper potion and strive to become a Sequence 5 Fate Appropriator of the Inevitability pathway.

Only by truly mastering some of fate's abilities could Lumian hope to uncover any connection between Loki and the ancient castle when he next confronted him.

According to Franca, Lumian had to locate the respawn point of an enemy capable of resurrection and camp there!

Certainly, the path to becoming a Fate Appropriator came with its own set of risks. Lumian's chances of encountering Circle Inhabitant Voisin Sanson would significantly rise, whether due to

the convergence of an Outer Deity's Blessed resulting from the world's rejection or the convergence of Inevitability powers.

Despite his yearning for such an encounter, Lumian was aware that he wasn't prepared to face a demigod, lacking the corresponding strength. A high-level Beyonder he could hire wouldn't be able to constantly keep an eye on him, and the moment of encounter was beyond his control.

Franca couldn't hide her envy upon hearing Lumian's plan.

If only the Demoness pathway's acting were that straightforward.

The early stages with Assassins and Instigators were relatively direct, but as time went on, it became more complicated.

Sigh. When I first met Lumian, I was clearly at a higher Sequence and stronger than him. It's only been half a year, but the tables have turned... Franca felt a mix of sorrow and impulsive emotions.

After sending Franca, Jenna, and Anthony back to Trier, Lumian entered Suite 7 on B3 of Hotel Orella, signaling for Lugano to leave.

Then, he carefully extracted Hisoka's lifeless body from his Traveler's Bag and positioned it in front of Ludwig. With a grin, he remarked, "Here's my end of the bargain. Is it edible?"

Ludwig, clutching a silver child's knife and fork with a steak laid out before him, sprung up from his seat. As he examined the torn, half-Devil-like, and bloodied remains, a mix of desire and hesitation played across his face.

It was clear he was tempted but wary.

After more than ten seconds, Ludwig delicately picked up the child's utensils and resolved himself.

"A tiny bit."

Without awaiting Lumian's reply, he crouched down and extended the child's knife and fork toward Hisoka's still open, flaxen-colored eyes.

Amidst the slicing sounds, Ludwig retrieved the Devil-like eyeballs, one on the fork and the other on the knife's tip.

Then, he poured a glass of orange Gwadar with one hand.

"There's caffeine in this. Not suitable for children," Lumian pointed out.

Ludwig glanced at the enticing beverage, then at the eyeballs on the child's utensils, and the half-Devil corpse on the ground. He fell silent.

Lumian also fell silent.

After a few moments, Ludwig submerged the eyeballs into the orange-yellow Gwadar, deliberately puncturing more holes with his fork to allow the liquid to seep out.

Then, he lifted the drink and squatted beside Hisoka's corpse, bringing the glass to a spot where some blood still dripped.

Bloop! Bloop! Bloop! Three drops of sulfur-scented blood fell into the fading orange beverage, swiftly tinting it with the color of blood.

Ludwig swirled the liquid in the glass and consumed it.

Lumian observed as Ludwig finished his drink, noting a clear boost in energy. Curious, he inquired, "What's the effect of this?"

Ludwig licked his lips and responded, "Permanently enhances my spirituality, allowing me to keenly sense the aura of the Abyss. I can also command a few lower-level undead creatures.

"Only the first glass has this effect. Subsequent drinks of a similar nature can only temporarily heighten my perception and restore some spirituality."

Ludwig's tone carried a maturity as he spoke on such matters.

Not bad... but only you would dare to consume such a messy thing... Lumian criticized inwardly. He stowed away Hisoka's remains and retreated to his bedroom, initiating a letter to Madam Magician. The focus was on reporting Hisoka's apparent identity, his speculations, and the issues with Tizamo Town. Additionally, he proposed that the reward for these unexpected discoveries should be the transformation of Hisoka's Beyonder characteristic into a Sealed Artifact.

Having neatly folded the letter, Lumian produced a jagged black crystal clump and arranged a ritual. He called forth Madam Magician's doll messenger.

Upon its emergence, the doll messenger emitted a disdainful sound, pinching its nose.

It pointed at Hisoka's Beyonder characteristic and remarked in a sharp voice,

"Pack it into a box! It's filthy!"

Lumian retrieved a small paper box from his Traveler's Bag and stuffed the black crystal clump inside.

"Tie it up."

"Stuff it in another box."

"Use another box to contain them."

The doll messenger continued with its requests.

Finally, it begrudgingly picked up the box and carried the letter away.

Port Pylos's patrol team.

Reaza informed Camus, "All the problematic team members have been purged. The rest are undergoing individual reviews. You are part of it too."

"How's Kolobo?" Camus asked with concern.

"He's fine. We went to the Earth Mother Church to hire a Doctor," Reaza replied calmly. "The major issue now is that we haven't apprehended Twanaku. Moreover, we're certain that he's both a Wraith and a Desire Apostle."

"How? Isn't he too powerful?" Camus felt a twinge of fear at the thought of potential retaliation from Twanaku.

At that moment, a patrol team member entered the office and informed Reaza and Camus, “Captain Reaza, Boss, the straw hat guy is back!”

Chapter 654 Bounty

Louis Berry is back again? Camus's forehead twitched at the mention of the “straw hat guy.”

Since encountering the adventurer, his life had taken a tumultuous turn. First, he had “captured” the murderer in a serial killing case, then he unearthed clues related to a four-year-old case. Subsequently, the suspect had emerged, attempting to harm him and Kolobo, throwing the patrol team into chaos.

And now, Louis Berry was making another appearance?

Camus felt the weight on his chest, and his heart raced.

“Where is Louis Berry?” Reaza was already familiar with Camus's account.

The patrol team member who had brought the report hastily answered, “Sitting in the hall.”

Reaza nodded, and he and Camus left the office, descending the stairs.

As they walked, Camus gradually snapped out of his daze.

He recalled Louis Berry's suspicions about Twanaku the previous day, how he had abandoned his theories without delving into specifics, and how the adventurer had sought him out early in the morning, hoping to gather information indirectly. Shortly after Kolobo handed over Twanaku's information, the latter had been attacked, leading to a fierce battle.

Did Louis Berry employ such a cautious inquiry to avoid triggering the Devil's Danger Premonition? Was buying information from Kolobo a trap targeting Twanaku? No, hadn't Twanaku sensed the corresponding danger? He could only sense it a minute or two in advance, and would it be too late by the time he discovered it? As a former Public Security Officer and now an Interrogator, Camus swiftly made connections and speculations.

He believed that Louis Berry had likely identified Twanaku after learning about his preference for sugarless Fermo coffee. He hinted at suspicions regarding the police headquarters but refrained from going into specifics, fearing that Twanaku might foresee danger!

As for how Louis Berry set a trap for Twanaku without detection, Camus couldn't puzzle it out for now.

Furthermore, he suspected that Louis Berry's operation hadn't been entirely successful. There were no signs from the Matani Import and Export Shop indicating Twanaku's demise.

This was a Sequence 5 Desire Apostle, wielding the power of a Sequence 5 Wraith. Unless a demigod personally intervened, they might require two or three battle teams of Mid-Sequence Beyonders from pathways like Sun and Warrior to handle him. Alternatively, they needed to mobilize Beyonders at the level of a Sequence 5 Pirate Admiral, armed with potent mystical items.

Soon, Camus and Reaza spotted Louis Berry seated on the sofa in the hall's guest area, his golden straw hat standing out in the sunlight.

“Monsieur Louis Berry, what brings you here again?” Camus inquired in deep Intisian.

Louis Berry gave Camus a deep look before smiling and addressing Reaza in fluent Dutanese, “I’m here to collect the bounty.”

As he spoke, he retrieved Twanaku’s head from his Traveler’s Bag.

Camus and Reaza observed the blood-stained face, the head with the broken horn, the vacant eyes, and the gruesome wound on the bridge of the nose, along with ten to twenty deep cuts.

Despite the severe damage, Camus, a former Public Security Officer, recognized the owner at a glance.

Twanaku Tupián!

He succeeded? Had he truly set a trap for a Desire Apostle and managed to defeat him? Camus’s gaze shifted up, scrutinizing Louis Berry, a young man with the title of a great adventurer in the Fog Sea.

Such strength could rival any Pirate Admiral in the Five Seas!

Of course, this assessment applied only to individual abilities, excluding the subordinates of Pirate Admirals.

Reaza silently ascertained from a spiritual level. He turned to Camus and asked in Dutanese,

“Is it Twanaku?”

“Yes,” Camus confirmed, sighing inwardly.

The battle between Twanaku and Louis Berry had been fierce, resulting in his tragic demise. Not only were his eyes absent, but he was also covered in wounds, displaying signs of Devilification.

Reaza looked at Lumian and pondered for a moment before speaking in Dutanese, “I wonder if you’ve seen Twanaku’s wanted poster. The bounty is only 70,000 verl d’or.”

Back then, the bounty was set based on the criteria of a Serial Killer. It was only increased by 20,000 because this particular Serial Killer targeted Beyonders.

Lumian barely understood and switched to Intisian with a smile.

“If I wait two days to collect the bounty, will I be able to get more?”

Upon hearing this, Camus pondered for a moment and realized the validity of the statement.

In two days, their wanted posters would depict Desire Apostle and Wraith Twanaku, who had caused the deaths of several members of the patrol team, not the Serial Killer from the past!

Of course, with Matani’s financial resources, it was impossible to significantly raise the bounty. At most, they could double it and report the danger to the Church of Earth Mother, the Eternal Blazing Sun Church, and other official organizations in the Northern Continent to see if they would be willing to increase the bounty.

After Camus translated Lumian’s words into Dutanese, Reaza remained silent, unsure of how to respond.

For the patrol team, 70,000 to 80,000 verl d’or was a substantial sum!

Without waiting for a response, Lumian added with a smile, “But there's no need to add to the bounty. Just fulfill two of my requests. Two simple ones.”

“What are they?” Reaza asked in a deep voice after hearing Camus's translation.

Lumian chuckled in response, stating, “Firstly, I want to see all the dossiers related to Tizamo Town. Secondly, I'm very curious about Twanaku's card and want to take a look. Of course, I'll just take a look.”

“You want to investigate last year's incident in Tizamo Town? Isn't your sole purpose in Port Pylos to find Twanaku?” Camus asked, puzzled.

Lumian chuckled.

“Need I remind you? Twanaku's hometown is Tizamo Town.”

Wh— Camus suddenly felt that the matter with Twanaku wouldn't conclude with the other party's death. There were still many secrets hidden behind it.

Louis Berry had mentioned this from the beginning.

After translating their conversation for Reaza, Camus sensed that the patrol team's previous investigation of the Tizamo Town incident might have concluded too hastily.

Eyeing Louis Berry, who had successfully taken down a Desire Apostle wielding Wraith powers, the chilly Reaza fell silent for a few seconds before uttering, “Who tasked you with looking into Twanaku?”

Without giving a direct response, Lumian inquired, “Did he declare himself a member of the temperance faction, a follower of The Fool?”

“It's not a self-proclamation. We verified it,” Reaza confidently replied after hearing Camus's translation.

As anticipated... Just making confirmation, Lumian stood up for the Church of The Fool, stating, “Traitors can surface in any organization, and there'll be individuals with hidden agendas attempting to infiltrate.”

“That's indeed our problem,” Camus sincerely concluded. “We shouldn't solely rely on the organization they're affiliated with to determine a person's character or whether they can be recruited. We also need to observe their words and actions.”

After careful consideration, Reaza agreed to Lumian's request.

While assigning another patrol team member to aid Lumian in the process and collect the bounty, he instructed Camus to show Lumian the poker card.

In the cold and silent underground corridor, Camus gazed at Lumian and cautiously asked, “What are you investigating?”

This had already led to the death of a Sequence 5 Desire Apostle!

Lumian emitted a soft chuckle.

“It's dangerous to know too much.”

Camus fell silent, wisely choosing not to inquire further, drawing from past experiences.

As Lumian advanced, he casually asked, “How many members of the patrol team perished this time?”

“Four. All under Twanaku's control.” Camus gave a self-

deprecating smile. “We'll be recruiting new members before the end of the year. They're fortunate. Those with suitable pathways don't have to worry about subsequent Sequence potions. If they aren't from the correct pathways, they can use Sealed Artifacts.”

This was how the resources of an official organization gradually accumulated.

Lumian nodded slightly.

“How's Kolobo?”

Camus's smile grew more relaxed.

“He's fine. He's almost healed.”

As they conversed, they arrived at a room adorned with cold bones. A metallic poker card lay on the table in the middle.

“Be careful. It will burrow into your body and control you like a Wraith,” Camus warned.

Lumian nodded slightly and approached, reaching out for the card with the ten of spades on its face.

A bone-like sensation entered his mind, accompanied by a chilling cold.

Lumian's right hand quickly became encased in a layer of frost.

The frost rapidly crystallized and extended towards his arm.

Simultaneously, the card's surface underwent a transformation, revealing a grayish-white joker.

It rapidly etherealized, poised to merge with Lumian's body.

Silently, Lumian's arm burst into brilliant white flames. With a swift flick of his palm, he accurately pressed his thumb onto the poker card that hadn't completely dissipated, right onto the joker's face.

The poker card fell into silence.

Frost detached from Lumian's arm, descended to the ground, and melted into water.

Zombie's Frost, Wraith's Possession... This is really a mystical item from the Prisoner pathway...

Lumian swiftly made a basic assessment.

However, the transformation abilities displayed by the poker cards didn't align with his understanding of the Prisoner pathway. Instead, they resembled superficial applications of a Faceless.

Could it be corruption brought about by the Celestial Worthy? Also, when the temperance faction provides resources, it's impossible to directly give Wraith. They start from low Sequences and work

their way up... Did this poker card strengthen time and time again? Does Hisoka have a permanent Artisan collaborator? Lumian withdrew his gaze from the poker card and slowly retreated to Camus's side.

"I'm done," he thought for a moment and said, "Be careful when using this item."

Camus nodded.

"We'll treat it as a Sealed Artifact rather than a mystical item."

Upon returning to the surface, Camus gathered all the dossiers related to Tizamo Town.

Lumian sorted through the items and picked up one of them.

Chapter 655 Pleasure

Lumian carefully examined the dossier on the Tizamo Town tragedy, which unfolded at the close of the previous year.

It detailed the incident as a gentleman and his servant's hunting expedition in Tizamo Town's primitive forest. Their actions provoked a large primitive tribe, leading to a retaliatory surprise attack on Tizamo Town. The assault resulted in numerous casualties, including the gentleman, his servant, several patrol team members responsible for Tizamo Town's security, and many innocent civilians.

In response, Admiral Querarill deployed additional troops to safeguard the area, prompting the primitive tribe to retreat into the depths of the forest.

There are quite a few formidable tribes inhabiting the Southern Continent's primitive forests... Lumian sighed from the bottom of his heart after reading the dossier.

This situation, a historical relic from the Balam Empire era, was emblematic of the challenges faced by the region.

While ancient empires boasted numerous powerful individuals in their ranks, along with a substantial number of Low- to Mid-Sequence Beyonders, effective management faced limitations. Technical constraints, population size, and the diversity of characteristics restricted governance to cities with favorable geographical conditions. These included towns and villages surrounding these cities, fertile plains, pastures, and valleys. The more challenging terrains, like primitive forests and mountains, remained largely unexplored due to these limitations, providing little incentive for the empires to eliminate potential threats.

When the Northern Continent invaded, causing the fragmentation of the Balam Empire and the destruction or replacement of other nations, many rebels sought refuge in these untouched areas, intensifying the dangers of the primitive forests and mountains.

In contrast, after Emperor Roselle initiated the Industrial Revolution, such challenges decreased in the Northern Continent. Currently, only a few remnants linger in the mountains of the south-central region.

The dossier offers no clues about April Fool's pranks or any Demon presence. Lumian, undeterred, set aside the dossier and turned his attention to something else.

He searched for keywords like “dream” and “festival.”

Before his demise, Hisoka had mentioned the “Dream Festival.”

Unfortunately, the patrol team had only been operational for six to seven years, with no recorded history of Tizamo Town's previous issues. During this period, there were no instances of dream-related or festival-related problems in Tizamo Town.

Lumian wasn't disheartened. He placed the dossiers down and addressed Camus, “Can I make a copy of everything?”

“No problem.” Camus knew Louis Berry was about to summon the Rabbit of Knowledge again.

At that moment, Reaza entered with another member of the patrol team, placing a small but weighty cloth bag in front of Lumian.

“Your bounty. Confirm it,” Reaza said in Dutanese.

Lumian lifted the cloth bag and spilled its contents onto the table.

Banknotes from Intis and a considerable number of gold coins lay before him. Lumian counted them, confirming everything was in order.

After Reaza and the other patrol team member departed, Lumian turned to Camus and pushed the cloth bag over with a smile.

“You...” Camus's eyes widened, asking hesitantly.

Lumian responded with a grin, “As I said, I'll waive the official bounty.”

“But I didn't...” Camus subconsciously replied, maintaining his politeness.

Lumian chuckled.

“The information you provided was crucial, but you need to share it with Kolobo.

“Also, do me a favor.”

This sum of money is for information and compensation based on the dangers we faced... Camus pressed down on the cloth bag, asking, “What is it?”

“Help me find a few people born and raised in Tizamo Town who are currently living in Port Pylos. Also, locate a few who have visited Tizamo Town multiple times but have no connection to it. Bring them to my place one by one,” Lumian requested.

Camus listened attentively and breathed a sigh of relief.

“No problem.”

This matter was straightforward!

Upon his return to Hotel Orella, Lumian had barely set down the Rabbit of Knowledge's copied dossier in his room, ready to delve into its details, when the doorbell chimed.

Amidst the tinkling sounds, Lugano rushed to open the door.

Shortly after, he called out, "Boss, Monsieur Iveljsta wishes to meet you."

Iveljsta? The one residing on B18 with numerous Zombie servants, suspected to be a Wraith? He's here for me? Lumian raised his eyebrows, set aside the dossier, and exited the master bedroom.

Trier, Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative.

In Franca and Jenna's rented apartment.

After seeing Anthony off, Franca returned to the master bedroom, contemplating the progress of digesting the Pleasure potion.

Even though Lumian's situation was unique, how could he digest the potion so quickly? How could he ascend to Sequence 5 in merely half a year? Despite this, Franca found herself triggered.

There lingered a sense of disappointment and frustration at being outpaced within seven months of watching over Lumian as an elder sister, or rather, an elder brother.

She longed to reach Sequence 5 and become a Demoness of Affliction at the earliest opportunity.

Truth be told, her digestion of the Pleasure potion surpassed that of most Demonesses. She had also gleaned substantial insights while delving into alternative interpretations and symbols of Pleasure. Patience was paramount, but blame fell upon the fellow with an absurdly rapid progression by her side!

Sigh, I must seek a partner for Pleasure. Both the ordinary and more profound forms of Pleasure are imperative. Only then can I digest it more rapidly. One is akin to my left foot, the other to my right—I must exert effort in both to move forward. I cannot jump on one foot alone... Franca's thoughts were lucid, yet she was uncertain how to proceed. Sigh, I cannot muster the courage to broach the subject... Should I seek help from Browns and her companions?

As Franca paced the room, she suddenly heard a knock on the bedroom door.

Jenna? Franca paused and turned towards the door.

"Enter, please."

Jenna, donned in a beige fluffy dress, stood before the door.

"Why the sudden politeness?" Franca inquired, feeling slightly uneasy.

Jenna chuckled in exasperation.

"Dammit! I've always been polite, okay? It's just that you never shut the door. You only close it when you sleep. How am I supposed to knock?"

With that remark, Jenna wore a vexed expression.

She regained composure and flashed a smile.

"Are you grappling with the Pleasure potion's digestion? Do you lack a target for its digestion?"

"Yes, but as I mentioned before..." Franca began to defend herself.

Jenna cut in, "What about me?"

“Huh?” Franca was caught off guard.

She questioned if she was imagining things.

Jenna's lovely face displayed a charming smile, reminiscent of her days as the Showy Diva, Little Minx.

She pushed aside strands of hair falling from her ears and grinned.

“Didn't you inform the Demoness of Black that we're lovers?”

“Then why not turn to me for Pleasure potion digestion?”

“B-but...” Franca was bewildered. “Why are you doing this?”

Jenna approached Franca, maintaining her enticing smile.

“I want to experience pleasure. I'll become one in the future.”

Surprise shifted to shock. Franca examined Jenna, wondering if she had undergone a sudden change.

Franca only snapped out of her reverie when Jenna halted in front of her, and a familiar fragrance filled her senses. She blurted out, “Are you trying to help me? Are you aiding me in this aspect because I've been without a partner for Pleasure digestion for so long?”

Jenna stopped and chuckled.

“That's one reason.”

She gazed up at Franca's face and sincerely praised, “You're so beautiful...”

Franca fell silent for a moment before posing a serious question, “Do you like me?”

“I do,” Jenna replied promptly. Her eyes glinted as she smiled and added, “You're so lively, interesting, and captivating. Why wouldn't I like you?”

Franca bit her red, moist lips.

“Then, do you love me? In a non-platonic sense.”

Jenna fell silent.

She cast her gaze downward and pursed her lips.

“I don't want to deceive you. To me, you're a beacon of light that brightens my life, offering hope and warmth. You're the person I trust the most, my closest friend, and the perfect sister in my heart. However, I've never envisioned romantic love between us.”

Franca's heart sank at the words “I don't want to deceive you,” and an inexplicable ache surged within her.

A shiver ran down her spine.

She raised her right hand and shifted it slightly.

“Then, I can't...”

“Dammit! Why must you make things so complicated?” Jenna was already feeling bashful, embarrassed, and torn. She struggled to conceal it and convinced herself it was just an act. Upon hearing Franca's refusal, she finally erupted. “Can't we have sex without love? Are you truly a Demoness devoted solely to love?”

“I just feel...” Franca faltered. “I can handle others, but not you. I can't bear the thought of you sacrificing yourself...”

Before she could finish, Jenna's tender lips pressed against hers, exploring and nibbling with an unpracticed finesse.

Franca couldn't resist, swept away by Jenna's lips and tongue, fueled by long-awaited anticipation, months of restraint, the lingering influence of Demon corruption, and the effects of the Pleasure potion.

She succumbed to it until Jenna pulled back, panting.

“Sacrifice, my foot! Quit playing innocent. Haven't you always joked about letting me experience true pleasure? Get with it!” Jenna's cheeks flushed as she glared at Franca with moist eyes, resembling a fervent and assertive lion cub.

Franca suddenly felt that during Jenna's days in the market district as Little Minx, a small part of her personality might not have been an act but something she already possessed.

Jenna kissed her again, and Franca couldn't deny the allure.

As she relished the fragrant, sweet, and passionate pleasures, she couldn't shake off the realization that this was merely assistance, not love.

In that moment, a phrase echoed in her mind: In pain we find pleasure, in pleasure we drown.

Chapter 656 Choosing a Reward

Lumian once again encountered Monsieur Iveljsta, who resided in B18. He still wore a fluffy black hat adorned with a white feather and a complex black robe.

With a quick glance, Lumian had already covertly used Weakness Investigation to search for pale-white marks on Iveljsta's body, ready for potential assassinations and surprise attacks.

Aurore and Emperor Roselle had always emphasized the need to stay vigilant against others at all times!

Of course, Lumian felt that the two of them hadn't done a good job in this matter. Otherwise, they would still be active in the world.

At that moment, the pallor on Iveljsta's body concentrated on his dark-brown eyes, emitting an illusory quality that seemed unreal.

Does this mean he can quickly transform into a Wraith, and his eyes are no longer his weakness? As Lumian pondered, he gestured towards the divan in the living room.

“Let's chat there.”

Ludwig, seated at the dining table, glanced at Iveljsta for a few seconds before lowering his head and continuing his meal with a succulent piece of beef.

Iveljsta nodded slightly and entered the living room quietly, taking a seat in a corner of the divan.

Are you a student at a primary school? So disciplined... Lumian criticized as he focused on observing Iverista's luck.

It was relatively normal and nothing special.

At that moment, Lumian suddenly had a few thoughts.

Luck Observation and Weakness Investigation require the eyes to determine the target's color. However, one focuses on the background color, while the other captures the various colors on the surface of the body. When I become a Fate Appropriator, could these two abilities fuse and mutate into a more special ability?

Why can I only use my eyes to observe these two abilities? Is a blind Reaper incapable of attacking a target's weakness? Similarly, is a blind Ascetic unqualified to observe others' luck? Can't they rely on their spirituality and ears and nose?

Or could it be done at a higher Sequence?

Lumian eased into the armchair, positioning himself at an angle across from Iveljsta. Flashing a friendly smile, he asked, “What's the matter?”

He spoke in Intisian.

Iveljsta, as silent as a corpse, straightened up. His eyes, deep as he spoke in ancient Feysac.

“Allow me to introduce myself. Iveljsta Eggers, a member of the Rose School of Thought and temperance faction under the Church of The Fool.”

Lumian's nerves, already tense, heightened. Nevertheless, he maintained a relaxed demeanor, confirming, “Are you Twanaku's liaison?”

He switched to ancient Feysac.

“No,” Iveljsta shook his head, “I've already eliminated that member fifteen minutes ago.”

Fifteen minutes ago, when I was still with the patrol team... However, you can't expect me to believe you just because you say so... Lumian feigned curiosity and asked, “I recall that you arrived in Port Pylos before Twanaku was exposed. What was your original motive?”

“I'm investigating the primitive forest in this area. I'm still in the early stages of gathering more information,” Iveljsta replied seriously. “Four days ago, I came into contact with Twanaku and obtained some information from him. He seemed fine and was very restrained.”

He's indeed restrained. Otherwise, there wouldn't be a second serial murder case in Port Pylos only after four years... Going to the primitive forest to investigate... The primitive forest... On the

surface, the incident in Tizamo Town was a sudden attack by a tribe in the primitive forest. Lumian quickly made many connections and said to Iveljsta thoughtfully, “Twanaku once did something in Tizamo Town that involved the tribes in the nearby primitive forest. Some of his important items seem to be hidden in Tizamo Town. It might also be related to a Nois family Demon of unknown Sequence.”

Iveljsta listened in silence, lost in thought.

After a few seconds, he said to Lumian, “Thank you for providing this information. It might not be useful for my investigation, but it can let me know what to be wary of.”

He didn't specify his mission. Clearly, he needed his superior's permission.

Lumian responded nonchalantly, “Even if I don't tell you now, you'll find out tonight or tomorrow.”

Having already reported the matter to Madam Magician, the Major Arcana card holder would undoubtedly inform the Church of The Fool and the temperance faction in detail subsequently. It wouldn't only be a general outline that mentioned key personnel like before.

Iveljsta nodded with restraint and said, “I'm here to express my gratitude and to inform you that we're already investigating any potential problems and latent dangers.

“Also, if you need help in Matani, feel free to come to me.”

“Alright.” Lumian didn't stand on ceremony.

After delving into the more serious matters, Lumian, intrigued, asked Iveljsta, “Why did you add the Rose School of Thought prefix when you introduced yourself? You've already left the Rose School of Thought and joined the Church of The Fool. It sounds as if the Rose School of Thought is affiliated with the Church of The Fool.”

“Our leader specifically requested this. She always believes that we are the true orthodox branch of the Rose School of Thought. Only we represent the Rose School of Thought. Those traitors should change the organization's name, not us,” Iveljsta explained in detail.

Sounds quite stubborn... Aren't you from the temperance faction? Don't you restrain your emotions and desires in this aspect? Yes, Sequence 5 is Wraith, close to evil spirits, and evil spirits have an extreme side. Is this reflected in High-Sequence Beyonders of the temperance faction's corresponding pathway? Lumian didn't quite understand and tried to make a guess based on the available information.

He was just chatting and had no intention of inquiring further. Instead, he asked,

“Your last name is Eggers. Was your ancestor a member of the Balam Empire's royal family?”

“Yes,” Iveljsta replied proudly, his emotions held in check. “And my mother's lineage is noble from the Highlands Kingdom.”

For many in the Southern Continent, the surname Eggers bore unparalleled prestige. It was a symbol of a deity who had once trod the land, a representation of Death's dominion over the world.

But Lumian's curiosity wandered elsewhere.

“I've heard that the mausoleums of the Balam Empire's nobles are constructed upside down underground, much like this hotel. What mystical significance does that hold? Is it simply a way to confront death? And why is death associated with the underground? Shouldn't the Underworld exist in the spirit world?”

This was the question that piqued Lumian's interest upon learning about the matter.

His understanding of mysticism was limited.

Iveljsta pondered for a moment and then explained, “I didn't choose the Death pathway. The construction method originated from ancient times, passed down by all the Eggers ancestors, devoted to the deity who controlled death.

“He embodies the very concept of death. Emulating Him is a way to approach the source of death.

“This mystic explanation resonates with me the most. Over the years, I've heard various interpretations:

“Some see life and death as opposing mystical concepts. They argue that, just as we stand upright and grow upwards in life, burial upside down signifies the contradiction and connection between life and death.

“Others believe that true hell isn't in the spirit world or the Underworld, but deep underground. Descending further symbolizes reaching true hell and returning to the essence of death. Thus, mausoleums are built upside down, reflecting our intention to face hell, worship death, and return to the source. This is the essence and symbol of mysticism.”

Some Beyonders of the Death pathway don't really approve of the Underworld... Can you discover true hell by delving deep underground? Heh heh, hasn't anyone informed you that the world we're on is essentially a planet? Does this extension reach underground magma and the core? Do they believe that's the genuine hell? Going deeper will traverse the core and the magma, but that'll merely be the other side of the planet, let alone true hell... Lumian found himself increasingly entertained as he listened.

Suddenly, he was taken aback.

What exists on the opposite side of the planet?

I only know of the Northern and Southern Continents. Considering the time difference, they're nearly on the same side...

If this world is genuinely a planet, there must be another side. But I've never heard of any continents—just an expansive sea?

Wait, how did those giant fellows from the New City of Silver emerge from the Forsaken Land of the Gods... Something must have occurred on the continent on the other side of the planet, abandoned by the deities. Could that be why it's known as the Forsaken Land of the Gods?

If I have a chance in the future, I could revisit the New City of Silver and explore the library for books related to the Forsaken Land of the Gods...

Lumian reined in his thoughts and continued conversing with Iveljsta for a while. Eventually, he escorted the former descendant of the Balam Empire's royal family, a member of the temperance faction, away from this floor.

Not long after returning to his room, the doll messenger arrived with a response from Madam Magician.

“The information and insights you've gathered this time are exceptionally valuable. It's no wonder my spiritual perception guided me to let you visit the New City of Silver after the Hanth Island Demon incident.

“Reflecting on it, your encounter with Naboredisley seemed almost coincidental. You followed the clues to Hanth Island. Hmm, you should grasp the significance, right?

“The situation in this matter both reassures me and intensifies my vigilance and anxiety. When that entity stands by our side, these details are incredibly useful. However, He won't always be with us. When our objectives clash, I can't fathom what challenges we'll face. The same goes for you and me.

“Therefore, Hunters must rely more on their personal growth amidst blood, fire, chaos, and conflict. Many Hunters meet their end, using their bones to forge the Red Priest who conquers all.

“We've already initiated an internal review. It involves a considerable number of individuals and will take a substantial amount of time to complete. Considering your contributions, besides converting the Beyonder characteristic into a Sealed Artifact, you have the option to choose a reward. Pick one out of two. Here are your choices.

“1: the potion formula for the Hunter pathway's Sequence 4 Iron-blooded Knight. 2: I'll assist you in divining clues about the remaining parts of the Abscessed Hand's body.”

Chapter 657 Tizamo Town

Reading Madam Magician's two choices, Lumian fell into deep thought.

These were incredible rewards!

It had to be known that reaching Sequence 4 marked a crucial point for Beyonders, a moment of qualitative transformation. From then on, one could attain godhood and become a half-human, half-

god entity. Most Beyonders would never get this far. This wasn't just about becoming a demigod; it also included seeing or obtaining related items firsthand.

A Sequence 4 potion formula was usually priceless!

Moreover, this was a Sequence 4 potion formula related to Lumian's own pathway.

As for the reward of divining clues about the rest of the Abscessed Hand's body, it symbolized the promise and assistance of an Angel. Ordinary Beyonders wouldn't even dream of such a chance, let alone receive an opportunity. They could only read about Angels gaining the Lord's permission and responding to believers' prayers in various Churches.

Furthermore, Lumian needed to address this issue.

After advancing to a Sequence 5 Reaper, his top priority was finding the remaining parts of the Abscessed Hand's body. Without completing this task, the formula, the ingredients, the digestion process, and the prepared ritual wouldn't give him a shot at becoming a demigod in time due to the unfulfilled promise and the oath's restrictions. Regret wouldn't even be an option.

Lumian had no clue how to locate it by himself. His only plan was to mimic the incantation for summoning the Abscessed Hand and craft a new series of summoning incantations. He hoped to summon the spirit world creature's legs, arms, body, and head.

However, this was a risky endeavor. In his dream, Lumian learned from his sister that when the summoning incantation lacked clarity and had no restrictions, the summoned entity could be unpredictable. It might be a demigod-level spirit world creature filled with malice, capable of killing the summoner instantly.

Lumian couldn't pinpoint the precise direction due to the unknown fragmentation of the Abscessed Hand's body. It could be a relatively intact body missing a hand, or it might have shattered into tiny, peanut-sized fragments. Describing it accurately was impossible. He could only experiment repeatedly, narrowing down the possibilities. It was akin to playing with his life.

More importantly, Lumian had already combed through the comprehensive information on common spirit world creatures provided by Madam Magician. Still, he found nothing that seemed to be other parts of the Abscessed Hand's body.

Lumian desired the Sequence 4 Iron-blooded Knight potion formula and clues about the rest of the Abscessed Hand's body.

This was the reason why he couldn't make a decision.

He pondered whether to teleport back to Trier now and seek Franca or Jenna's help in divination, hoping their spiritual insights would provide him with valuable hints.

As these thoughts raced through his mind, Lumian reached a decision.

The second option!

This was because he remembered something important. Mr. Hanged Man's reward had yet to materialize. It was an opportunity to explore the Blue Avenger, a ghost ship that was a relic of the Tudor Empire.

Considering that the Blood Emperor Alista Tudor was once a true god of the Hunter pathway and a half-mad Red Priest, the Tudor Empire's inheritance contained the Sequence 4 potion formula of the

Hunter pathway, along with Beyonder ingredients and characteristics. It was something to look forward to.

Lumian promptly sat down and penned a reply to Madam Magician, expressing his thoughts. He also informed her that he would be heading to Tizamo Town to investigate Hisoka's inheritance.

At 4 p.m., Camus Castiya, accompanied by three dark-brown Southern Continent natives, knocked on the door of Suite 7 on B3 of Hotel Orella.

“They all hail from Tizamo, born and bred. They only ventured to Port Pylos in search of opportunities upon reaching adulthood,” Camus explained in Intisian, introducing the two men and one woman. “One is a supplier of Gwadar berries, another married a local and toils at the port, and the third took a less lawful path as a thief.”

One is a relatively wealthy merchant, the other is a dockworker, and the other is a thief. They happen to be at three different social levels, and they are from both genders. This will allow me to understand the situation in Tizamo to the greatest extent and comprehensively. Camus is very professional in this aspect. As expected of a former Public Security Officer... Lumian nodded slightly and asked the three subjects in fluent Dutanese, “I'm a scholar of folklore en route to Tizamo. But before that, I'd like to learn more about the town. My Dutanese is a bit rusty, so Mr. Camus will assist in translation.”

“We'll heed Officer Camus,” responded the eldest merchant with a smile, quickly seconded by the others.

Lumian turned to Lugano and instructed, “I'll take one to the master bedroom for an exchange. You can entertain the other two.”

“Alright,” Lugano replied promptly.

Inside the master bedroom, Lumian courteously seated the merchant in an armchair, positioning himself at the edge of the bed. Speaking in Intisian, he inquired, “What's the primary produce of Tizamo?”

Camus, translating, wore a puzzled expression.

Is Louis Berry truly planning a journey to Tizamo?

It's evident he's tracing Twanaku's footsteps!

Camus assumed the role of an Interrogator, staring down at the seated merchant as he conveyed Lumian's words.

The merchant, filled with trepidation, responded, “Sir, we mainly cultivate Gwadar berries, spices, and forest fruits. Numerous plantations dot the surroundings, and we often venture into the forest for hunting, selling both meat and fur. Additionally, we cut down trees for crafting coffins.

“That's... that's about it. The remaining effort goes into planting corn and potatoes for our own consumption.”

Lumian absorbed the information and refined his understanding of Dutanese through Camus's translation.

Engaging in casual conversation, Lumian explored the daily lives, sustenance, and leisure activities of the Tizamo residents.

From the merchant's account, Lumian painted a mental picture of Tizamo.

Its populace mainly consisted of locals, with outsiders being the proprietors of nearby plantations and some acquired slaves. Thanks to the hunting services provided to the Port Pylos gentry, Tizamo maintained a connection with the outside world, avoiding isolation and conservatism.

Although the faith in Death had been eradicated, traces of it lingered in daily life. The townspeople primarily believed in the Eternal Blazing Sun, yet remnants of Death faith were evident, such as frequent visits to the cemetery and the practice of not burying prematurely deceased children in coffins. Each adult prepared a coffin for themselves in advance, and the common means of travel involved using a coffin.

With keen interest, Lumian concluded the discussion and inquired, "Are you familiar with Twanaku Tupián?"

Finally getting into the meat... Camus exhaled quietly and conveyed the question to the merchant.

A warm smile appeared on the merchant's face.

"I do! He's well-known in town."

"Why?" Camus interjected.

The merchant, with an obsequious smile, responded, "Sir, he should be your colleague. Twanaku is the first person from Tizamo to join the patrol team. Moreover, he's rapidly advancing in rank. He's a source of pride for us."

Lumian couldn't help but emit a soft chuckle.

"I'm quite curious about Twanaku's past."

The merchant's expression shifted slightly as he glanced around.

"Sirs, did Twanaku commit a crime? Did he join an organization that believes in Death?"

Quite perceptive... Lumian thought, while Camus grumbled in a low voice, "Are we doing the questioning or are you? Just answer truthfully!"

Under the mental pressure of the Interrogator, the dark-

skinned merchant replied with a trembling voice, "I've known for a long time that this young man, Twanaku, will surely become extraordinary, but I also know he'll one day tread the path of blasphemy against a deity."

Seeing Camus and Lumian awaiting further explanation, the merchant continued, "There was a fire in the Twanaku family. All his kin perished, and only he survived. According to our customs, he's favored by a deity, spared from death. Such individuals often go on to achieve great feats."

The deity's favor refers to Death here, right? Not succumbing to Death is considered receiving Death's favor? Lumian interjected thoughtfully.

“The fire happened about six years ago?”

“How did you know?” the surprised merchant asked. Then, slapping his forehead, he added, “I'm such a fool. You must have investigated it beforehand.”

From the looks of it, the fire somehow brought Twanaku back to life, transforming him into Hisoka... Lumian nodded.

“Continue.”

Recalling, the merchant said, “Since then, Twanaku fell silent, as if in shock. He no longer participated in Mass or entered the cathedral of God. Later, he left Tizamo for Port Pylos.”

Was Twanaku unafraid of scrutiny for acting so unusually? Did he not bother to feign his faith? By then, Hisoka had already become a Beyonder of the Devil pathway, making it impossible for him to participate in the Eternal Blazing Sun Church's Mass? Where did his first potion come from? Lumian pondered while Camus translated and asked, “Does Twanaku frequently return to Tizamo?”

“He comes back to Tizamo every year. I'm not sure how often or for how long,” the merchant truthfully replied.

“Where does he stay when he returns to Tizamo?” Lumian inquired further.

The merchant smoothly replied, “At his own place. After joining the patrol team and amassing wealth, he rebuilt the burnt-down house.”

Rebuilt the house that was destroyed in the fire... Lumian contemplated for a moment and then asked, “Are there any special folklore festivals in Tizamo?”

Chapter 658 Deep Desire

The merchant responded cautiously to Camus's translation, “Sir, we don't really have any special folklore festivals. We only celebrate two festivals every year. One is the Sun Sacrifice in December, and the other is the New Sun Festival in June.”

The Sun Sacrifice was a recurring festival for the Eternal Blazing Sun Church, marking the day with the longest daylight of the year when the sun reached its zenith at noon.

In the Northern Continent, it took place in mid-to-late June, while in the Southern Continent, due to the reversed seasons, it occurred in mid-to-late December.

The New Sun Festival, originating from the believers of the Southern Continent's Eternal Blazing Sun, involved celebrations during the longest night and shortest days, welcoming the return of the sun and anticipating more light and warmer weather.

This celebration often coincided with the New Year in many parts of the Southern Continent, gradually merging the two festivities.

The merchant explained that the citizens of Tizamo Town solely celebrated festivals connected to the Eternal Blazing Sun, having abandoned the traditions related to Death.

He reflected for a moment and added, "It's been like this for a long time—since my grandfather was born."

Matani, particularly Port Pylos and the gold mine city of Devise, had been Intis's colony for nearly a century. The native population was compelled to convert generations ago, becoming followers of the Eternal Blazing Sun. This, however, was limited to areas effectively managed by colonial institutions in the past.

When Lumian arrived in Port Pylos, his first impression was: at the docks, in the heart of the city, it resembled the port cities of Intis. Yet, the workers' skin was darker and browner. The streets frequented by Intisians and Feynapotterians were sparsely populated and desolate. After passing Hotel Orella and exploring other areas of Port Pylos, various buildings with West Balam characteristics emerged. More pedestrians populated the streets, and the echoes of Dutanese filled the air.

Lumian sought further details, indirectly confirming the merchant's words. Interrogator Camus discerned no signs of deception.

"What things have left a deep impression on you since you were young that you still remember from time to time?" Lumian shifted the conversation.

Recalling, the merchant replied, "Grand funerals... Newly built coffins..."

"The primitive tribe that clashes with us every year... The occasional scream at night because of them..."

"Everyone's hardworking, calm, and well-educated. We get angry, but we don't argue on the spot or shout. We choose to find the padre, officers, and judges to determine who's right and who's wrong..."

Camus translated the merchant's words to Lumian, adding a few comments.

"That's indeed the case. I've been to Tizamo. The people there are very docile. Even if they're treated unfairly, they rarely resist violently. The manor owners of the surrounding plantations love to hire them, reducing the cost of buying slaves."

"Of course, it's not that they're emotionless and won't resist. Instead, they tend to abide by order and follow the official processes to resolve problems. I-I guess they can be considered outstanding believers of the Eternal Blazing Sun?"

The honorific name of the Eternal Blazing Sun contained the description "Embodiment of Order."

As a member of the Feynapotter royal lineage, Camus undoubtedly believed in the Earth Mother. He knew that Louis Berry hailed from the Intis Republic and was likely a believer of the Eternal Blazing Sun.

Lumian stood up, extending his arms with a smile. "Praise the Sun!"

"Praise the Sun!" The merchant hastily followed suit.

Lumian settled back into his seat, contemplating for a few fleeting moments.

“Have you experienced any strange dreams?”

The merchant nodded, then shook his head.

“Many, but they slip away from memory. Do you not encounter such dreams?”

Indeed. Dreams often elude the control of one's consciousness. They can reveal spiritual insights, mirror suppressed desires, or reflect events from the day. Sometimes, these elements intertwine, resulting in strange and unpredictable dreams. I, too, frequently encounter such dreams. In the past, when I battled the Demon corruption, they were even more bizarre and exaggerated... Lumian sensed that the merchant's response was impeccable.

If the other party could pinpoint a specific strange dream, that might raise suspicion.

Either the dream was exceptionally strange and unforgettable, or the merchant was abnormal and had prepared in advance before coming.

After discussing other matters, Lumian escorted the merchant out of the master bedroom.

The responses of the other two Tizamons were similar to the merchant's, only supplementing the details they observed at their level and sharing encounters with their own characteristics.

Lumian found no traces of the Dream Festival.

If the Dream Festival is genuinely linked to Tizamo, there's only one possibility: When the townsfolk fall asleep, they enter a dream world to celebrate the festival. Upon waking, they forget everything...

Or, there's another possibility. Two factions may be involved in Hisoka's Tizamo Town prank. First, the citizens of Tizamo. Second, the primitive tribe in the nearby forest. Could the Dream Festival be a celebration for that primitive tribe?

Hisoka's prank impacted the Dream Festival, leading the primitive tribe to suddenly attack Tizamo, resulting in significant casualties and concealing the traces of his advancement ritual to Desire Apostle. Lumian pondered as he walked Camus and the three Tizamons to the door.

Upon returning to the master bedroom, he stood before the desk and gazed at the stone wall in front of him. His eyes flickered with anticipation and unease.

His decision to stay in the Southern Continent and actively pursue Hisoka's inheritance was indeed to grow amid blood, fire, chaos, and conflict, securing more acting opportunities. He aimed to open the door to godhood and advance to Sequence 4 as soon as possible.

The reason for his impatience was: he saw a glimmer of hope in reviving his sister!

The state of the Naboredisleys on Hanth Island provided him with that glimmer of hope.

This hope stemmed from the belief that a high-ranking figure of the Earth Mother Church might possess the ability to divide another person's soul. This would allow each soul fragment to grow into a relatively separate individual through rebirth.

Aurore's soul fragment was sealed within Lumian's body.

Perhaps a high-ranking member of the Church of Earth Mother could use one or more soul fragments to resurrect Aurore in a new form!

Lumian wasn't certain if such a plan could be realized or if it constituted true “resurrection,” but it was the most plausible method he had encountered so far. He was determined to give it a try.

Of course, he couldn't experiment with Aurore's soul fragment directly. His plan was to deliberately create some soul fragments in future cullings and seek help from the Church of Earth Mother to see if they could be reborn and if the person who returned was the same individual.

Once all the details were confirmed, he would revive Aurore.

Lumian didn't believe he had the qualifications to collaborate with the Church of Earth Mother. Only by becoming a demigod and relying on the secret organization, the Tarot Club, could he gain the Church of Earth Mother's attention and fulfill the transaction conditions proposed by the other party.

For this, Lumian couldn't wait to obtain godhood and advance to Sequence 4.

At times, Lumian wished his sister were also a Blessed of Celestial Worthy and had inherited the ancient castle. This way, her resurrection might be more straightforward.

Yes, to extract Aurore's soul fragment, I must undo Mr. Fool's seal. To undo his seal, I have to wait for Termiboros to become very weak. For Termiboros to weaken, I need to continuously extract his power at a higher level. And to withstand the power of a higher level, I have to possess godhood and advance step by step... Lumian's thoughts gradually clarified, and he unprecedentedly yearned for an advancement.

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

Franca lay on the bed beneath a velvet blanket, her cheeks still flushed, eyes moist, and her expression unusually complicated.

Beside her, Jenna rested under the same velvet cover. She had slipped into a deep slumber, her brows furrowed with a mix of exhaustion, satisfaction, resistance, and nostalgia. Her outstretched arms and exposed fair skin still bore traces of the recent fervor.

Franca gazed at Jenna and let out a sudden sigh.

The experience had exceeded her expectations, yet a sense of emptiness lingered in her heart.

It was beautiful in the moment, but what would transpire after the digestion of the Pleasure potion?

Could physical intimacy and emotional distance coexist?

Did overwhelming pleasure pave the way for sorrow? Was it the agony of sinking into oblivion while resisting salvation?

Sigh... Franca released another soft sigh.

She sensed that her Pleasure potion had been substantially digested.

Matani State, Port Pylos.

Lumian, sipping a glass of Gwadar, looked up and spoke to Lugano as if discussing the weather.

“We're heading to Tizamo Town today. Will you join Ludwig and me, or will you stay here and wait for us?”

“Let me warn you in advance. The situation in Tizamo Town might be very dangerous.”

Very dangerous... He wanted to say he'd stay in Port Pylos, but memories of Father Montserrat flashed in his mind.

Gritting his teeth, he replied, “I'm with you.”

If danger lurked in Tizamo Town, he could rely on his boss to bail him out. But here? Only himself! Lumian nodded slightly and didn't say more.

After checking out and hitting the street, he chuckled at Lugano and Ludwig, “Do we take a coffin to Tizamo, or should we grab a carriage?”

Before Lugano and Ludwig could answer, a four-wheeled, four-seater carriage rolled up from under the shade.

The carriage's driver, a young man, kept his head low, not daring to look away.

Coming to a stop, Camus Castiya emerged. He forced a smile and said to Lumian, “Thanks for your help these past days. I'll escort you to Tizamo.”

Chapter 659 Poor “Monster”

Observing Camus's expression, as if compelled to act at gunpoint, Lumian didn't hold back. He replied with a smile, “I'd like that.”

It was evident to him that the brass of the patrol team, or even Admiral Querarill himself, was concerned about Louis Berry wandering around their territory. Tizamo, where he was headed, was located near the primitive forest and had close ties to a Sequence 5 Desire Apostle. Therefore, two additional patrol team members with a certain relationship with Louis Berry were sent to accompany him. Even if they couldn't prevent trouble, they could at least send word before it became a catastrophe.

As for why they didn't directly stop Louis Berry from heading to Tizamo Town, it was partly because Lumian had hinted at the faction backing him when he submitted Twanaku's head. Without a conflict of principles, Admiral Querarill likely wouldn't make things difficult for him. Secondly, Louis Berry's investigations and adventures seemed to bring calamity, but they had exposed hidden dangers ahead of time. If the problem remained concealed and continued to evolve, Matani and Admiral Querarill might not be able to handle it in a year or two. When the time came, blood might flow like a river.

Kolobo, acting as the carriage driver, gazed ahead stonily. He fumbled for a pair of sunglasses and slid them onto the bridge of his nose. There were no visible injuries on his body.

As Camus held the carriage door open, he watched Louis Berry board, leading a young boy by the hand.

“He's going to Tizamo too?” Camus blurted in surprise.

He had assumed Louis Berry would leave his servant and godson at Hotel Orella, joining them later after dealing with Tizamo Town's issues. However, the adventurer was now bringing a young child to Tizamo, and it was evident this wasn't a leisurely trip. It was very dangerous!

Lumian's left foot remained on the ground, and his right foot halted at the carriage's edge. He smiled and spoke, "My godson is fascinated by jungle fruits, the unique beasts I hunt, and various spices."

Earlier, the Tizamons had mentioned their hometown's specialties, highlighting the excellence of roasted meat. The blend of spices and the distinctive gamey flavor of wild beasts in the forest contributed to Tizamo Town's unique delicacies.

Ludwig, already settled in the carriage, swallowed, seemingly in sync with Lumian.

Aren't you worried about endangering your godson? Why are you so confident? Camus didn't press, simply signaling Lugano with his eyes to hurry up.

Lugano cast a glance at the peculiar carriage driver, who trembled slightly beneath his black sunglasses. He entered the carriage and took a seat across from Lumian and Ludwig.

Camus shut the carriage door and settled beside Kolobo. With a sigh, he remarked, "You can remove your sunglasses now. It's been hard on you."

"Alright, alright, alright." Kolobo seemed to shiver as if struck by an icy wind. His teeth chattered, and his tremors intensified.

Camus turned to him, surprised.

"Didn't you strike a deal face-to-face with Louis Berry? Why are you still so afraid?"

Not seeing him directly again!

"Alright, alright, alright." Kolobo removed his sunglasses, taking more than ten seconds to compose himself.

In a hushed tone, he confessed with fear, "I feel like my fingers, my arms, my insides, even my head... all eaten.

"That, that..."

"That what?" Camus struggled to comprehend why the Monster's demeanor had shifted so drastically, sensing that the issue might be significant.

Kolobo swallowed hard and continued, "That... that child... is also... very dangerous!"

"Though I haven't laid eyes on him, I sense a looming threat, like facing a lion, a tiger, a python, ready to eat me at any moment."

"..." Camus was stunned, a hiss escaping his lips.

Until now, Kolobo had never exhibited such fear except in the presence of three individuals radiating danger: Desire Apostle Twanaku with Wraith powers, and Louis Berry, capable of hunting Twanaku. Could this boy match them?

Is he also a Beyonder, perhaps a Sequence 5 Beyonder?

No, it's not merely a Sequence 5 matter. Our patrol team's captain is a Sequence 5, yet Kolobo never mentioned feeling such foreboding in his presence.

There must be something unique about these three individuals!

Regardless, the boy is undoubtedly extraordinary and hazardous!

No wonder Louis Berry is bringing his godson to Tizamo without worry. Perhaps the child poses an even greater threat... Camus unraveled his earlier confusion, stifling his curiosity, refraining from probing further with Kolobo.

In the confines of the four-wheeled carriage, even with the barrier between them, Louis Berry caught wind of their hushed exchange!

Considering the intel gleaned from the Fog Sea, Camus harbored suspicions that Louis Berry was a Sequence 5 Beyonder following the Hunter pathway. Those of this pathway were renowned for their sharp senses—exceptional vision, acute sense of smell, and keen hearing.

A Beyonder of the Monster pathway is quite intriguing. Even without laying eyes on Ludwig or hearing his voice, Louis can sense his ominous aura, a being who devours everything... Lumian, leaning against the carriage wall, toyed with his golden straw hat, shooting Ludwig a knowing smile.

Could it be that this “little child” has truly taken a liking to Kolobo and Camus?

Indeed. These are two Beyonders who haven't succumbed to severe corruption. Ludwig likely had a momentary lapse in control... Heh heh, Camus may not have noticed, but Kolobo reacted instantly, sensing the danger? Lumian acknowledged Ludwig with a nod.

“Well done. Your restraint is admirable.”

Praise was due when a child behaved correctly, fostering a healthy mindset and habits!

Ludwig remained silent, his expression conveying he was not to be treated as a child.

A faint smile graced his lips as he retrieved a box of biscuits from his crimson school bag, nibbling on them.

What restraint... What did he mean by “well done”... Lugano, seated across from him, found himself perplexed.

Tizamo stood as the most remote town in Port Pylos, nestled against the edge of the primitive forest. A full two hours' journey by carriage was required to reach it.

Of course, for those in a hurry, an alternative route existed: boarding a steam locomotive from the port to Cahert, the southernmost town. From there, a carriage or coffin could be hired to venture northeast, shaving the travel time to Tizamo down to just an hour. However, Lumian showed no inclination towards haste.

As they departed Port Pylos, the road gradually narrowed and deteriorated. Yet, the carriage pressed on steadily. Kolobo, the carriage driver, operated with precision akin to a well-oiled machine, guiding the horses and carriage without falter.

An hour slipped by, and the carriage wound its way through the forest.

Abruptly, Lumian, pretending to slumber, snapped open his eyes.

His body turned dark and spectral, melding with the shadows cast by the window.

Shadow Transformation!

In an instant, gunshots pierced the forest's tranquility.

Bullets whizzed from afar, some thudding into the earth, kicking up clouds of soil, while others took aim at Camus, the carriage, and the horse.

Amidst the chaos, the horse crumpled, bleeding profusely, and the carriage toppled to the ground.

Kolobo had already abandoned his perch as the driver, escaping unscathed from the barrage of gunfire. Camus leaped clear of the carriage in advance, crouching low, revolver in hand. He maneuvered with agility, at times rolling, at others slithering deeper into the undergrowth.

With each movement, he unleashed shots, seeking to suppress the unseen assailant. In this range, many of his abilities were restricted.

A handful of fiery crimson orbs, almost blindingly white, streaked past Camus, disappearing into the forest's depths.

Rumble!

Amidst the thunderous explosions, the gunfire abruptly ceased.

Soon after, curses in Dutanese rang out from the forest's depths.

“Go to hell, you Northern Continent bandits!

“Rot with your sons of bitches!

“Come after us if you have the guts!

Gradually, the curses faded into the forest's depths.

Lumian emerged from the shadows of the carriage, opting not to pursue.

“It's the Resistance! What are they doing in Matani...” Camus frowned, muttering to himself in confusion.

In the Southern Continent, numerous Resistance factions abounded. He couldn't discern which faction they belonged to or their motives. Typically, Matani, ostensibly independent from the Intis Republic and governed by Admiral Querarill, a Southern Continent native, saw little Resistance activity. Their primary demand was the expulsion of colonists.

Could it be a faction of the Resistance dedicated to Death, aiming to revive Death's influence in Matani? Please not the Rose School of Thought-backed Resistance. No, those lunatics... Camus returned to the carriage, puzzled.

Lumian mulled over another matter.

Despite attaining Sequence 5 status, life still felt fragile.

Vulnerable to being shot dead!

If a Resistance member possessed sharpshooting skills and remained beyond his observational range, sniping from over 100 meters, they could have ended his life.

Reapers lacked the resilient bodies of Devils. While lacking Malicious Perception, Devils might sustain only minor wounds from rifle shots. Their absence of long-range Danger Premonition characteristic of Seer pathways rendered them unable to preemptively evade.

Granted, Lumian's Ascetic traits bolstered his spiritual perception. Anticipating danger, he had foreseen the attack.

Yet, if the adversary could nullify his spiritual perception or manipulate it effectively, conventional rifles could indeed imperil Lumian.

Yes, Shadow Transformation can serve as a shield. Bullets lacking special effects pose no genuine threat to shadow beings... Lumian redirected his thoughts, instructing Lugano, emerging from the carriage, "Check on the horse."

If it survived, attend to its injuries promptly for carriage duty. If not, Ludwig would command the equine corpse to pull the carriage.

After all, Ludwig had gained the ability to command a handful of low-level undead from a concoction brewed from Hisoka's eyeballs.

Chapter 660 Across the Door

Without hesitation, Lugano pushed himself up and hurried to the fallen horse, carefully examining it.

After a few seconds, he exclaimed regretfully, "It's dead!"

The poor horse was unlucky. Despite being over a hundred meters away, it was hit twice by a flurry of gunshots. One bullet struck its side, and the other hit its head. It couldn't be any more dead.

In contrast, the carriage driver remained unscathed. At most, he had scraped his skin during the tumble.

Lumian glanced at Kolobo, who had his back turned to him and the others, seemingly on guard against any potential attacks from the depths of the forest. He led Ludwig, who had been thrown from the carriage, to the side of the motionless, bleeding horse corpse.

"Stop the bleeding," Lumian instructed Lugano.

Why stop it when the horse is already dead? Although Lugano didn't understand, he extended his shimmering palm.

After the dead horse's wounds closed, Lumian turned to Ludwig and said, "Your turn."

Ludwig, dressed in a child's formal attire, nodded slightly.

He extended his right palm, gripping the dead horse with his five fingers, and slowly raised it.

The blood-stained corpse of the horse suddenly stood up, causing the overturned carriage to shift slightly.

Upon seeing this, Camus gave a barely perceptible nod.

Is this child from the Death pathway or the Prisoner pathway?

However, there's no cold aura or corpse-like aura...

After Lugano righted the carriage, the undead horse corpse continued pulling the five of them towards Tizamo.

Just before noon, Lumian spotted their destination.

It was a small town half-encircled by rubber trees, acacia trees, laurels, and other vegetation. Several plantations dotted the muddy road, and the air was filled with different spice scents and the alluring smell of roasted meat.

Tizamo's buildings were unique. Apart from the Eternal Blazing Sun Church cathedral, which had a distinct northern style, the rest were propped up by wooden stakes and stone pillars. They were reminiscent of West Balam—the base deliberately left empty underneath.

This was due to the humid air and abundant rainfall in many West Balam areas. Water would often overflow and pool below.

Lumian climbed down from the four-wheeled, four-seater carriage, watching the people busy with their tasks in the plantation and the town.

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

Franca reclined in the recliner, rocking gently as she recollected the previous day's events.

After Jenna woke up that morning, she went out to the streets to buy meat, vegetables, fruits, and bread, making Franca wonder if she had experienced a wet dream or hallucination.

Why did she suddenly volunteer to help me with digesting the potion? Compared to most Trieriens, she can definitely be considered conservative...

Moreover, she was so direct and straightforward that I almost lost my desires out of shock. Shouldn't she flirt first to set the mood? When the time comes, even if she doesn't initiate, I won't be able to control myself... The more Franca thought about it, the more puzzled she became. She felt Jenna wouldn't normally act that way.

After recalling Jenna's past experiences and actions, she realized there was no issue.

That was precisely what Jenna would do!

Jenna has a bold nature, or rather, a personality that allows her to act decisively...

After the Showy Diva singer who helped her was raped by Margot and became unstable, she was truly willing to go to extremes to assassinate Margot and avenge her friend. To that end, she even indebted herself to me for the Assassin potion and firmly became a Beyonder despite her finances...

At the Hugues Artois banquet, she faced the Member of Parliament protected by official Beyonders and evil gods' minions. She risked everything, disregarding her own fate. She killed the bastard who brought catastrophe to the market district and her family on the spot...

In her heart, I should still be more important than that Showy Diva friend of hers. Suddenly going to extremes and offering to help me with the potion's effects is indeed something she would do...

Besides, sigh, this definitely isn't a spur-of-the-moment idea. She has asked me several times about my progress digesting the Pleasure potion and if I have a new partner. She even recommended Lumian...

Realizing that I haven't found a new partner and that I'm only open-minded outwardly, she decided to act after being stirred by Lumian advancing to Sequence 5 yesterday...

That doesn't seem enough reason—Jenna wouldn't sacrifice her body because of just those things. Sigh, sacrifice...

Could it be that she had long realized I secretly liked her and didn't seek out a new partner because of her? Could she believe she affected my digesting the Pleasure potion, causing her to act?

Yes! That must be it. That's the only way she'd truly go to such extremes.

Ahhh! Why can't I find any hint of romantic love?

Franca wailed inwardly.

If she had known this would happen, she would have summoned her courage, toughened her resolve, and sought Lumian's help. That way, she wouldn't feel as conflicted and pained as she did now.

Of course, she didn't seek out a new intimate partner partly because she cared about Jenna's opinion.

She had become Gardner Martin's lover and shared his other lovers before meeting Jenna. There was no changing that history, so she continued on.

After Gardner Martin's demise, she had claimed she wanted Browns to experience true pleasure and participate in the Demoness's female orgies, but most of it was just talk. She was filled with anticipation only out of novelty. If Browns suddenly agreed, she might hesitate and make excuses.

She didn't want to leave an unrestrained image in Jenna or Lumian's minds.

To put it simply, her answer to the question “Is there really no one in this world you care about?” had changed, so she was hesitant to actively pursue a new intimate partner.

Jenna had no substantial intimate experience, so she didn't know how to set a mood for such situations. She could only revert to the straightforward seduction from when she was Little Minx, but she didn't want to deceive my feelings and make me fall deeper. That's why she acted that way yesterday.

Thankfully, she's relatively level-headed. She didn't seek a lover to make me give up, allowing me to truly find a new intimate partner. Yes, she might think that would be giving me prolonged pain and not prolonged pleasure. It would have hindered my digestion of the potion... Franca felt even more dejected after piecing together the entire situation.

On the stairs leading to Apartment 702.

Jenna held a bag of bread and a basket of beef, vegetables, and fruits, reluctant to go back inside.

Recalling yesterday's events made her blush, unsure of how to face Franca.

In her previous days as a Showy Diva singer, she had witnessed others' affection and felt it was just so-so. Although exciting, she thought she could endure it.

Unexpectedly, after experiencing it for real, she realized pleasure could make people become consumed by it.

Phew... Jenna took a few deep breaths to calm herself.

What troubled her now was how to interact with Franca.

Wait, should I pretend nothing happened and face her with my usual demeanor? Should I be more cheerful and take the initiative to mention yesterday, pretending it's no big deal so Franca doesn't mind?

But won't this upset her? She needs to digest the Pleasure potion...

Besides, one pleasure encounter is definitely not enough. I have to spend time with her as a couple...

Should I keep seducing her tonight like yesterday, or wait for her to initiate?

Dammit, how annoying!

Jenna found such matters more vexing than assassinating powerful figures. Whether avenging herself on Margot or killing Hugues Artois, she had always felt death was the worst outcome—no big deal. However, this situation clearly hadn't reached life-or-death stakes. The subsequent troubles would linger.

Jenna couldn't help but feel frustrated at the thought of maintaining an intimate physical relationship with Franca and all the complexities involved. She wished she could simply assassinate the Minister of Industry, Moran Avigny, instead.

Taking deep breaths to steady her emotions, Jenna analyzed how to approach this from an actress's perspective to make Franca more accepting of future intimacies.

She had already taken the first bold step. She definitely wasn't willing to give up now. She planned to continue their relationship until Franca finished digesting the Pleasure potion's effects.

After figuring out her next move, Jenna's lips curled into a faint smile.

Carrying bread and ingredients, she briskly climbed the stairs and returned to Apartment 702.

As soon as she opened the door, Franca jumped up from the recliner instinctively and forced a smile. She said nervously, "You're back?"

Amused by Franca's actions, Jenna chuckled and sighed inwardly.

How great would it be if you didn't want to become lovers...

Jenna calmly walked to the dining table and placed her items on it. Then, she glared at Franca.

"What are you waiting for? Help me!"

"Alright, alright." Franca hurried over.

Seeing that Jenna wasn't reserved or distant, nor reverted to her usual demeanor, she felt an inexplicable relief. She even began to anticipate the night's arrival.

Sizzle. Sizzle.

The juices from a piece of beef dripped onto the fire, transforming into smoke that swirled upwards, blending with the aroma of spices. This caused Ludwig to swallow a few mouthfuls of saliva.

However, the boy patiently waited, not rushing the cook until the beef roasted to its optimal state.

Lumian turned his body and gazed at a three-story building diagonally across from the restaurant.

The yellowish-brown house was the former residence rebuilt by Hisoka Tvanaku.