

Inevitability 791

Chapter 791 Capture

After dinner, Franca and Jenna returned to 9 Rue Orosai's Apartment 702.

"Finally, it worked." Franca raised her hands and stretched lazily. "Next, should we find Palia the Mirror Person first, report to the Demoness of Black, or tell her tomorrow morning that I've become a Demoness of Affliction? She said that once I advanced to Affliction, she would share some secrets of the Demoness Sect with me."

Franca was curious but also a bit fearful about knowing these secrets.

Additionally, she felt that her progress in digesting the Pleasure potion was much faster than expected, which might arouse the Demoness of Pleasure's suspicion. She didn't want to report anything related to Admiral Deep Sea yet.

This involved the secret of the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society's transmigration!

So far, Franca and Lumian had only mentioned Admiral Deep Sea's suspected connection to elves to their respective Arcana cards and had yet to receive any response.

Jenna thought for a moment and then said, "Even if you don't go to the Demoness of Black tomorrow, you should do it soon. The sooner we understand the Demoness Sect's secrets, the better we can plan our actions and avoid potential pitfalls."

Understanding Franca's concerns, she added with a smile, "Just tell the Demoness of Black that Lumian has become a Reaper and he helped you digest the Pleasure potion."

"Uh..." Franca was taken aback. "That's true, but the way you put it doesn't feel right..."

"That's exactly the kind of misunderstanding we need," Jenna replied with a soft smile.

She glanced out at the night sky and said, "Finding Palia should be enough with just you and Anthony. I want to visit Julien in Port LeSeur in the next few days. We haven't seen each other for almost two months, and I want to gauge his intentions, see if he really plans to return to Trier."

"Sure." Franca understood Jenna's concerns.

Jenna nodded. "I'll go home tonight, pack some things for him, and try to leave tomorrow morning. The sooner I go, the sooner I can come back."

There were plenty of steam locomotives and riverboats heading to Port LeSeur, so she didn't worry about not getting a ticket on the spot.

After a brief conversation, Jenna packed her luggage, took her suitcase, and left the apartment.

She hadn't followed Julien's instructions to cancel the lease on the Rue Pasteur apartment while he was away for his exchange program in Port LeSeur, saving money. She still occasionally stayed there, as if she had never left.

Watching Jenna leave, Franca felt a pang of disappointment and muttered, “I was hoping we could celebrate tonight...”

She walked slowly back to her bedroom and saw that some of Jenna's clothes and belongings had been taken away.

As she looked at the now tidier and cleaner bedroom, Franca seemed to understand something.

She fell silent.

She felt that the Affliction potion had been somewhat digested.

...

Chug, chug, chug.

A cream-colored steam train with brass patterns sped along the tracks, heading towards the capital of Lenburg, Azshara, nestled among the mountains.

Lumian sat in a second-class carriage, looking around leisurely.

Without coordinates for Azshara and unwilling to go through the messenger hassle again, he chose to teleport back to the Riston Province, take a steam train to the border, and then smuggle himself across the mountains.

With pre-exchanged Lenburg currency, knowledge of black market traders, and intermediaries, Lumian easily obtained new identification and bought a ticket to Azshara.

Lenburg was a small country, so he would reach his destination by the evening.

As Lumian observed, he noticed that Lenburg residents favored light-colored clothes and brass accessories, each carrying a book to read quietly during the journey. Even those who conversed did so in hushed tones.

At stops, passengers were eager to help elderly people or those dressed as scholars, showing heartfelt respect.

No wonder this is the land of the God of Knowledge and Wisdom, Lumian silently mused.

Lenburg was a nation of single faith without a royal family, where the Church of Knowledge exerted strong control and influence over the country.

Perhaps sensing his gaze, the young man next to him, holding a book, glanced at Lumian's “Lenburg Travel Guide” and asked with a low laugh, “Are you a foreigner?”

He spoke in Lenburg, then switched to Highlander, Loenese, Intisian, and Feysac.

Lumian was a bit surprised.

A typical Lenburg second-class passenger knew so many languages?

Moreover, it felt like the man was showing off.

“Yes, I'm from Intis, and I speak Lenburg,” Lumian replied cooperatively.

“What's your name? It's impressive you know all the North Continent languages.”

The young man adjusted his light-framed glasses and smiled. “My name is Sallent, and I’m just a small company employee.

“Actually, once you learn one language from the North Continent, the others are easy. If you start with ancient Feysac, it’s even simpler. We Lenburgers begin learning ancient Feysac in our compulsory education.”

Sallent’s tone carried a hint of pride, almost looking down on other countries still plagued by illiteracy and people who didn’t know foreign languages.

In theory, yes, otherwise, I wouldn’t have mastered Highlander so quickly. My Dutanese is just barely passable... Lumian didn’t mind Sallent’s slight arrogance.

The Lenburgers he met this morning all had a similar attitude.

Keeping his voice low, Lumian said with a smile, “You’re quite civilized, showing great respect for the elderly and scholars, and reading on the train instead of chatting or playing.”

Sallent replied with restrained pride, “In Lenburg, knowledge is the most precious, and scholars have more knowledge. Elders, throughout their lives, accumulate a lot of experiential knowledge.”

Sallent let out a self-deprecating laugh. “Reading is a habit from childhood and a necessity. You wouldn’t know that our lives are filled with exams and evaluations-in school, in companies, and even in church, where we take theological tests during grand masses to show our piety and respect for the God of Knowledge.”

Lumian suddenly felt this wasn’t necessarily a good thing.

No wonder Ludwig is reluctant to return to the Church of Knowledge...

But Aurore would love it here. She wouldn’t want to live here herself, but she’d certainly want to send me here to study...

Seeing the foreigner beside him fall silent, Sallent sighed and said, “That’s why I didn’t stay in Azshara after graduating. The pressure is overwhelming-qualification exams, annual competency reviews, monthly company evaluations, job training exams, and so on.”

Lumian couldn’t help but hiss internally.

So this is the daily life of Lenburgers, especially those in Azshara?

Ludwig’s vague descriptions didn’t prepare me for this. I thought only students had it hard...

Thank goodness Aurore took me in and not some Lenburger...

Talking about this made Sallent feel melancholic, prompting him to lower his head and return to his book.

Judging by the time, Lumian realized they were close to Azshara, so he started pondering the issue of the City of Exiles, Morora.

He hesitated and then asked Sallent, “Have you heard of a city called Morora?”

Sallent thought carefully and then replied, “No, neither in reality nor in any legends.”

Lumian gave a noncommittal grunt and turned his gaze back to the quickly receding mountain scenery outside, as if their conversation was just casual small talk.

If Madam Magician couldn't find it, I probably can't either, unless I kidnap a demigod of the Church of Knowledge...

Since the Church of Knowledge placed parts of the Abscessed Hand in Morora, can I use the connection between the body parts to find the city?

The Church of Knowledge expects and allows me to go to Morora, perhaps even hoping for it. Will they give me a hint?

...

With these thoughts, Lumian grew more determined.

As dusk fell, the steam locomotive stopped at a platform paved with gray and white stone slabs.

Lumian, carrying a small suitcase, walked with Sallent through the station decorated with book sculptures and brass patterns.

The wind howled through the mountains, bringing cold but refreshing air.

As they approached the entrance of Azshara Steam Train Station, Lumian saw several clergy members from the Church of Knowledge in white robes trimmed with brass blocking the way, checking the documents of passengers.

"What's going on?" Lumian asked.

Sallent glanced over and casually replied, "Routine exit checks, done alternately by the Church and the government."

"I thought they might randomly stop people to test their knowledge," Lumian joked.

Sallent turned his head sharply, eyes filled with fear, as if to say: Are you a devil? Even the Church bishops wouldn't think of that!

Lumian shrugged and stepped forward to have his documents checked by the clergy.

The elder leading the group scrutinized Lumian, glanced at his documents, then signaled to the others.

Lumian was quickly surrounded by the clergy, all poised for action.

The elder stared at him and said sternly, "We've found a wanted criminal. Take him away!"

Uh... Lumian raised an eyebrow.

In a split second, he decided not to resist, extending his hands to let the clergy cuff him with silver handcuffs.

Chapter 792 Judgment

Inside the slow-moving carriage, Lumian, handcuffed and shackled, stared at the window with iron bars welded and covered with thick cloth.

His belief in his own judgment grew stronger.

When the clergy from the Church of Knowledge accused him of being a wanted criminal, his first reaction wasn't to be on guard but to feel a wave of confusion.

He sensed that those performing the routine exit check were there specifically for him. But apart from Ludwig and the 0-01 incident, he had no interaction with the Church of Knowledge and hadn't harmed their interests.

Why are you Lenburgers so enthusiastic about catching an Intisian criminal? Did you even verify the details and the target's current abilities?

As thoughts raced through his mind, Lumian, noticing Sallent's surprised, fearful yet relieved gaze, thought of a possibility, Is this the hint from the Church of Knowledge?

No, this isn't just a hint. They're directly escorting me to the destination!

The City of Exiles, as the name suggests, is a place for exiling criminals.

When I'm arrested as a wanted criminal and sentenced to exile, I'll naturally be sent to Morora...

Isn't this method a bit too straightforward?

How did they know I was coming? Although I didn't disguise myself, I kept a low profile the entire way...

Are High-Sequence Beyonders of the Reader pathway adept at prophecy or divination?

Lumian glanced at his waist, looking at the Traveler's Bag that hadn't been confiscated. He couldn't help but silently grumble, They didn't confiscate a wanted criminal's belongings or take measures against potential dangerous criminals to restrict the use of Beyonder powers...

This performance is too unconvincing. Are they afraid I won't notice and might resist, causing losses?

Lumian silently took the Traveler's Bag from his belt and tucked it into the inner pocket of his thick jacket.

He didn't want to make things difficult for the clergy of the Church of Knowledge.

Their poor acting doesn't matter, but I can't be equally patronizing. What if other serious offenders, nearby Azshara citizens, or assisting police officers see the Traveler's Bag?

They'd think the clergy of the Church of Knowledge are unprofessional!

After driving for a while, the vehicle finally stopped.

Under the strict guard of several clergy members in white robes trimmed with brass, Lumian was escorted to a massive white tower.

Before he could take a good look at the tower's full appearance or even see its spire to confirm its grandeur, he was "pushed" through a side door, down a stone staircase, through a dim corridor lit by several gas wall lamps, and into a cell made of black iron.

Lumian glanced around and saw about eight people already inside, all handcuffed and shackled. Some were even chained through their collarbones, fixed in place.

Such restraints would be effective even against Beyonders, but they couldn't suppress those with more mystical abilities... If it were me, being locked up like this would render my Hunter combat

skills useless, but it wouldn't stop me from starting fires, provoking, scouting for weaknesses, swapping fates, or teleporting to escape. Come on, can't you be more professional? This performance is too fake... Lumian thought as he watched the elder who had arrested him open the iron cell door.

The slightly aged clergyman stepped aside and said to Lumian, "Stay here and await your judgment."

Judgment? You haven't even done the judgment yet? Have you given up on pretending? Lumian cooperatively shuffled into the cell.

Clang! The iron cell door was closed and locked.

Lumian looked around, found a metal chair fixed to the ground, and sat down, casting his gaze at the serious offenders who were sizing him up.

A young man with glasses, sitting opposite him, raised his chin and said, "Didn't expect someone younger than me to arrive. Brother, what crime did you commit?"

Without answering, Lumian asked in return, "What about you?"

The young man with glasses smiled and said, "Murder. Most people here are murderers."

"How many did you kill?" a middle-aged man with a sturdy build and chains through his collarbones asked curiously.

"Seven or eight. I'm not sure if one of them died in the end," the young man replied with a reminiscent look. "Ending a human life with my own hands, feeling their pain, struggle, and despair, having their warm blood splatter on my face, is intoxicating. At that moment, I felt like their god, their lord."

A Serial Killer? Lumian silently watched, not interrupting the exchange among these serious offenders.

The young man sighed in the end.

"Unfortunately, Azshara has too many detectives. They eventually found me. What about you? How many did you kill, and why?" he asked the middle-aged man with chained collarbones.

The man replied indifferently, as if describing his breakfast, "Don't know. Too many. Do you keep count of how many slices of bread you eat in a month?"

"That's a quote from Emperor Roselle of Intis, right? I read it in a biography," the young man replied with a smile. "I remember eating 123 slices last month."

The middle-aged man was silent for a few seconds and then said, "I kill because they deserve to die. And the more deserving they are, the tastier their flesh."

"You eat the people you kill?" the young man's expression changed slightly.

"Depending on how much they deserve it, there are different cooking methods," the middle-aged man replied seriously.

“You two are both freaks,” a sullen man in his thirties snorted.

The young man didn't get angry and asked curiously, “Why did you kill?”

“I didn't kill for the sake of killing. I just wanted to rape them. Blame them on resisting too much,” the sullen man answered with a look of disdain, as if saying he was different from these perverts.

The young man laughed and pointed to a woman with disheveled brown hair and collarbone chains, “She also rapes and kills, but that's incidental.

Her main purpose is collecting reproductive organs.”

Sitting quietly on a metal chair, slightly leaning forward, Lumian couldn't help but shake his head.

Does Lenburg have too many murderers? On average, each has a few body counts...

The gentlemanly young man looked at Lumian again.

“What about you? What major crime did you commit?”

Lumian thought seriously for a moment and said, “Murder, blasphemy, arson, kidnapping, extortion, intimidation, deceit, causing explosions, inducing miscarriages, worshiping evil gods, attacking government officials, blackmailing the orthodox Churches...”

The young man was stunned for a few seconds and then laughed.

“Brother, haven't you committed too many crimes?”

“Why else would I be here?” Lumian replied casually.

“True.” The young man and the other serious offenders looked at Lumian with more respect.

“How many did you kill exactly?” the young man asked, as if he could immerse himself in the details.

Lumian shook his head and said in a low voice, “I didn't count and don't want to answer. It's not something to boast about. It's like a farmer culling wheat-I'm just doing my job. Would you be happy doing your daily job well?”

The young man was silent for a moment and then said, “What's your name? I'm Guei. Maybe we'll meet again in the land of Death.”

Lumian simply replied, “Louis.”

He didn't want to use his real name among these people or in the City of Exiles. In mysticism, knowing someone's real name could lead to curses.

The Inevitability pathway had similar contract abilities.

“What about you guys?” Guei asked the others.

“Lez,” the middle-aged man replied.

The sullen man hesitated but answered, "Vijepan."

"Julie," said the woman with disheveled brown hair, her gaze lingering greedily on Guei and the others' crotches.

After the serious offenders introduced themselves, Lumian smiled and said, "I didn't expect Lenburg's security to be so bad, with so many serial killers. Right, I'm from Intis. I haven't been in Lenburg long."

Guei, the most talkative, raised his handcuffed hands, adjusted his glasses, and said with a smile, "Actually, it's not bad, even quite good, because Lenburg has the most and best detectives in the world.

"But there are still many people like us-twisted personalities combined with a lot of knowledge easily create a batch of formidable criminals.

"And criminals from other countries come here, wanting to challenge Lenburg's detectives."

Detectives are Sequence 7 of the Reader pathway, which belongs to the Church of Knowledge. There are indeed many here... Could there be real Criminals and Serial Killers among these criminals, using the Detectives for their own role-play? But then again, if the detectives catch the Devil pathway criminals, they can better and faster digest their own potions...

Lumian thought, nodding slightly and replying with a smile, "Am I one of them?"

"You have a clear understanding of your own personality. The more knowledge you have, the more dangerous you become."

Guei coughed and said, "Yes, I now regret not having more knowledge."

As the serious offenders alternated between silence and idle chatter, time seemed to pass without notice.

Finally, the clergy from before escorted a woman to the cell.

She wore a shirt with white lace flowers at the collar, a beige coat with brass trim, a dark knee-length skirt, and brown boots. Her face was oval, her light blue eyes like spring water, her nose high and straight, and her brown hair simply tied back with a bun-a very beautiful woman.

Seeing her, Vijepan's eyes lit up.

"You have been judged, and I will announce the verdict." The beautiful woman said before turning and walking toward the end of the dim corridor. The other clergy opened the cell and escorted Lumian, Guei, and the others behind her.

They descended stone stairs, going deeper and deeper underground, until they reached a large, double brass door.

The beautiful woman with the oval face stopped and turned to face Lumian and the others, her expression serious.

"Your verdict is:

“Exile, never to return!”

“Exile to where?” Guei asked, both surprised and confused.

Not a death sentence?

The woman pointed to the brass double doors behind her.

“Exile beyond these doors.”

As soon as she finished speaking, a chilling, indistinct sound came from behind the doors.

Chapter 793 Morora

Hearing the sounds from behind the door, the faces of all the serious offenders changed, except for Lumian.

Guei blurted out, “What's behind the door?”

Could exile actually mean being sent to some monster to be its food?

“Behind the door is a path leading to your place of exile,” the beautiful woman with the oval face answered simply. “There are no monsters waiting to eat you, but it is indeed dangerous. I don't know the specifics, but there's definitely a chance for you to survive. It's much better than being hanged or shot.”

Guei, Lez, and the others exchanged glances, then looked at the clergy in white robes trimmed with brass. They were tempted but eventually suppressed their urge.

They believed they were no match for the clergy of the Church of Knowledge, especially the beautiful woman who clearly held a higher status.

Guei glanced at Lumian and saw that the wanted criminal, who claimed to have committed various serious crimes, looked calm and unafraid.

“I will open the door in a moment. You will enter on your own. Anyone who stays behind will have an additional charge tagged on, and be sentenced to death on the spot,” the beautiful woman said, raising her hands. In her light blue eyes, countless illusory lights seemed to float.

Dark, dim rain fell silently from a height of about four meters, drenching Lumian and the others.

Lumian immediately felt irritated, a wave of violent emotions surging within him.

It seemed like the blood of Omebella was stirring.

“What did you do to us?” Guei asked, unsure and alarmed.

The beautiful woman in the beige coat with brass trim explained in a teaching tone,

“This is a mystic technique called ‘Harps' Rain of Sterility.’ It renders you infertile but can be reversed with the corresponding mystic technique or by a professional doctor.

“We don't want babies born in the place of exile. They are innocent.”

Rain of Sterility... No wonder Omebella's blood reacted so strongly... I wonder if this secret technique will affect me or if the special properties of Omebella's bloodline will neutralize it... If it works, would it prevent embryos from implanting if I were influenced by the Great Mother in the future? It probably depends on the rank of the influence... Lumian thought that the Rain of Sterility might not be a bad thing.

The other serious offenders didn't see it as a problem either. Some already had children, while others were too cold-blooded or twisted to think much about offspring.

The beautiful woman stepped back a few paces, faced the brass doors, and pressed her hands in the air.

The doors emitted a heavy, metallic creaking sound and slowly opened.

For some reason, Guei and the others felt an urge to go through the doors, stepping into the dim passage beyond.

They didn't notice that, except for the beautiful woman, the clergy of the Church of Knowledge had retreated to the edge of the corridor, standing on the steps when the doors opened.

Lumian felt the same urge, sensing something familiar yet unknown calling to him from deep within the passage.

He walked in the middle of the group, hearing the clang of the closing doors behind them.

The passage dimmed significantly, illuminated only by glowing gems embedded in the walls.

How extravagant... Lumian instinctively thought.

Guei glanced around and whispered, "Should we stay here and wait until there are fewer guards outside, then find a way to escape?"

"Do you think the exiled people before us didn't think of that?" Vijepan sneered. "And we're still shackled. How do we escape?"

Lumian watched coldly, noticing that Guei could somewhat resist the urge to flee while the other serious offenders were finding excuses to reject his suggestion.

After they argued for two or three minutes, Lumian casually asked, "Do we have any food? What if the guards only have a lapse every few days?"

Without waiting for Guei to answer, Lumian continued, "Actually, there is food. Each one of you is food."

He turned to Lez, the human chef, and asked with a smile, "How would you prepare us?"

"Suitable for stewing and pickling. You need the right spices to prevent the taste from turning sour," Lez replied, his face lighting up.

Guei fell silent for a few seconds, then, handcuffed and shackled, began to walk slowly down the passage. Lumian followed at the same pace.

They walked for what felt like seven or eight hours, though Lumian suspected his sense of time was distorted.

During this time, no one chose to stop. It seemed like they were heading not for a City of Exiles but a Land of Hope.

They frequently heard the indescribable terrifying sounds, prompting the human chef, Lez, to comment, "It's like we're walking down a monster's long esophagus, heading for its stomach. The sounds are its digestive movements."

Lumian agreed, while the others felt their hair stand on end.

Finally, they saw stone steps leading upwards.

This seemed to signify that the end was near.

Climbing the steps and pushing open a heavy wooden door, Lumian and the others were momentarily blinded by the bright sunlight, causing them to instinctively close their eyes. The indescribable, chilling sounds ceased.

Almost simultaneously, a gentle voice said, "Welcome to the City of Exiles, Morora."

Just as I thought... Lumian sighed silently, opened his eyes, and looked around.

They were in a grand prayer hall of a cathedral. Sunlight streamed through stained glass windows, creating a sacred and radiant scene.

The walls without windows were adorned with murals depicting mythical stories, while below stood brass bookshelves filled with various books and scrolls.

It felt more like a library than a church.

The speaker was an old man in a white robe trimmed with brass. He was in his sixties or seventies, with graying hair, gentle and clear amber eyes, and no trace of cloudiness. He held a thick book in his left hand, a standard scholar-clergyman of the Church of Knowledge.

Yet Lumian felt he wasn't a real person, suspecting he was a specially crafted puppet.

"Morora? This place is called Morora?" Guei asked curiously, opening his eyes.

The old man nodded. "I am Heraberg, responsible for all theological affairs in Morora."

As he spoke, he extended his right hand, pointing at Lumian and the others.

The shackles, handcuffs, and chains through their collarbones softened instantly, as if made of mud.

With a clatter, they fell from the bodies of the serious offenders, hitting the gray and white stone floor with metallic thuds.

The serious offenders' hearts sank, abandoning any bad thoughts.

Heraberg handed out the thick book and a brass-cased pen.

"Register your names. This signifies your official status as residents of Morora."

Lumian complied, taking the book and writing "Louis."

Next was Guei. He took the book and pen and tentatively asked Heraberg, "How do you know we're writing our real names?"

Heraberg replied calmly, "The past is not important. In Morora, the present and the future matter."

Guei pondered for a while, unsure of the clergyman, Heraberg's meaning.

Considering that the Church of Knowledge could exchange information via telegram, he didn't use a fake name but wrote his real name honestly.

After all the serious offenders finished registering, Heraberg looked at them and said, "You must follow the rules here. Most laws are the same as in other cities in Lenburg, but dueling is legal if both parties agree. Non-violent protests are also allowed. We have a dedicated team to maintain order in Morora."

The honest-looking, middle-aged Lez asked, "Can we join the enforcement team?"

"The enforcement team is made up entirely of experimental personnel," Heraberg replied warmly.

Guei asked, "How do we become experimental personnel?"

Vijepan asked grimly, "What happens if we break the law here? Jail time or death penalty?"

Heraberg smiled.

"The worst punishment for breaking the law here is becoming an experimental personnel."

"Wouldn't that make us enforcers?" Guei was stunned.

Isn't that encouraging us to break the law?

Lumian recalled the term "experimental personnel" frequently appearing in the 0-01 sealed information.

Just from that, he knew becoming experimental personnel was definitely not a good thing.

Heraberg's expression remained unchanged.

"Yes, but remember, besides the church's overseers, at least two experimental personnel are discarded daily."

Discarded... Guei and the others found this term strangely terrifying.

"How many people are in Morora now?" Lumian asked a peculiar question.

Heraberg replied with a smile, "Nearly 200,000. The city has farms, mines, and factories around it, all part of Morora."

"Nearly 200,000? Does Lenburg have that many serious offenders?"

Lumian was slightly surprised.

Heraberg professionally explained, "It's accumulated over generations, and we also spend money to import serious offenders from abroad."

Import... makes it sound like importing talent... Lumian pondered for a few seconds, not in a hurry to "commit a crime," planning to apply to become experimental personnel, hoping to get close to the sealed 0-01.

He bade farewell to Heraberg and headed for the exit of the library-like cathedral, intending to first find the two parts of the Abscessed Hand.

Chapter 794 The Price of Meddling

Behind Lumian, Vijepan continued questioning Heraberg, the clergy of the Church of Knowledge, “In a legal duel, can I do anything to the other party without facing punishment?”

“Yes,” Heraberg confirmed.

Vijepan's eyes lit up, feeling as if he had found paradise.

He excitedly swallowed.

Gulp... He heard a similar sound next to him.

He turned his head and saw that the sound came from a woman with long brown hair, Julie.

The “collector” was also excited, while the human chef, Lez, licked his lips.

He was already hungry.

Lumian didn't bother watching the other offenders' performances. He left the library-like cathedral and surveyed the surroundings.

The buildings in this area were ancient, reminiscent of early Fifth Epoch styles with their heavy columns and arches, giving a sense of grandeur and simplicity.

Behind the cathedral was a seemingly endless graveyard. Tombstones stood amidst the trees, with many raised graves dotting the landscape.

This reminded Lumian of a line from the 0-01 sealed information: “Place it in an underground mausoleum with a large number of soldier mannequins. Construct a cemetery with more than a million corpses above it...”

Is the underground mausoleum sealing 0-01 right below? Just as Lumian withdrew his gaze, the previously sunny sky darkened. Thick clouds gathered, and the sound of thunder rumbled.

The weather changes so quickly... No wonder the information mentioned Morora frequently experiencing extreme weather... Lumian sighed as he looked into the distance, seeing mountain ranges resembling giant beasts lying at the horizon, blocking anyone who might want to leave secretly.

Of course, this was just a metaphor, as the residents of Morora never thought of leaving the city.

Lumian felt a slight reluctance too.

The underground was calling to him.

“We need to find a place to settle down quickly, or we'll get soaked,” Guei's voice came from beside Lumian.

He had also left the cathedral, and as a local of Azshara, his words were quite formal.

“Yeah,” Lumian replied with a smile as he walked into the large square in front of the cathedral.

Guei followed, glancing back and saying in surprise, "There's such a large graveyard here?"

"A graveyard with over a million, even tens of millions of corpses," Lumian replied casually.

Guei nodded thoughtfully.

"History books record a large-scale grave relocation in the early Fifth Epoch in the Lenburg region to address the aftermath of the Pale Disaster. Was it moved here?"

"Perhaps," Lumian said as they crossed the square. He quietly activated the black mark representing the Abscessed Hand, but did not actually use it.

He was sensing the approximate location of the other two parts of the Abscessed Hand.

To his surprise, he sensed more than two parts. Different directions within the City of Exiles had subtle responses.

Hand Bro's body parts got dismembered? Lumian silently muttered.

He chose the direction with the strongest response.

After walking about a street's length, he heard the clashing of metal and saw two men fiercely fighting with sharp swords as a crowd watched.

Duels with fatalities happen daily... Lumian reviewed the 0-01 sealed information. He didn't hurry, deciding to watch for a while.

Guei did the same, seemingly assessing the strength of Morora's residents.

The fight lasted two or three minutes, ending with a man in a black jacket being slashed across the chest and stomach, his intestines spilling out as he convulsed and died.

A team of men and women in black robes, their expressions indifferent, appeared, silently dragging the stripped corpse away and cleaning the blood from the street, like machines following a set procedure.

The onlookers dispersed. A small man in a brown-green cap, smiling kindly, walked past Lumian and Guei, glancing at them.

"New here?" the small man asked warmly.

"How can you tell?" Guei asked curiously.

The small man laughed.

"You still have that new look, not yet fully integrated into Morora!"

His voice suddenly turned sharp, as if possessed by something unknown.

Lumian watched the small man in silence, observing his changes.

The small man waved.

"Haha, I'm Worms. Let's have a drink sometime."

As Worms walked down another street, Guei suddenly spoke to Lumian, "Don't you feel like you're missing something?"

"I noticed," Lumian replied nonchalantly. "He's quick."

He had only noticed his Traveler's Bag was about to be taken when Worms withdrew his hand.

He must be a real Beyonder, a true Marauder. That sudden state change was likely a performance to distract attention.

"Why didn't you expose him if you noticed? Afraid of retaliation?" Guei didn't understand Lumian's reaction.

"I wanted to see what he would do," Lumian replied with a smile, hands in his pockets, slowly following the route Worms had taken.

Guei watched his back for a while, then decided to find a place to stay first.

...

Once out of Lumian and Guei's sight, Worms quickened his pace, darting through several alleys in a circuitous route.

After confirming he had shaken off any potential pursuers, he stopped in a secluded alley and took out a dark black coin pouch from inside his clothes.

It was Lumian's Traveler's Bag.

"Haha, these new fools are so careless. Let's see what's inside..." Worms reached into the Traveler's Bag.

His expression changed slightly, filled with intense surprise.

He could "see" the pouch's value, sensing many items with spirituality inside, but he hadn't expected it to be a rare spatial item, holding what felt like a small room.

What a pleasant surprise... Worms pulled out one of the items.

What greeted his eyes was a half-decomposed, dark blue swollen corpse, dripping yellowish-red pus.

Smack!

Worms recoiled, letting the half-corpse fall to the ground.

Wh- His face turned horrified.

Who carries a half-decomposed corpse around?

And a highly decayed corpse at that!

Even in Morora, filled with countless murderers, this is the most twisted thing!

No wonder he was exiled here!

Steadying himself, Worms reached into the Traveler's Bag again, pulling out a piece of smooth, white leather.

He couldn't take his eyes off it, as if staring at the skin of a dream lover.

He quickly noticed some black words on the leather that he didn't recognize.

Seems to be words that can trigger Beyonder powers. This leather must be very valuable. I should copy it and find someone to decipher it without arousing suspicion, Worms thought in delight, caressing the leather, unwilling to let go.

Suddenly, he felt his throat itch.

Cough, cough, cough!

He started coughing, more and more violently.

Within seconds, he coughed so hard it felt like his heart would tear apart.

Pfft!

Worms spat out a mouthful of blood.

This isn't right! How did I suddenly get so sick? Worms, vaguely understanding, threw the leather to the ground.

But his coughing continued, even more violently.

While coughing, he thought of a way to save himself: That guy put such dangerous leather in his pocket, he must have prepared a cure...

Yes, there must be one!

Worms reached into the Traveler's Bag again.

He first pulled out a gray-white lightning-shaped brooch.

A thick, silvery-white lightning bolt suddenly descended from the stacked clouds, striking him.

Boom!

The thunder echoed, and Worms fell, his body charred and twitching.

Already gravely ill, the lightning strike left him near death.

How... how could I suddenly be struck... by lightning... I, I... Worms's vision darkened, his confusion and regret lingering as he closed his eyes.

He soon stopped breathing.

About ten seconds later, Lumian turned into the alley, walked to Worms, looked down at his body, and shook his head with a smile.

"Rummaging through others' belongings is very dangerous."

After a pause, Lumian regrettably sighed.

"I wanted to follow you and get in touch with Morora's Beyonders. You let me down.

"And you didn't even get to the more dangerous items."

As he spoke, Lumian picked up the Traveler's Bag, placing the items back inside in their compressed form: the Fury of the Sea brooch, the Demoness of Despair human leather, and the half-corps of the Abscessed Hand.

"I guess being a generous soul is all you can do," Lumian muttered, extracting 537 sassen gold from Worms.

That was about 2863 verl d'or.

Pocketing the generous soul's gift, Lumian waited for Worms's Beyonder characteristics to manifest.

About two minutes later, a team of black-robed enforcers entered the alley. The leader looked at Lumian expressionlessly and said, "Did you kill him?"

"No, he was struck by lightning. Maybe he did too many bad things," Lumian replied with a smile, explaining earnestly. "He was a thief and stole my stuff, so I chased him here."

The enforcers stared at Lumian as if verifying his truthfulness.

After a moment, the leader nodded. "You may leave."

Lumian didn't move, smiling as he said, "His belongings should be mine, right?"

Chapter 795 "Old Friend"

The leader of the enforcers was around forty, clean-shaven, with dark brown eyes.

He responded to Lumian's question without any expression, "There's no such rule."

He meant there was no rule stating that all items on a thief's body should go to the victim.

Lumian smiled and asked, "But there's also no law specifically prohibiting it, right?"

"Right." The leader of the enforcers nodded slowly.

Lumian's smile broadened. "Coming to Morora means cutting all ties with the past, right?"

This was inferred from what the clergyman Heraberg had said in the cathedral.

"Yes." The enforcer did not deny it.

Lumian probed further, "And this thief doesn't have any other heirs in Morora, does he?"

Before being sent to Morora, serious criminals were sterilized. Unless they were part of a criminal family or found a partner with similar criminal interests here, no one in Morora had legal heirs.

The enforcer didn't answer Lumian immediately. He pulled a thick book from under his black robe and started searching for the relevant records.

"Do you know this thief's name?" Lumian asked thoughtfully.

The enforcer nodded. "His name is Worms."

Soon, the records were found. The enforcer read in a flat voice, "His parents and siblings are not in Morora, and he hasn't married here, at least not officially registered."

“So, according to the laws from where I come from, a thief's possessions go to the person who caught them if there are no other heirs or claimants,” Lumian began to explain, “Just like in a legal duel, the victor can take the spoils.”

The enforcer stared at Lumian for a few seconds before saying, “Okay.”

He and his team stood patiently as Worms's Beyonder characteristics manifested, merging with one of his fingers, which then broke off, turning semi-transparent black.

Lumian put away the Beyonder characteristics but didn't leave immediately. Instead, he stayed, watching as the enforcers dragged away the body and cleaned the blood and scorch marks from the alley.

The clouds above thickened, and lightning and thunder grew more frequent.

Finally, the alley was clean and quiet, with only Lumian remaining.

Lumian nodded thoughtfully, murmuring to himself, The enforcers seem to remember the appearance and names of every Morora resident...

After becoming enforcers, they are still human but not quite human anymore...

He felt that the so-called enforcers, who were actually experimental personnel, acted like puppets following set procedures, lacking self-awareness and deep thinking.

He had deliberately asked if Worms's belongings were his, not out of greed for the Beyonder characteristics, although that played a small part, as Beyonder characteristics were valuable. He had long figured that Worms wasn't a Sequence 7 Marauder, as a Sequence 7 called Cryptologist would have deciphered some of the secrets of the items in the Traveler's Bag and understood their dangers, not dying just after examining three items.

Lumian even doubted Worms had reached Sequence 8 Swindler, because the thief didn't seem smart enough.

Lumian's questions to the enforcers were not to showcase his talent in being a negotiator or exploit loopholes but to test the enforcers' state.

And he had his answer.

He felt that after becoming enforcers, these serious criminals became like the wax figures in the Sauron family's Red Swan Castle or a combination of the Iron and Blood Cross Order Supervisor Olson, but without the violent madness, instead exhibiting a gentle indifference.

Is this the combined effect of the 0-01 corruption and Morora's sealing influence? Lumian was unsure if he would retain his self-awareness if he joined the enforcers, or end up just following Morora's rules, becoming a puppet of the City of Exiles or 0-01.

This made him waver in his original plan to approach 0-01 as an enforcer.

He laughed softly, asking in a low voice, “Termiboros, do you want to be Morora's puppet?”

Termiboros ignored him.

Whoosh!

The downpour finally arrived, shrouding Morora in a mist of rain and a doomsday-like gloom.

Lumian followed the shelter of the huge buildings, avoiding the rain as he headed to the place where the strongest feedback from the Abscessed Hand's missing parts came from.

When he reached his destination, his clothes were half-soaked by the wind and rain, and the water on the street was nearly up to the steps.

Lumian glanced to the side, seeing a sign by the door depicting a knife, fork, and wine glass, with the words in Lenburg: "Carnivore"

A bar serving food? Carnivore... Lumian pondered the bar's name, suddenly having a strange guess, The feedback indicated that parts of Hand Bro's body are scattered across Morora, but originally there were only two pieces...

The demon with the goat face in the Underworld cut and ate Hand Bro's rotten flesh daily, and it regenerated...

This bar is called "Carnivore"...

Could it be that one piece of Hand Bro's body was obtained by the bar's owner, saving them the cost of buying meat and using it as a substitute?

Other bar owners in different cities might not do this, but in Morora, they likely would, since they were exiled here for serious crimes. The bar owner might even be a perverted butcher who killed people and sold their meat...

If that's true, things will be troublesome. Who knows how many people have eaten and integrated Hand Bro's rotten flesh, and what impact that might have...

Can I merge the remaining parts once I find the original two pieces?

Lumian muttered silently for a while, then ran through the rain and pushed open the heavy wooden door of the Carnivore bar.

Upon arriving in Morora, after almost reassembling the Abscessed Hand's body, he had started referring to it as Hand Bro, half-jokingly and half to show "closeness," hoping it wouldn't attack him when fully restored, as there might be other dangers then.

Just as he entered the bar, bringing in the rain, Lumian saw a familiar figure.

That figure sat on a high stool in front of the bar, their hair tinged with red, eyebrows and eyes leaning towards brown, looking handsome yet unlikable due to their overly sharp features.

Albus!

Albus Medici!

Lumian tensed, though his expression remained calm as he smiled and walked towards the bar.

He used to think Albus Medici was mysterious and possibly involved in some consOriginal. Later, he learned about the existence of the Red Angel Medici, realizing this former King of Angels had orchestrated a massive plot and successfully obtained the Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic of the Hunter pathway from Vermonda Sauron in Fourth Epoch Trier.

This made Lumian associate Albus Medici with the Red Angel, suspecting Albus was the King of Angels' agent, sent to Morora to find a way to get close to 0-01.

For Lumian, this was bad news, as Medici was close to ascending to the Red Priest's divine throne!

Albus Medici noticed Lumian's gaze and turned, looking back at Lumian, who had made no effort to disguise himself beyond restoring his hair color.

"What brings you here?" Lumian smiled as if meeting an old friend.

Albus returned the smile. "What brings you here?"

"Of course, I was captured," Lumian laughed, sitting beside Albus and tapping the bar counter, "Give me a steak, tenderloin, medium-rare," he told the bartender, who looked as if he had lost his parents.

"Are you mimicking me? Also being randomly captured and ordering a tenderloin steak," Albus said, one foot on the stool's footrest, the other resting on his knee.

Before Lumian could respond, he relaxed and asked with a smile, "What crime did you commit?"

"Murder, blasphemy, arson, causing explosions, kidnapping..." Lumian repeated the crimes he had told Guei and others before, but not in the same order.

He was relaxed as he asked, "What about you?"

"Me?" Albus jiggled his foot resting on his knee, "Murder, arson, inciting riots, attempting to overthrow the government."

"Which government?" Lumian asked in a tone of old friends reuniting.

"Intis." Albus shrugged, "Don't ask me why I tried to overthrow the Intis government and ended up in this strange city in Lenburg. I don't know either."

That's such a patronizing answer... Lumian nodded in agreement. "Yeah, I didn't commit crimes in Lenburg either."

As the two former Iron and Blood Cross Order members "chatted," two steaks were served.

Looking at the steaks on white porcelain plates, slightly bloody and with a good-looking texture, Lumian remained silent and didn't pick up his knife and fork.

He sensed a connection.

This was indeed the Abscessed Hand's rotten flesh, cut from the body!

After a few seconds, Lumian glanced to the side and found Albus Medici also staring at the "steak" without moving.

Lumian smiled and asked, "Why aren't you eating?"

Albus responded with a radiant smile. "Why aren't you?"

Chapter 796 "Duel"

In response to Albus's question, Lumian let out a soft laugh and muttered to himself, This guy seems pretty sharp...

No idea when he was exiled to Morora, but this must be his first time eating here...

Did he come here because he noticed some people in Morora behaving strangely after eating at this bar?

As these thoughts raced through his mind, Lumian slapped the bar counter.

He jumped off the stool and coldly said to the bartender, whose expression had remained grim.

“Serving this kind of meat as steak to me? Get your boss out here!”

The bartender was taken aback. “Are you certain?”

He wasn't embarrassed or angry at Lumian's attitude; instead, there seemed to be a slight hint of pleasant surprise.

Lumian didn't answer but conveyed with his eyes that he wanted the boss to hurry up and come out.

The bartender immediately shouted, “Boss! Boss! Someone's about to wreck your bar!”

Within seconds, a figure rushed out from the kitchen.

The figure had messy, fluffy hair and a very fat face, layered with flesh that made his eyes appear small, yet his body was quite standard, showing no sign of obesity.

At this moment, he was wearing a white apron and holding a cleaver, glaring angrily at the two customers near the bar, shouting in Lenburg, “Who? Who's going to wreck my bar?”

Lumian pointed at the steak on the white porcelain plate and sneered, “You think I can't tell what kind of meat this is?”

“If I say it's steak, it's steak,” the fat-faced boss retorted without backing down.

Lumian didn't argue further. He took out a black glove from the Traveler's Bag and tossed it in front of him.

“I challenge you to a duel,” Lumian said calmly.

Throwing down a glove was a customary way to issue a duel challenge in Intis.

The boss glanced at the black glove on the ground, his layers of fat shifting to reveal a light yellow beard.

He was laughing.

He responded to Lumian's challenge, “Okay.”

As soon as he spoke, he raised the cleaver and swung it down at Lumian.

Lumian sidestepped the blow, but suddenly felt he couldn't use his teleportation ability.

The contract ability from the Abscessed Hand seemed to be stripped away by some strange power!

Lumian recalled Ludwig's description of the Sequence 5 Depriver of the Gourmet pathway and suspected this boss-cum-chef was a blessed one of this pathway.

No wonder he can make Hand Bro's rotten flesh look and smell like real steak...

A bestowed not executed but exiled to Morora?

Stop dumping all the trash in Morora...

Is it because they fear Morora's population decline, risking the seal on 0-01?

As these thoughts flashed through his mind, Lumian swung his shoulder, his arm swelling, and punched out with his right fist.

His fist burst into bright, blazing-white flames, like a peacock's tail, heading straight for the bartender.

Boom!

As his fist struck the side of the heavy cleaver, a violent explosion occurred.

The blazing-white light lit up the entire bar, the violent blast overturning nearby stools and throwing the fat-faced boss away.

Albus reacted quickly, jumping off his stool and perching on the bar counter far from the blast area.

He pulled one foot up, resting it on the bar, watching Lumian's duel with interest.

The bartender was also caught in the blast, thrown against the liquor shelf, doused in the fragrant liquid from shattered bottles.

He was nearly set on fire.

The bar owner, who took the brunt of the explosion, had his chest clothes torn, revealing blood, charred flesh, and white bones.

His face had similar wounds, but the layers of fat kept it from affecting his skull.

The wounds were writhing and healing rapidly in an unnatural, inhuman way, as if they would soon be completely healed.

This isn't a power or trait typical of a Depriver. None of the middle or low Sequences in the Gourmet pathway have this ability. Did he gain this from a special kind of food as a Chef? It's similar to how Hand Bro's rotten flesh can regenerate after being eaten... Lumian retreated a few steps from the bar owner, putting distance between them.

As he noticed the other party's peculiarity, he also realized he had lost another ability-Spell of Harrumph.

Can a Depriver sense which of my abilities and traits are most dangerous to them? Even if they don't know exactly what those abilities and traits are, can they still deprive me of them based on the level of danger they pose? Lumian calmly formed a massive, blazing-white fireball and shot it at the bar owner.

The bar owner didn't dodge. He raised his nearly shattered cleaver and slashed at the blazing-white fireball.

The fireball split in two, losing its momentum and destructive aura. The bar owner opened his mouth wide and sucked it in like a whale swallowing water, remaining unharmed.

At that moment, Lumian laughed.

More blazing-white fireballs rapidly formed around him, whistling through the air toward the bar owner.

Behind him, blazing-white fire crows appeared one after another, flying in wide arcs to flank the bar owner.

Lumian wanted to see how many fireballs the Depriver could handle and if he could eat them all without getting overwhelmed.

The bar owner's eyes narrowed, and he immediately spewed the blazing-white flames from his stomach, transforming them into a torrent to meet the incoming fireballs.

Seeing this, Albus flipped over the bar counter.

Rumble!

The fireballs exploded one after another upon contact with the flames.

The counter was flattened, the liquor shelves collapsed silently, and the mixed liquor burned in a fierce blaze.

The bartender, who had escaped to Albus's position, felt very fortunate he had reacted in time.

Other patrons either shrank to the edges of the room or escaped the hall, showing a wealth of experience.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! The blazing-white Fire Ravens, which had deliberately avoided the front, fell on the bar owner's back one after another.

By then, the bar owner was covered in a semi-transparent crimson glow, like solidified moonlight.

Rumble!

Despite the explosions and flames from the Fire Ravens, the bar owner's crimson glow didn't dim. Instead, it brightened with the fire's reflection.

When the flames finally subsided, the bar owner returned to his normal appearance. He lifted his cleaver and looked at where Lumian had been standing.

No one was there.

Lumian was nowhere to be seen in the hall either.

The bar owner was momentarily stunned.

Almost simultaneously, a figure emerged from his shadow.

Lumian, his eyes iron-black, struck the bar owner's crotch with his blazing-white flame-covered right fist.

Amid the rumbling, Lumian's fist hit its mark, penetrating the Depriver's intestines with blazing-white flames.

Standing up straight, Lumian lifted the bar owner, letting the flames surge into his stomach.

Then, Lumian withdrew his right fist and threw the bar owner to the ground.

With a thud, the bar owner's crotch split open, intestines spilling out, and his stomach, though intact, was scorched and oozing yellow-green fluid.

Lumian looked at the bar owner's pained, shrunken eyes and mocked, "Did you turn your brain into food too? You blocked one round of attacks, then stayed in the same spot without moving. Did you not consider that I might use your shadow?"

The bar owner's face twisted as he murmured, "Turning... my own... brain into... food... Is it possible?"

His voice faded, and he died, lying motionless on the ground.

Lumian stared at the Depriver's corpse, not thinking about his opponent's response, but noting something unusual about the battle.

Deprivers sure have a variety of abilities. Though each one is basic and crude, their combat applications are quite formidable...

If this guy hadn't reacted so sluggishly after I vanished, I wouldn't have attacked his weak spot so easily. I might have needed to use one of the mystical items from the Traveler's Bag...

In comparison, Worms the Marauder didn't have this problem...

As he thought, Lumian shook his hand, revealing painful corrosive wounds caused by the stomach acid of the bar owner when he delivered the strike at his stomach.

His hand had been protected by the blazing-white flames at the time.

Despite knowing he couldn't prevent the bar owner's boons from returning to their source, Lumian squatted down, pulled a plain sword from the Traveler's Bag, and used his flames to separate the stomach from the corpse.

He planned to ask Ludwig if this could be made into a dish with special effects or if it could be used as a unique material by an Artisan.

Finished with this task, Lumian stood and asked the bartender, who had just emerged from hiding and was severely injured, "How many years has your boss been exiled in Morora?"

"Five or six years, I think," the bartender answered with an uncertain look.

Five or six years... That thief looked younger, probably only exiled for a year or two... The longer one stays in Morora, the more likely they are to show symptoms of experimental personnel-symptoms of 0-01 corruption. No, the sealing information didn't mention this, and it doesn't happen in Trier... Did the bar owner do something in Morora that caused him to start turning into an experimental subject? Lumian pondered as he looked around and smiled. "Don't take my spoils."

He referred to the bar owner's money.

Lumian then walked towards the corridor beside the bar.

Based on the origin of the "steak" and the Chef's position, he suspected the Abscessed Hand's body part was in the kitchen.

Entering the kitchen, he saw a half-decayed, swollen, blue-black corpse openly displayed on the cooking counter.

Chapter 797 Determining the Situation

Looking at the swollen, blue-black corpse on the counter, Lumian chuckled to himself, They're not even trying to hide it, are they? Classic Morora, the City of Exiles...

Lumian did a quick inspection, confirming that the highly decayed corpse was indeed the other body part of the Abscessed Hand. Besides missing the left half, the corresponding part of the head, and the Abscessed Hand's body itself, it was fairly intact.

If it weren't for the rotting flesh at the spine writhing and trying to regenerate, Lumian might have doubted that the two steaks served to him and Albus had come from this corpse, let alone that dozens, perhaps hundreds, of such "steaks" had been sold.

This made Lumian frown slightly, a question he had pondered earlier resurfacing in his mind: Must I do a recall of all the steaks sold?

Judging by the corpse's completeness, it doesn't seem necessary...

Moreover, the residents of Morora had been eating such steaks for some time. Who knows if they've actually digested and absorbed the rotten flesh...

From what I sense about the subtle connections between the corpse, even if digested, the rotten flesh likely just changes form without fundamentally altering...

As he pondered, Lumian quickly stuffed the half-decayed corpse into the Traveler's Bag, using the Sword of Courage and other plain swords to separate it from the other half to prevent unwanted fusion before finding the head.

"So we were served this stuff, and it looked pretty appetizing," Albus's voice came from the kitchen doorway as Lumian put away the half of the Abscessed Hand.

Albus, the former member of the Iron and Blood Cross Order and Medici family member, wore a black jacket with dark red patterns, one hand in his pocket, marveling.

He didn't seem disgusted by almost eating rotten flesh steak.

Lumian turned and responded with a smile, "I was looking forward to seeing what changes you'd undergo after eating it."

"Gradually gain some self-healing ability, become stronger on moonlit nights, and learn some dark spells," Albus replied in a report-like tone.

"But in return, self-control would significantly decrease, intelligence would regress, and nightmares would be frequent."

"So, you came to investigate after noticing the odd behavior of those guys?" Lumian asked with a smile.

He wasn't really seeking confirmation; he had already determined it. He was using this question to indicate that he was also investigating and hadn't come specifically for the half-corpse.

"A Hunter must conceal their true purpose to avoid traps set by others." The red-haired Albus smiled. "They tried to keep this a secret, hoping only they and their collaborators could enjoy this bar's special food."

“Who in Morora isn't selfish?” Lumian asked, changing the topic. “How did you notice their intelligence regression?”

Albus raised his right hand, palm up. “If their intelligence hadn't regressed, how could they have revealed their secret to me so easily, leading me to this bar?”

Lumian nodded slightly, looking thoughtful. “So, should I kill you to keep this secret from spreading?”

Albus met Lumian's gaze calmly, smiling. “Do you think those idiots can keep a secret?”

With that, the Medici family member turned and walked towards the bar hall, exposing his back to Lumian.

Lumian stood still, watching him leave, as if deep in thought.

For a moment, he had the urge to kill.

He considered using this chance to eliminate Albus Medici to prevent him from interfering with his approach to 0-01, or even marking it for the Red Angel before him.

Ultimately, Lumian resisted this impulse.

For two reasons: First, he judged that becoming an experimental subject would severely impact his self-awareness. Unless it was his only option, he didn't want to try it. In that case, having an extra person, a “cannon fodder” to help navigate the dangers, was a viable strategy.

Second, he wasn't confident he could kill Albus Medici. If Albus was still in the same state as when they explored the Red Swan Castle, he would be easily dealt with, but several months had passed. He had become a Reaper and had even fully digested the corresponding potion. It was unlikely the other party hadn't made any progress.

Moreover, if Albus was indeed representing the Red Angel in approaching 0-01, the King of Angels would likely enhance His descendant's strength, providing powerful items to ensure he was among the apex below demigods, capable of handling Morora's dangers.

Lumian didn't leave the kitchen immediately. He checked around again.

He was looking for any other special ingredients-the bar owner's slightly sluggish behavior made him suspect it was caused by randomly eating something in Morora, a common cause of death for Beyonders of the Gourmet pathway.

Unfortunately, Lumian only found ordinary ingredients like flour, butter, and milk.

He then went up to the second floor of the Carnivore bar, entering the Depriver's bedroom.

He planned to stay here as the duel winner for the time being.

The bedroom was cleaner than Lumian expected-no grease stains, no cockroaches, mice, or insects. Aside from being slightly messy, it was fine.

Lumian walked around the bedroom, trying to activate the black mark on his right shoulder to see if he could teleport out of Morora.

He couldn't sense any of the places he had been to.

As expected, I can't leave. I can only teleport within this mountainous area... But it's not like Morora residents want to leave... I wonder if Albus has such thoughts... Lumian muttered silently, taking out ritual materials from the Traveler's Bag.

He conducted his second experiment: Summoning a messenger!

But neither the doll messenger nor his own messenger responded to his call.

Disconnected from the spirit world? At least to some extent... As expected from a place sealing 0-01... Lumian stood at the window, gazing at the dim environment and the slightly less intense rain, feeling the cold dampness seeping in.

He proceeded with the third experiment according to his plan.

He walked to the full-length mirror in the room, placed his right hand on it, and activated a black mark on his body.

He was using the contractual ability from Bloody Jack to sense the mirror marks he had left elsewhere!

In the blink of an eye, Lumian sensed three faint marks through the mirror.

They were in Moron Avigny's study, the Blue Avenger's treasury, and Franca and Jenna's rented apartment.

This meant that if Lumian could enter the mirror, he might be able to use his teleportation ability to reach the mirrors corresponding to these marks. Even if not, he should be able to exchange information with the outside world through them!

Lumian was both pleasantly surprised and satisfied that his hypothesis was confirmed.

Having read the 0-01 data, he knew its origin and its connection to Fourth Epoch Trier. Given the similar sealing methods, many details should also be consistent-Trier had a special mirror world, so this place likely did too. Trier had Mirror People, so this place likely had them too!

The experimental subjects' detail, "if not blindfolded, the one who leaves the mausoleum will be a monster resembling him," was evidence of the Mirror People and the special mirror world's existence.

Based on these premises, Lumian thought using the mirror world's abilities might establish some contact with the outside world.

With this hypothesis, he borrowed the Mirror Cufflink from Franca, who had become a Demoness of Affliction. In a few days, she could use the pretext of investigating Mirror People to request charms from the Demoness Sect that would allow her to use the mirror world for teleportation.

Lumian reached into the Traveler's Bag and took out the glass-like cufflink.

He didn't rush to confirm if it could be used to leave directly or only to transmit information, as the Mirror Cufflink had only four uses left. He'd wait for important information or urgent matters to test it.

Grr, grr... At that moment, Lumian's stomach growled with hunger.

He couldn't help but gripe internally, Seriously, the Church of Knowledge is so stingy. Not even a meal or a sip of water before sending me into Morora. I'm not Ludwig, who can finish all the prison food...

Muttering, Lumian descended to the first floor, intending to cook something in the kitchen and wait for the rain to stop before looking for the Abscessed Hand's head.

By now, the bar owner's body had been taken away by the enforcers, and the bloodstains on the floor had been cleaned, but the destroyed bar counter and the hall's scorched remains hadn't been dealt with. Glass shards and wood splinters mixed with the scents of liquor and charred wood.

Just as Lumian picked up the bar owner's legacy left by the enforcers- 420 sassen gold-someone walked in from the doorway.

It was the humble-looking human meat chef, Lez.

Lez was soaked, glanced around, and asked Lumian, "Are you hiring a chef here?"

The Law of Beyonder Characteristics Convergence? Lumian suddenly laughed. "Sure, go to the kitchen and make something. I'll try it and see how it tastes."

Chapter 798 Hire

Lez looked at Lumian with confusion and asked, "Can you make decisions for the owner here?"

"Yes, because I am the owner now," Lumian replied with a smile, pointing to himself.

The human meat chef, Lez, was even more perplexed. "Weren't we just exiled to Morora together?"

It had been less than an hour since they arrived.

Lumian tilted his head and pointed his chin towards the destroyed bar area. "I had a duel with the previous owner and won this bar from him."

Lez's eyes suddenly lit up. "Is he dead? Where's his body?"

"The enforcers took it away, probably to be buried in the cemetery," Lumian said, walking to the edge of the hall and picking up a relatively intact chair, placing it next to the ruined bar.

Lez sighed regretfully but followed Lumian's suggestion and went into the kitchen to start cooking.

Lumian wandered to the bar area, searching for the two "steaks" he and Albus hadn't eaten.

They were torn to pieces in the violent explosion, scattered among the debris, completely charred and carbonized.

After examining them for a while, Lumian noticed that the steak fragments showed no signs of writhing or regeneration. The fire had destroyed any subtle connection to the corpse, making them seem entirely dead and no longer part of the Abscessed Hand.

These probably don't need to be recalled...

High-temperature flames can restrain the self-healing ability of the separated rotten flesh, but it's unclear how much it affects the corpse itself...

Besides, the separated rotten flesh must only have a limited self-healing ability; otherwise, each piece could grow into a new Hand Bro, and there'd be no need for Hand Bro to find the whole corpse...

After pondering for a while, Lumian brought over a small overturned round table from the edge of the hall and placed it next to the chair.

He sat down, patiently waiting for Lez to prepare lunch.

As time passed, Lez brought out a mixed salad, creamy mashed potatoes, and other dishes.

Lumian took a spoonful of mashed potatoes and tasted it, finding the texture unusually smooth and the flavors of starch, cream, and fat deliciously combined.

"Not bad," Lumian said, raising his left hand and giving a thumbs up.

Lez stood beside him, smiling humbly.

"I used to own a restaurant."

"A restaurant specializing in human meat?" Lumian teased provocatively.

Lez shook his head.

"Back then, I was a normal chef with excellent, but still human, cooking skills."

"Then why did you start eating people?" Lumian didn't directly ask when he started worshipping an evil god.

He didn't know which evil god corresponded to the Gourmet pathway.

Lez's expression gradually darkened.

"My wife had a friend who always filled her head with the idea of a luxurious lifestyle, introducing her to so-called high society members, even encouraging her to have affairs and squander money. She secretly mortgaged our restaurant; her goal was our restaurant from the start.

"After losing the restaurant, that friend stopped associating with my wife. My wife finally came to her senses but was too weak. She burned down the restaurant, killing herself in the process.

"Then a regular customer, who admired my cooking skills, approached me and asked if I wanted revenge. He offered to help, saying someone with my high-level cooking skills should worship the God of Cuisine, the great 'Devouring Whirlpool.'

"After that, I received a boon and slowly grew stronger.

"After becoming a true Chef, I found that woman and made her into the most satisfying meal of my life.

“From that day on, I enjoyed eating the flesh of the damned and gained the ability to discern who deserved to die.”

“Was that woman also a follower of an evil god?” Hearing this, Lumian strongly suspected that the first person Lez ate was a bestowed of the Broker pathway.

Perhaps Lez's restaurant was part of a transaction.

“Yes,” Lez confirmed, “She worshiped the so-called Truth. When she met my wife, she was still weak.”

As expected... Lumian smiled.

The ability to discern who deserves to die is quite useful. When I capture a Broker pathway Sequence 7 or higher, I'll leave it to Ludwig to handle.

After finishing the meal Lez prepared, Lumian nodded in satisfaction.

“I'm willing to hire you as the chef for this bar. Let's discuss your compensation and responsibilities.”

“Alright,” Lez said, assuming a listening posture.

Lumian picked up a white napkin and wiped his mouth.

“There's quite a bit of wine left in the cellar. Clean up the bar, rebuild it, and display the wine. After that, you'll be responsible for hiring and managing bartenders and waitstaff, as well as reestablishing contact with suppliers.”

“That's the job of a manager,” Lez noted, having run a restaurant before.

Lumian chuckled in response.

“Yes, chef and manager.

“The bar's revenue, after costs, will all be yours.”

“What about you?” Lez had never seen such an owner.

Not even wanting the money?

Lumian stood up, stretching his body, and casually said, “You'll be responsible for my meals, cleaning my room, and if there are special ingredients, making dishes or cocktails that give me the corresponding traits. Also, I don't eat human meat.”

Lez stared at Lumian for a few seconds and said in a deep voice, “You seem to know a lot about a Chef's abilities.”

Lumian glanced at the now-stopped rain outside and walked towards the bar's entrance, smiling.

“The previous owner of this bar was a Depriver, but unfortunately, I deprived him of his life, so he can't share his culinary skills with you.”

Moreover, my godson is an Angel of your pathway.

Lez fell silent. As Lumian was about to leave the bar, he finally spoke, "I'll take good care of this bar."

Lumian didn't look back, raising his right hand and waving lightly in acknowledgment.

There were still some deep pools of water on the street outside, with pedestrians mainly walking on the sidewalks. The sky was now bright and sunny, as if there hadn't been a heavy rainstorm.

Following the subtle connection from the contract mark, Lumian walked towards the suspected location of the Abscessed Hand's head.

Turning a corner, he saw a drenched corpse lying under a book-engraved obelisk. It was Vijepan, the gloomy rapist-murderer who had been exiled to Morora with Lumian and others.

At this moment, his hands and feet were severed at the joints, his pants stripped off, and his groin a bloody mess with the most important part missing.

His eyes were wide open, frozen in pain and despair.

Lost the duel, huh? Lumian murmured with a silent laugh.

He almost whistled in admiration for the duel he hadn't witnessed.

It must have been exciting; whoever died deserved a toast.

Looks like that collector named Julie is stronger... Both she and Vijepan had ulterior motives, no, open intentions to provoke a duel... Lumian thought Julie was likely a Beyonder. Such knife skills weren't something an ordinary person could possess.

As for whether Vijepan was a Beyonder, Lumian couldn't tell for now.

Even if he was, his Beyonder characteristic should have been taken.

"That woman is formidable," a voice suddenly said beside Lumian.

A gentleman had come from the side of the small square.

He wore a half-high silk hat, a white shirt, a cashmere sweater, and a woolen suit jacket, with a bow tie and a cane in hand.

He looked just over thirty, with a thin face and gentle blue eyes, like a well-educated upper-class person.

Of course, in Morora, there were no good people, only bad people and worse people.

"Did you see their fight?" Lumian asked casually.

The gentleman smiled. "They initially wanted to borrow revolvers for a duel from the restaurant over there, but the waiter told them that there were too many duels today and all the guns were borrowed, leaving only two long swords.

"That woman was very skilled. This man blocked three strikes before being knocked down, having his hands and feet cut off, and his pants removed."

So Vijepan wasn't likely a Beyonder... Lumian shifted his gaze from the corpse to the gentleman and asked with a smile, "What's your name?"

The gentleman placed a hand on his chest and bowed.

“You can call me Gusain, or Count. I heard you killed Worms?”

“Worms, the thief?” Lumian laughed. “He was struck by lightning, nothing to do with me. If I had killed him, the enforcers would have arrested me.”

Gusain smiled slightly. “There are ways to deceive the enforcers.”

So you've noticed their rigidity and procedural nature too? Lumian thought for a few seconds before deciding to be “honest.”

“Worms died because he wasn't lucky enough. The item he stole from me attracts lightning during rain.”

“Then you can't be blamed,” Gusain said understandingly.

He asked warmly, “How should I address you, and where are you staying now?”

“Louis, staying at the Carnivore bar,” Lumian replied truthfully.

Gusain nodded slightly.

“Be wary of Bainar, the bar's owner and chef. He's dangerous and cannibalistic.”

Lumian smiled. “He's already dead.”

Gusain paused for a moment before smiling. “You're more interesting than I expected. I hope you bring long-lost vitality to Morora.”

Lumian didn't continue the topic, instead taking the opportunity to gather information.

“In Morora, apart from Heraberg from the Church of Knowledge, who else should I watch out for?”

Without hesitation, Gusain replied, “Wanak, the owner of Dades Agricultural Company, has a monopoly on the grain supply from the surrounding farms to Morora. He had become an experimental subject but suddenly escaped and now behaves like a normal person.

“He is the most dangerous one in Morora.”

Can someone really return to normal after becoming an experimental subject? And the Church of Knowledge didn't do anything about Wanak leaving the experimental group? This is exactly what I need... Lumian thought to himself and nodded. “Who is the second most dangerous person in Morora?”

Gusain's smile remained unchanged as he answered, “They say it's me.”

Chapter 799 Provocation

Lumian wasn't surprised that Gusain indirectly referred to himself as the second most dangerous person in Morora. Instead, he smiled and asked, “What have you done? I mean, what have you done in Morora?”

Gusain's smile faded as he spoke seriously.

“Organized uprisings.

“We're already in the City of Exiles. Why should we still accept the rule of the Church of Knowledge? We should unite and drive them out of Morora. Then, we'll make our own rules and govern ourselves!”

Ignoring other factors, your words do make some sense. But the issue is, if we overthrow the Church's rule, why stay in Morora? Is this the influence of 0-01? The residents of Morora never consider leaving the city... Fortunately, I have a false Angel rank and all sorts of random items, so I'm only somewhat reluctant to leave, not entirely devoid of such thoughts... Lumian first confirmed the abnormalities of Morora from Gusain's response, then understood why people considered Gusain the second most dangerous person in Morora.

Uprisings were something the Church of Knowledge wouldn't allow, and given the information on 0-01, Gusain must have organized multiple uprisings and still hadn't been caught and added to the experimental subjects!

This was enough to show that this gentleman-like mature man was not simple.

Seeing that Louis wasn't scared by his words and didn't show obvious resistance, Gusain extended an invitation, “Would you like to join our group?”

“I'll think about it,” Lumian replied with a smile.

He really intended to consider it. This might be a way to approach 0-01 without becoming an experimental subject.

He believed that this ragtag group, unable to resist the influence of 0-01, couldn't truly overthrow the Church's rule in Morora, but he needed chaos and opportunity.

These exiles could die, and the Church of Knowledge personnel here seemed to be puppets.

Gusain smiled in satisfaction.

“Being a prisoner in this open-air prison or becoming its ruler, being perpetually oppressed or pursuing freedom, it indeed requires careful consideration.”

With that, Gusain glanced at the other side of the small square and said, “I must take my leave now. If you decide, hang a red cloth, the kind used to taunt bulls, at the door of the Carnivore bar.”

With that, Gusain removed his hat, placed a hand on his chest, and bowed.

Watching him walk into a nearby alley at a leisurely pace, Lumian saw a group of black-robed enforcers hurrying from the opposite side of the small square.

“Did you see Gusain just now? He looks like a gentleman with a hat,” the leader asked Lumian.

Lumian's smile widened, and he casually pointed to the alley Gusain had entered.

“Yes, he went that way.”

The enforcers stared at Lumian for a couple of seconds before continuing to pursue Gusain.

Lumian raised his right hand, rubbed his chin, and murmured to himself, Gusain sensed the enforcers' arrival in advance, but I didn't...

Is that why he's managed to organize multiple uprisings without being caught?

Is it his ability, an item, or the special corruption from 0-01?

Lumian didn't linger in the small square, bidding farewell to Vijepan's corpse, and continued towards the possible location of the Abscessed Hand's head.

After turning into another street, he suddenly had a premonition and looked towards the edge of the city of Morora.

The ground shook violently, earth and stones surged up, swallowing several buildings and forming a mountain about ten meters high.

At the mountain's peak, thick dust mixed with smoke erupted, red lava flowed, emitting heat that Lumian could clearly feel even in the city center.

At the same time, the screams of humans from that direction echoed far and wide.

A volcanic eruption? Lumian was stunned.

He had thought the volcanic eruptions described in the 0-01 information came from the surrounding mountains, not from within the city on flat ground!

After a few seconds, the dust obscured the sky, plunging Morora back into darkness.

Passersby showed no extra reaction, merely covering their noses to block the dust, treating it as just another heavy rain.

Lumian shook his head as he watched.

In such living conditions, Gusain and his people hadn't thought of escaping, only planning to overthrow the Church's rule and replace it. No wonder this is a Grade 0 Sealed Artifact...

Lumian, who restored himself at six every morning, remained unafraid of the dust and resumed his steps.

He crossed the street and arrived at a square with multiple obelisks. In the dusty environment, he moved along the buildings around the square towards his destination.

Suddenly, he felt a resonance, a connection from his special powers.

Lumian quickly turned and looked at the classical building made of gray-white stones beside him.

At the top hung a large sign with words written in Lenburg: Dades Agricultural Company Below the sign, two glass windows suddenly opened, revealing a figure.

The figure, wearing a thin white shirt with the top two buttons undone despite the cold winter, had hair like it was stained with fresh blood, iron-black eyes, and sharp facial features, exuding a fierce aura.

No introduction was needed; Lumian identified the figure from the sign and the resonating aura.

The most dangerous criminal in Morora, former experimental subject Wanak!

Did the resonance just now come from the direct corruption of 0-01?

Did the law of convergence lead to this encounter?

Did Wanak escape the status of an experimental subject because he completely submitted to 0-01?

Is he now 0-01's proxy in Morora?

This Sealed Artifact, despite lacking wisdom, instinctively seeks opportunities to break free from its seal?

As Lumian's thoughts raced, the suspected Wanak suddenly transformed into a blazing-white flame spear, filled with destructive energy, and flew at him.

Lumian's figure instantly disappeared without reappearing.

He directly teleported closer to the Abscessed Hand's head. In his ears echoed the taunting voice of the suspected Wanak, "Coward! Chicken!"

Lumian snorted, not turning back to fight the man.

I'll first gather the Abscessed Hand's body!

He feared the intense battle might lead to unforeseen events, making contact with 0-01 before he collected all the body parts, resulting in uncontrollable consequences.

Moreover, the aura and the flame spear the suspected Wanak displayed suggested he might have a trace of godhood. Even if not truly Sequence 4, he had fundamentally differed from a Sequence 5 Beyond.

Demigods couldn't approach 0-01, but maybe pseudo-demigod proxies created by 0-01 weren't subject to this rule!

Lumian looked ahead, finding himself in the boundless cemetery behind the Church of Knowledge, surrounded by gravestones and trees.

Uh... Lumian was momentarily stunned, then felt it made sense.

The bar owner-cum-chef having half of the Abscessed Hand's body and using it was an anomaly. Normally, anyone, even a felon, encountering a rotting corpse split into multiple parts would first call the enforcers to clean up the scene. The enforcers would then bury the body in this cemetery as part of the seal.

Of course, this was a normal assumption, excluding those with a penchant for corpses.

Lumian moved forward, approaching the source of the subtle connection.

During this, he remembered something.

Madam Magician said dangerous things might happen once the Abscessed Hand's body is gathered. It's best to complete this step within the City of Exiles to offset the corresponding risks with the presence of 0-01...

If I get the Hand Bro's head later, does that count as gathering the body?

Will that cause dangerous events?

Maybe I should wait a bit longer? Wait for dangerous and difficult-to-handle situations before teleporting back to gather Hand Bro's body to create unknown risks and muddy the waters?

I can't face the dangers of the Hand Bro alone; sharing is caring...

Also, Madam Magician implied that the Hand Bro might break the seal and enter Morora once its body is gathered?

Otherwise, how could it be considered complete...

Normally, not even a messenger can be summoned, nor a contract creature...

This might help me escape Morora...

As Lumian pondered, he stopped at a recently filled pit without a tombstone.

His contract mark told him a part of the Abscessed Hand's body was in this pit.

Seeing the unusually fresh marks on the pit's surface, Lumian felt a tightness in his chest. He crouched down, extended his hands, and performed a directional blast.

With the rumbling sound of explosions, he blew away a large amount of soil and unearthed a black wooden box from the bottom of the pit.

Opening the box, Lumian saw a highly decomposed, blue-black, swollen ear and a folded white paper.

Lumian unfolded the paper, seeing words written in Intisian:

"As expected, you want this rotten head.

"But unfortunately, I got it before you went to the Carnivore bar and hid it.

"Maybe you can ask me for it.

"Albus Medici."

Chapter 800 New Waitress

Lumian admitted that he felt a bit provoked.

However, it was still acceptable. If his guess was right, he and Albus would eventually cross paths again regarding 0-01. It was better for the Abscessed Hand's head to be in Albus's possession than lost or hidden by some unknown person.

Lumian now regretted not acting against Albus at the Carnivore Bar. He had hesitated and wanted to use him.

At that time, it was hard to predict that Albus had already obtained the Abscessed Hand's head.

Silently, Lumian activated the black mark representing Spirit World Traversal, sensing the subtle connection between himself and the Abscessed Hand's body parts again.

He intended to use this to find Albus.

The feedback is all similar, no way to distinguish which is stronger, which might be Hand Bro's head... Did Albus do something to suppress the feedback? Or completely block it? Lumian slowly exhaled, taking the Abscessed Hand's ear from the black wooden box and placing it in his Traveler's Bag.

He carefully examined the area around the grave, hoping to find clues to Albus's whereabouts.

Unfortunately, Albus was also an experienced Hunter, very adept at covering his tracks.

Containing his emotions, Lumian turned back to the Carnivore Bar amidst the dust and clouds from the volcanic eruption.

As he stepped through the door, Lez, the human cook, who had found some wood to repair the shelves and bar counter, stopped working, hammer in hand, and turned to him.

“I hired a waitress.”

“You can decide on that yourself,” Lumian said, uninterested in the bar's operation. He only cared about getting three meals and free lodging under the guise of being the boss.

Lez, ever diligent, added, “You know her. Julie, who came in with us.”

The “collector”? Lumian almost choked on his own saliva.

Why would a man hire such a “collector” as a waitress?

Won't he feel a chill down there?

Before Lumian could ask Lez's reasoning, Julie descended from upstairs.

She had changed into a dark slit dress she found from somewhere, with her chest barely concealed under a thin veil.

Her previously dirty face was now clean, and her long brown hair was simply tied up, her features clear in Lumian's eyes.

Despite having been around two Demonesses for a long time, Lumian found himself impressed.

This female convict didn't look perverse or mad, with slender brown eyebrows and brown eyes that seemed to hold a gentle autumn water, her skin delicate and white, her demeanor gentle and elegant, contrasting sharply with her enticing figure.

She was a uniquely beautiful woman, exuding an allure beyond normal.

Like a Demoness... Lumian had to admit Julie's previous disguise with dirt and loose hair was quite effective.

Another case of the Law of Beyond Characteristics Convergence...

Lumian sighed, responding to Julie's tender, affectionate gaze, “Why do you want to be a waitress at my bar?”

“I need a job to support myself,” Julie smiled gently, as if they were in some city instead of Morora.

Lumian suddenly changed the topic.

“Why do you like collecting that part of men?”

Julie's gentle brown eyes suddenly showed an indescribable madness.

She smiled and answered with a tone of longing, “I just want to reclaim what's mine.”

Uh... another victim of the Demoness Sect? Now turned perpetrator...

She must have transformed from a man to a woman like Franca, but unlike Franca, she had severe psychological issues, resulting in her abnormal hobby? Lumian guessed while confirming that Julie was likely a Demoness, and not a low-level one, at least a Sequence 6 Demoness of Pleasure.

Lumian then murmured, Your way of digesting Pleasure is to rape men and then cut it off at the climax to make them experience the fall from heaven to hell?

That fits the nature of a Demoness of Pleasure, but it's too direct and brutal, lacking the beauty of self-struggle...

How did the Church of Knowledge send a Demoness here as an ordinary rapist-murderer?

Was it intentional?

Right, based on my current mysticism knowledge, each god's pathway top has one to three great beings holding all the sequence powers, like Mr. Fool, The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, the Great Mother, and the Mother Tree of Desire...

From this perspective, the Primordial Demoness-being adjacent to the Hunter pathway-trying to scheme 0-01 is understandable, perhaps inevitable. According to Madam Magician, 0-01 is the key to ascending to Red Priest and becoming the true god of the Hunter pathway...

In this case, once the Demoness Sect discovers Morora, they will definitely send witches below the demigod level to infiltrate here...

Why didn't they send anyone before, waiting until Julie and I were exiled together?

Perhaps the Primordial Demoness's revelation told them only by following me could they enter Morora, given I was specially sent by the Church of Knowledge without any checks?

No, more likely, Julie isn't the first or even the second Demoness to infiltrate Morora. The previous ones didn't complete their mission and gradually lost contact with the Demoness Sect...

If that's true, the Demonesses controlling the mirror world have it easier than me using the Mirror Cufflink and Mirror Mark to connect with the outside. Julie must have a lot of accumulated intelligence and plans...

From her, I might find opportunities and ways to approach 0-01 and leave a mark...

With these thoughts, Lumian smiled at Julie, who still had a hint of madness in her eyes, "I don't care what you want to reclaim or why, but since you chose to be my bar's waitress, you must follow my rules. First, no harassing customers during business hours."

Julie looked a bit aggrieved but her eyes shone brightly, full of anticipation.

"What if they harass me?"

"Lez will throw them out. If they dare fight back, Lez knows how to cook them and will leave you the parts you want," Lumian said casually. "Or you can wait until the bar closes and find them yourself."

Julie licked her lips. "What's the second rule?"

“No harassing the boss.” Lumian headed for the stairs to the second floor. “Lez will discuss your pay.”

Julie seemed slightly disappointed. “I wanted to see if what I lost is with you.”

Before Lumian could respond, she asked again, “Is it harassment if I invite you to view my collection?”

“Not interested,” Lumian replied curtly.

He confirmed Julie's crimes weren't intentional to get exiled to Morora.

She had a genuine hobby, looking gentle and beautiful but twisted and mad inside.

After dark, Julie finished Lez's meticulously prepared dinner and praised it, “I've decided to seduce you last.”

Her seduction was lethal.

Lez seemed a bit disappointed but sincerely asked, “If you're ever killed, can I have your body?”

“Sure,” Julie agreed nonchalantly, her movements graceful and smile reserved.

She then looked at Lumian, blinking. “Boss, the bar hasn't reopened. Can I go out tonight?”

“That's your freedom.” Lumian drank some wheat ale to suppress the sudden restlessness inside him.

He was now sure Julie was a Demoness of Affliction, having just used Charm on him.

If she approached again, he planned to Cull her without mercy.

Only by intimidating this Demoness of Affliction with strength and ferocity could he keep her in check.

Julie wiped her mouth with a white napkin, stood up, and left the Carnivore Bar.

After a few seconds, Lumian vanished from the table.

He first teleported then turned into a shadow creature, silently following Julie.

Julie walked elegantly, approaching a square where exiles gathered, feigning drunkenness.

The exiles couldn't take their eyes off this Demoness. A muscular man eagerly approached and chatted with Julie.

Julie drunkenly wagged her finger.

“I want to duel you.”

“Sure,” the man said joyfully, helping Julie leave for his home.

The other exiles didn't react in time, losing sight of the two.

Lumian didn't lose track, hiding outside the man's window.

He heard Julie's kitten-like moans, unlike the rough madness he imagined.

With an Ascetic's endurance, Lumian showed no abnormality until the man shouted loudly, nearing climax.

The next second, a piercing scream of intense pain erupted from the room.

Soon, Julie emerged, face flushed, eyes bright, her beauty overwhelming.

She held a bloody object, freezing it in crystal-clear ice, placing it in a small bag.

Lumian continued following Julie, who didn't attempt any counter-surveillance, arriving at the large square outside the Church of Knowledge.

She seemed to be waiting for something.

After a while, a team of black-robed enforcers emerged from the church, led by a tall, fair-skinned, restrained, beautiful woman.

Julie's eyes lit up, her face glowing with joy.

She approached the enforcers excitedly, shouting at the leader, "Celeste!

The tall woman in the black robe glanced at Julie indifferently, asking emotionlessly, "Who are you?"

Julie's expression froze.