

LOA Nobody 281

Chapter 281 Currencies of arcadia

?281 Currencies of arcadia

"Brother, are you going out too?" Amelia asked, during breakfast time as she noticed several students making plans for their visit outside the academy today.

Most of them just wanted to go shopping for the freshers party, others just wanted to roam around.

"Yes, I have something planned. I'll be back before the evening training." Rio said without looking up.

"I'm going out too, you can join me for the shopping when you're free." Rebecca said and sat down on the table with her plate.

"Why are you leaving now too?" Amelia asked, surprised.

"There's some kind of auction event held by one of the elite families today. Alfred asked me to go with him." Rebecca said and looked at Rio whose hands stopped hearing Alfred's name.

But then he continued eating without saying anything.

—Clang

The sound of the silver spoon breaking in two and falling to the ground brought Rebecca back, as she looked at Amelia whose eyes were turning black or red in anger.

"Amy, eat." Rio said without looking up and Amelia just clenched her fists and forced herself to calm down.

Though her pressing hands did mold the table in her hand's shape.

"I'm full. I'll go for training." Amelia said and left without looking back. The aura on her body kept oozing along with a faint madness for blood, despite her high control.

Rebecca looked at both their reactions and didn't know what to say for a while. After much hesitation she just gave up.

After the dungeon crash event, the academy and others praised Alfred and Lisa for leading the student out of the calamity and saving their lives.

World Association and Zenith kept this news high to hide their failure to stop the attack. While King Maximus and the faction backing Alfred used this to promote Alfred's heroic image and build relationships with all the parties involved.

Yet even this positive news campaign couldn't hide the whispered rumors about what really happened, and how they really managed to survive.

And that's what made Artemis and Amelia both hate Alfred. If not for the blood relation or lack of proof, Rebecca was sure there would've been Alfred's body buried first before anyone from Warzy died.

But there wasn't anything she could do about it. Alfred was her brother after all.

The whole meal was spent in silence as neither Rio and Rebecca said anything.

"Take care of yourself." Rio said and left after he finished eating.

'System, I'm thinking _.'

[Host..]

'I've never actually used the explosives you boasted so much about.'

[???

'Let's do that today.' Rio said and smiled coldly, as he remembered about the smug look Alfred gave him before he ran away from the dungeon.

'Don't let her be drowned in her anger.' Rio said as he pressed his hand over the mark of Kali's blessing.

After getting ready for the auction event, Rio called Esme, who was already waiting nearby to pick him up.

Getting in the car, Rio took out his private phone and contacted Riley.

[Change of plans. Send 3 men from squad zero to the auction.]

[And bring some fireworks too.]

Sending the message, Rio threw his phone into the system storage and closed his eyes. Thinking of all the drama that could happen at the auction, a smile inadvertently came to his face. Just the look on his eyes kept getting colder.

To enter the auction site, one either needed to have their invitation or membership card. If not both, then one could even buy a ticket for 10000 AC.

AC or Arcadian coins was the common currency system approved by the world association.

These were different from the normal currency of gold, silver, copper or platinum or mixed metal coins (MM coins) . Which is mainly used by non-awakerners or regular folks.

1 MM coin = 10 platinum coin

1 platinum coin = 10 gold coins

1 gold coin = 100 silver coins

1 silver coin = 1000 copper coins

1 copper coin

For awakeners these methodical coins fail to hold value as any illusion magic or metal magic could create them out of thin air. So to stop the frauds, different currencies were created for the awakeners.

Arcadian coins are made of a total of 23 different metals in an unusual mixture which makes them hard to be created by fraudulent people or scammers. Not to mention every arcadian coin had a special mark on them which could be identified by pouring a little bit of mana into them.

This makes it easier to identify even the single faulty coin or fake coin in a pile of coins.

There are even more currencies which are higher and different than arcadian coins, like mana stones, magic crystals, soul coins, ember shards or essence cards.

All these methods of payments depend on their various roles and usage for transactions. Same is the case for their conversion rates which differs depending on their rarity and market value.

From the current market price, 10000AC could be equal to 100 high grade mana stones. 1000 mid grade mana stones or 3000 low grade mana stones.

Nothing much for any noble or elite family to pay for.

Unless of course the protagonist's family.

Rio had a special team of hackers which were constantly monitoring all the accounts of Leon and his entire family. After all, who knew when that guy got some treasure on the roadside and became nouveau riche in seconds.

Thus from what he knew, Leon had about 25000AC and 50 high grade mana stones on him, which his father gave him during the admission time.

There was no way this guy was going to waste almost 1/3 of his entire savings just to attend an auction.

As for if he got an invitation, well he didn't.

Nishkal family's young master had an old feud with our Leon after all.

Three years ago, Leon was attending a similar auction with his father, looking for a way for any miracle medicine which could cure him, but when he went to the toilet, he came across a room where he heard the sound of screaming inside. Curious and heroic as he is, he entered and found Nishkal family's heir forcing himself upon a young girl.

Since Leon couldn't fight the guards behind the heir, he just started screaming and calling for help.

Since the venue was fully crowded some people came there soon and the Nishkal family's heirs' good deeds were exposed and ruined.

Though the news was quickly suppressed and never leaked outside. But the heir of the elite family always held a grudge against Leon for it.

As for that girl, well she disappeared and was never seen again.

Probably only one person knew where she was and that was Rio himself. After all, it was all his own plan and idea just to ignite an amber which could turn into a flame today.

Experiment number 29 - can he create new enemies and challenges for the protagonist. Entirely different from the plotlines ahead of time.

Chapter 282 The pervert protagonist's public death

?282 The pervert protagonist's public death

"There's still some time, let's just wait before going in."

Rio said and looked at the building in front of him as his car just stood there for some time. Looking at the people entering inside or guarding outside. A glance at the nearby facilities or shops around the auction house.

Rio's eyes finally landed on Leon as he kept drinking something he picked from the system shop, and a smirk came to his lips.

'So you're here.' Rio looked at the idiot dressed in academy uniform curiously reading the details of the auction outside the walls.

Why he was in the academy uniform still outside the academy, Rio couldn't bother to think. Just one word - protagonist.

If he's not in tatters like a beggar, then he's in other embarrassing or looking down on me clothes.

Watching as Leon decided to enter directly inside, but was stopped at the gate by security guards. Rio just brought out some popcorn and started eating as he kept enjoying the drama about to unfold.

"Ticket, but you didn't ask them for anything?" Leon said as he pointed at a couple who entered directly without showing any tickets.

"Sir, they're one of our main guests that's why they didn't have to show it." The security guard respectfully said while cursing this idiot in his heart for ruining his mood in the morning. "If you don't have a ticket, you can't enter. So please step aside to stop blocking the entrance."

"But I want to enter. I'll buy the ticket, where can I get them?" Leon asked.

"Sir, the tickets are a little expensive. Why don't you try the public auction house next street which is free." The guard said and tried to shoo Leon away, who was attracting everyone's attention.

Hearing their constant chatter Aldrich who was guiding the guest couple inside frowned and looked back at the entrance.

"Miss, I'll be back soon. He'll show you to your room." Aldric said apologetically and signaled his shadow to guide the couple inside.

His eyes locked at the familiar figure standing outside and a playful smile came to his face.

'So you dare to come here, you damn cripple.' Aldric said as he looked at Leon.

Calling his people and asking him what was happening, he decided to know everything first.

Learning that this idiot was without a ticket, Aldric smiled and called one of his guards and gave him an order and then walked outside.

"What's the hold up? Can't you shoo these dogs away?" Aldric said loudly pointing at Leon.

"You _"

After taking in the fact that someone indeed called HIM a dog, Leon got furious and pointed at Aldric but then stopped as he remembered who he was.

"Sir, please leave. Young master is in a bad mood." one of the older security guard came to Leon's side and whispered in his ear, trying to save him from the anger of their young master. But Leon just stared at Aldric and clenched his fists in anger.

He remembered the time when he stopped this rapist from doing something bad to a pretty girl and in return this bastard kicked him in the nuts before anyone came hearing his screams.

He had been a laughing stock of his clan for weeks whenever the healers came to apply medicine on his swollen balls.

"Young master _ that _ he _ he doesn't have a ticket and refuses to leave." The first security guard came forward and bowed 90° to apologize and blame Leon.

"Doesn't have a ticket, then why are you standing there and chatting like he's your secret lover, throw him out for me." Aldric said feigning anger and ignoring Leon.

"I can buy a ticket." Leon said with a straight back as he chanted God knows what mantras to calm down his anger.

"Even the most normal public ticket costs 10000AC. Tell me, do you have that much money, or do you need to sell some property of yours to get that money too?" Aldric said, reminding Leon about the fact that his father had to sell 3 mines to get Nishkal family's forgiveness last time.

Clenching his fist in anger again, Leon glared at Aldric and then decided to throw that money on this bastard's face.

He's not the same weak and cripple boy from 3 years ago, he's an avatar now, first among his generation, and the next supreme - though his heart bled a little hearing the outrageous amount of coins, but he decided to do it anyway.

First he just wanted to enter to try his luck, but now he wanted to show this bastard and then let him guide him inside like a useless dandy he is.

"Take this."

Raising his hands Leon channeled his mana and waved it in front of Aldric.

Instantly a pile of women's clothes, skirts, makeup kits and wigs fell on the ground, creating a small mountain reaching his knees.

Seeing this unknown stuff instead of Arcadian coins Leon had a frown on his face, as he looked at his storage ring and then at the clothes thrown out.

"What _"

Hahahhahah

HHahaha

"Look at that. What the hell."

"Is he some pervert?"

"Young master just said he can exchange stuff and this idiot put a fancy stall in front of him. Ahahaha"

"But his taste is indeed a little _"

"Hey, doesn't he look a little familiar _ oh I remember he's that cripple who turned around and got first rank at zenith."

"But does he have that kind of hobby?"

While Leon looked at the thrown out stuff in disbelief, a little crowd gathered around him and started laughing and mocking him loudly.

Aldric used his mana and controlled a see through lingerie and waved it in front of Leon's body and burst out laughing.

"Ahhh my eyes. I can't unsee it now. Why did I have to picture it? Hahaha"

"But he did look a little _"

"Bah bah bah"

The guard around him also played their parts and started cooperating with their master and started laughing.

While Leon tried to check his storage ring again and he came across stuff even more outrageous. Suddenly surprised he lost his composure for a moment and ended up emptying his entire ring.

'Fuck' he cursed as he looked at the falling whips, handcuffs and other weird looking tools which he had no idea what their use was. .

This time even the crowd was surprised by this new wave of reveal and kept silent for a second with wide eyes, before losing their mind and laughing maniacally at this fancy pervert.

"Rich guy_ is this how he likes to play."

"Tsk tsk tsk, I know those adulterous dungeons are to blame when we see young people twisted like this."

"What a shame, _ wait _ is he showing his collection to get a partner around here."

All kinds of insults and taunts filled the air as everyone laughed at Leon, who just stood there frozen on the spot trembling in fury, as his face turned red in anger and shame.

[Apollo shakes his head in disappointment.]

[Priapus shows disdain at you and shows his long waving phallus(penis) , saying that's how a man should be.]

[Loki laughs and writes down your name in his pervert list.]

[Goddess Ishtar takes a sneaky glance at your collection and blushes a little.]

Reading the lines of notifications from various gods and hearing the laughter from everyone, Leon just wanted to find a crack in the ground and hide inside. Wishing he could turn invisible.

While the person truly responsible for all this was chugging down a juice trying to control his laughter and not spray it outside.

Rio gulped down the cold drink and breathed a little as he sent a message to Riley and asked to get a recording of this scene and save it and share it on Whisper and Moments.

(Whisper and moments are like whatsapp and Instagram of arcadia.)

[Was it _really necessary? Hahhaha] system tried to speak seriously for the protagonist's sake but ended up laughing in between seeing Leon bringing several more toys out.

"You're the one who chose the items, I just asked at randomly." Rio said and shook his head as this system never really took any blame for anything.

Chapter 283

I didn't see it for that time, and then it slipped my mind. Since WN doesn't allow removing chaps, and I already had next chaps posted, I only have one option, that is to either leave it or edit it with something else.

And since next chaps r posted in continuation, I'll just write some flashback scenes of Rio for you guys.

Sorry and Love

DevilDarkness

###

5 years back

13 year old Rio was standing on an empty street looking at the dilapidated temple in front of him. It was an empty shell of a building with moss covered walls supported by broken pillars. Empty windows and a doorless entrance welcomed anyone who stepped over the boundary of the temple.

Over the top of these walls was the mural carved on stone of a rising sun, spreading rays of light which pushed the clouds away.

Rio shook his head in disappointment and walked inside the temple with clear steps. A platoon of guards and shadows stayed a few steps behind, ensuring his safety and awaiting his further orders.

"In every harmony, in every light, I am present."

"In the echoes of his lyre, find the harmony of your soul."

"When the world weeps in its darkest plight,

The God of sun shall rise, to reclaim the light."

Rio read a few lines glorifying the God whom this temple belonged to and chuckled inside.

'It's funny how the one who's said to bring light in this world, doesn't have light in his own temple.' Rio said as he snapped his fingers and the sconces/torches hanging on the walls lit up one by one, illuminating the insides of the temple.

He walked with unhurried footsteps looking at everything with curious eyes.

[Entering the temples of Gods you don't believe in is a foolish move, mortal. Be careful or you'd be buried and burned for no reason.] Nyx's words echoed in his ears, reminding him to not be stupid.

Temples/churches/mosques or shrines - each place of worship for different religions or gods hold special place in Arcadia. Here they aren't just places of prayers or gatherings, nor a place for tourism or sight seeing - but a special channel point for devotees and their deity.

That's why entering temples of gods whom you don't like or who doesn't like you, is always unadvisable. After all, both the gods and their blind followers are beings hard to understand with a normal brain.

[It's not like it's prohibited or not allowed, but just risky.]

And in Rio's case, he's literally the son of darkness as Nyx chose him, so stepping into a God who boasts light - not so smart.

'It's just an empty temple, I'm sure even the God abandoned it.' Rio replied to Nyx in his heart and said 'And not like anyone would dare touch a primordial's prized follower just for being curious.'

[You know too little about the gods, mortal. Your failed understandings might spell your doom.] Nyx reminded again and then lost interest to speak again.

Rio too chose not to answer as he knew exactly what she meant.

'Gods, they're all the same.' He thought and shook his head.

"Clean this place." Rio said, and next second a wave of mana passed through entire temple and swiping everything outside. Cleaning the floors, walls, windows or ceiling.

Though the place got a little shine after cleaning, but it was still the same broken shit. He even saw a side wall which crumbled under the gentle mana which was used for cleaning.

This was actually the temple of Apollo just outside the city of Harendale. The place where our dear protagonist is born and currently living the life of misery as a cripple.

There was no need to ask what he was doing here, simply just to destroy a little something Leon was supposed to get in the future.

Rio walked into the middle of the temple and sat on the ground. There were no chairs or tables around, whatever was, was probably rotten and just in need of a touch to turn into dust and wither away.

Those were already thrown outside.

"This is the first time I'm actually inside one of your temples. I've always wanted to come here though. But mother wouldn't even let me out of the house with what happened last time.

I wanted to say thank you for saving me when I was cursed some years ago. I just came here after destroying the last temple of the fallen God who cursed me.

If not for your grace and your follower's help, maybe I wouldn't be here. So thank you for giving me this life. I'll remember it till the day I die."

Rio finished his words and stood up back again. He turned around and left the temple.

In the place where he was sitting though, was a silver coin placed there with the mark of a moon and a river carved onto it.

Rio walked out of that temple and left without turning back. He looked at a corner where all the broken stuff from the church was placed and shook his head. "Burn them, and put some new chairs and tables inside."

After saying that, he sat inside the car and left. Looking back through the glass mirror, he saw the pile of trash from the temple rising in smoke and even before his car turned, he noticed there was no sign of anything left behind.

'High rankers, so efficient.' Rio praised the shadow guards and closed his eyes.

'How would you feel if you knew the thing you were looking everywhere for, was just buried in your temple and burned in front of you, Apollo.'

'And that too was just in return for some simple tables and chairs.'

Rio thought in his heart as he remembered the plotline of the treasure map he just burned, and couldn't help but smile.

While Rio was lost in his thoughts, in Apollo's church, the coin he left behind shone in a white glow and then lost its luster and the mark of moon.

It just turned into scrap round regular metal and then withered in air.

If Rio saw this scene, he'd smile some more in his heart. As it meant, the bait he threw out, someone already took it.

And now he just needed to wait to see the results of his experiment.

Experiment number 9 - Would gods interfere if their followers and believers were to fight amongst themselves on their name? Would they ignore it like usual, or would they sit, talk and sort things out.

Chapter 284 Leon and Alfred

?284 Leon and Alfred

After watching enough of Leon's embarrassment, Rio stepped out of his car and started walking towards the entrance.

Aldric, who was mocking Leon, stopped joking and walked past him.

"Back from the dead huh." He said as he went forward to hug Rio and welcome him. "When I saw your shadow's name in the list, I was curious, but _ there was no need for that, if you just called me, you know."

"It doesn't matter. Let's go inside." Rio said and started walking through the stairs.

From the beginning Leon kept his head down thinking Rio or anyone from the academy shouldn't see all this drama - but when he peaked up, he saw Rio staring at him. "I _ it's not.."

Leon wanted to explain he didn't have anything to do with this, but Rio just turned his head and ignored him like a stranger.

Seeing the ignorance, Leon just felt even greater insult then some taunt, making him then frown.

"Stop," he ended up shouting and then walked towards them. He didn't even know what he was doing. Just venting I guess. "He doesn't have a ticket too."

"And_" Aldrich said with clear annoyance on his face.

"So why can he enter? Is this how one of the elite families works? Giving favors and being partial, while ignoring the normal people who're even willing to pay for these useless tickets."

Leon spoke in one breath with fervor, even dragging Nishkal family's reputation in his speech, yet Aldric just coldly glanced at him. But before he could teach this guy a lesson, Rio waved his hand and stopped him. As arcadian coins fell from his ring and in front of Leon's face.

When thinking they should be more than enough to buy one ticket, Rio stopped his mana.

"Money for my ticket." Rio's words echoed in confused Leon's ears as he ignored him again and turned back to leave.

"Throw him out for me, we don't welcome perverts in our auction house." Aldrich said to his guards and followed Rio, while nodding his head in approval to one of the guards who was still staring at the pile of playthings.

He was probably wondering where these things came from when he didn't even do anything.

As Aldrich and Rio were walking inside, a group of cars came from the other side. The logo of lightning inside a crown was visible to everyone, showing who these parades belonged to.

Rio stopped by the window as his eyes landed on the familiar faces stepping out of the cars.

"She's here too. Do you want me to arrange their rooms alongside you?" Aldrich asked Rio, as he saw Rebecca and remembered about the rumors of their engagement.

"No, put them as far away from me as possible." Rio said, glancing below at how Alfred came forward to stop some guards from beating up Leon.

Seeing Leon being flaggerbasted after looking at Rebecca, who was dressed in one of her fancy clothes with some light makeup and royal accessories, Rio just smiled and shook his head.

'Protagonists, what a pity.' Rio thought in his heart and walked away. Just as Rebecca's eyes turned to look at the empty window where he was.

After recognizing Leon as the first ranker and hearing that he wanted to attend the auction, Alfred directly invited him to join them.

Rio didn't need to see them walking together to guess what would've happened or what would happen next, but he just scoffed at these petty arrangements caused by hero's halo or high luck or whatever.

Having a royal prince to bid for the items a protagonist wants, who can dare not give him face.

As for Rebecca, well there's something for her in this auction too, and there's also the chance that only Leon can sense that thing and buy it for her. In return, getting her recognition and favor.

But these are all petty tricks against mini minion level villains, against him, it just made him more motivated to crush them all even more.

Walking into one of the private rooms which had a large sofa in the middle and a table full of precious delicacies of these islands placed inside. Rio looked at the large mirror and then at the empty stage and hall full of crowd below. His eyes glanced around and noticed the members of Eclipse mingling and chatting with the people around them.

"You can take a look at the list and if there's anything you need, the waiter is just waiting outside." Aldrich said and turned to leave.

"Aldrich" Rio called him before he opened the door. "Next time you send someone to pull a prank, make sure they're either a few levels higher than the opposite party, or unaffiliated with you. Lest your laziness drag your name down again."

Hearing it Aldrich stopped and frowned. Not understanding since his prank wasn't caught, so what's with the extra knowledge.

"He's C- rank now." Rio said and finally Aldrich realized what he meant,

The guard he sent to swipe off Leon's ring was just C- rank too. So chances of him getting caught by Leon or anyone else were higher.

"Hmmm" Aldrich nodded as he took a glance at Rio and left.

In the original , Aldrich's guard stole Leon's money, but was later caught when Leon noticed him standing behind Aldrich. After a scene of mocking, Leon used a gu worm which worked similar to truth potion and exposed that guard and Aldrich's scheme.

This not only ruined Aldrich's image but also made Leon complete another face slapping scenario.

But this time before Aldrich's guard made a move, Rio arranged someone else to interrupt him and do this job for him.

Once Rio was finished giving the advice to this side villain, he ignored the doubtful look from him and sat down, while Esme stood behind him with the tablet which had the names and details of all the items sold today.

There was a non-known rule that VIP's could book a few treasures in which they are interested before they're sold off publicly. Obviously since a similar list is with all the people in VIP boxes, they'll have to decide amongst themselves for that item.

This way the auction house gave every VIP a favor and also stopped any involvement in fights between houses by being impartial.

But this obviously had a flaw as they only list famous things or items which they're supposed to be bidding for high prices. And as any opportunity belonging to the protagonist, the ring with that grandpa inside was also just a normal scrap metal in front of others, so no one listed it for the VIP's.

"Master, I've selected the herbs and other items which could be used at Angel or by others, you can take a look and choose more if you want." Esme said as she handed him the tablet.

Rio took a glance at the list and shook his head, whatever this auction considered precious was just useless for him. So he just threw it away.

Soon once all the VIP's arrived and the public entrance was closed too, an enchantment covered the auction house, so no one could leave before the auction ended. Or they bought at least one item. After which if they want to leave midway, they can use private teleportation circles made inside and leave. This was done to stop chances of stealing or any other terrorist attacks planned for these gatherings.

Rio closed his eyes and soon his vision turned illusory. His eyes could now see through all these enchanted walls and windows, looking at every room and guests sitting inside.

"True vision"

This was a skill he bought from the system, which could let him see through anything as long as he has enough mental strength or enough points.

It worked similarly to those urban protagonists who used their eyes to spy on girls or look through stones at jade gambling stores.

It cost him 170000 points , just to unlock its first three versions. (Imagine it like 3 tomoe thingy of sharingan. In total this eye skill had 7 versions.)

Seeing Leon sitting in the same room as Alfred and Rebecca, Rio just smiled and thought - 'The show is just starting, Leon. Let's see what you can take from this auction.

Chapter 285 Anemoi and Animals

285 Anemoi and Animals

Rio paid close attention to the things lined up on the stage one by one, as a beautiful girl came forward and they all became a backdrop for her. Dressed in a tight red gown which slit near her thighs, giving her a seductive look and charming aura.

Just a glance at her pretty face and the way she smiled and twisted her body with her every move was enough to charm those who sat near the stage.

Their eyes were glued to that girl, probably undressing her with their luscious thoughts and imagining scenes of that hot figure in their hands.

Noticing the burning gaze on her, the lady on the stage didn't frown, or feel discomforted , but had a proud smile on her face. After all, the day her charm ended, will be the day she'd be kicked out of these facilities, who're paying her in millions now.

Same was the case with waiters and servers walking around the guests, the reason to hire these pretty faces was just because they can fool some idiots into spending more money.

"Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests and all the visitors from far away places, welcome to the annual auction event organized by the Nishkal family and our Golden Temple."

"I won't waste much of your time explaining the rules that everybody already knows. But to those who're coming here for their first experience, I hope you will all maintain this peaceful order." The lady in red said and waved her hand, as a golden parchment floated in the air and clear lines of words formed over it in perfect handwriting - explaining some basic rules to follow and manner of bidding. What was allowed and what was not.

There weren't any exaggerated rules, simple things like every item sold would have a similar time frame for the bidders to think and start bidding. And the item would either be sold to the highest bidder, when no one else is willing to outbid them or when the timer runs out.

So if they want to buy something they better not waste time and lose their pockets fast or someone else might snatch it.

There shall be no fighting, stealing or any double dealing of sold items inside the auction venue. Outside of it, well that just depends on your own capabilities.

To make it simple and efficient, only money or simple currencies were the mode of bidding. No return treasures or favors would count as a bid. Pressuring others using prestige or reputation wasn't allowed either.

If you don't pay the money you bid or boasted about, then you will be sacrificed to the gods who guard this venue as an offering. And your dues will be taken from your friends, family, relatives or anyone close to you , by any means necessary.

After showing everyone these rules, the lady took a glance at the crowd of newbies who were especially afraid of the final rule. That was too cruel, right.

After all, the gods guarding this auction were the same ones who pulled the Nishkal family out of the gutters and made them one of the richest elite families on these islands.

There are rumors that to maintain their favor, the Nishkal family always made sure that the rivers of blood sprayed on the cathedrals of these gods in the name of sacrificial offerings, is always flowing non-stop.

The lady in red waved her hand and the parchment disappeared and a flowery scent lingered in the entire venue, giving everyone a refreshing feeling.

"Now, now. There's no need to be so serious. After all, those are just for formalities to keep some troublemakers in check. There's no need for fine people like you to sweat over it."

The charming voice and the pretty smile acted as some kind of hypnotic skill that dragged the anxious crowd away from all their worrisome thoughts.

"Now let's start this auction. The first on the line is a C grade artifact called 'Sword of a sinner' - this sword has an effect of enhanced bloodlust, and it also comes with its own practicing method etched onto itself.

"According to our appraisers this method of swordsmanship can increase your attack power by half once mastered completely." The red lady said and nodded her head as she looked at the eager eyes of everyone sitting in front. "The starting price of this fantastic weapon is just 15000 arcadian coins."

As her words finished introducing the artifact and its various advantages and price, she flipped the hourglass on the podium. Signaling the start of this bidding process.

16000 coins

18000 coins

20000 coins

25000 coins and

Hearing the excited murmurs of price increases all around, Leon had a dumbfounded expression on his face. It didn't even take a half a minute until the price for the sword had crossed the limit of his entire savings.

'Why're they willing to pay so much for that scrap of sword?' Leon thought after noticing the oozing bloodlust lingering on the stage. He had no doubt that though this sword brought some increase in strength, it would bring backlashes even more severe.

Alfred looked at Leon's changing face and smiled and said - "Auction houses always start with things that can make public momentum high at the beginning and save some really promising things for the last. As for the middle, that's where they all throw the stuff they don't care about. It's a marketing strategy."

Leon nodded his head and could only sigh at all these schemes and hidden thoughts of everyone. He really didn't like or understand why people are wasting their money like this. When they can just go into some dungeons and look for some opportunities.

Like he does.

Alfred looked at Rebecca who was still silent, and hadn't spoken a word to him since coming here and frowned.

"If something catches your eyes, you can tell me Becca. I'll buy it for you." He said, yet got no response again. As Rebecca just kept her eyes on the stage or the crowd below. Ignoring the two people sitting around her.

Originally she wanted to use this chance to talk with Alfred and ask him to clear things out with Rio and sort everything. But her brother just dragged this Leon guy inside and now she wasn't in the mood to discuss family matters in front of him.

After all, that Lisa alongside Alfred in that dungeon was this guy's sister.

[Anemoi laughs at your pathetic self. Encouraging you to teach this impudent girl a lesson.]

[Anemoi wishes you to man up and deal with your problems like a grown up should.]

Seeing the notifications of his gods on the status, Alfred tried hard to maintain the smile on his face, which was a little hideous and twisted to look at.

'Fucking horses thinking they're something high and mighty. Once I get my father's approval I'll be sure to slaughter everyone who even whispers your name.' Alfred cursed in his heart and calmed himself down.

He glanced at the room opposite him and clenched his fists. Despite the distance and obvious restraints, he could still feel that familiar dark aura lingering inside that room.

'It's all because of him. If not for him, I wouldn't be tied to these idiots in the first place.' Alfred thought with hatred and the more he remembered about his past, the more angry he got.

"10000 coins"

Alfred was in his world, when Leon's words nearby pulled him out. Currently he was bidding on a healing herb that had the properties of calming the mind.

Though not particularly efficient but it was a little rare and so he wanted to buy it for his mother, who was still unconscious with no signs of recovery.

"12000 coins"

"12,000 coins going once, going twice, and sold(hammer falls sounds) to the gentleman in room number 5."

The lady in red said and pointed at Leon's room and waved her hands to uncover the cloth over the next item.

Soon a waiter knocked on the room, holding a tray which had the healing grass placed inside and came inside to finish the process of exchange.

Surprisingly Leon had another hidden storage ring, which he got from the people of Warzy when they attacked him and Seraphina at the Dorsia incident. He killed them and kept their rings to himself.

Leon took the green herb in his hands and checked its condition. After feeling satisfied, that it was perfectly fine and he wasn't cheated of his money, Leon smiled and put it into a leather satchel which worked well for medicinal herbs storage, without damaging their effects.

Alfred who saw his happy and thoughtful expression throughout this process curled his lips in a thoughtful smile and found the way to trick this treat.

'We'll meet soon, Rio. But before that, let's see if this bumpkin can be of any use.' Alfred thought and looked at Leon with a smile.

He moved closer and started chatting with Leon about the academy, the classes, trainings and well obviously his big sister, who's his classmate.

Chapter 286 Star sign bracelet

286 Star sign bracelet

When the auction was in mid stages of bidding, Rio signaled Esme removed the enhancement on the front glass, making it two way. Immediately everyone could see who was sitting inside as their names or family/organization crest became visible on glass's top.

Another trick VIP's use in auctions to pressurize other bidders to not compete with them. Normally when any VIP rooms bid, they use the tablets given to them to type the amount and that'll show up on the glass window. But since the glass rolled down, now they have to speak up their own amounts. Showing their background, so everyone knows not to drag the items they want.

Seeing his actions, some of the other VIP rooms also followed suit, while most still preferred to remain secretive.

From the beginning to end, Rio didn't bid on anything yet, so when the next item appeared, he directly increased the price of an item by several fold, hoping to end the bidding instantly.

Yet how can it be so easy?

"50000 coins" A voice echoed as the glass from another room became clear. And Belmont's family crest of a red moon slashed by a broken sword became visible.

'Vanessa' Rio muttered and smiled. "70000 coins"

"100000 coins" Vanessa said, looking at him proactively.

Esme was about to bid again, but Rio just raised his hand and stopped her. There was no need to compete with her and waste money on stupid things.

"Sold to the miss in VIP room no. 7" The red lady said and smiled even more heartily. There was a madness in her eyes seeing the money rolling in constantly. Especially for these broken things in such high amounts.

The auction continued and whenever Rio bid on something, either Vanessa or someone from the Korbil family would bid more. While Vanessa spent everything to not let him get anything. Korbil's kept increasing the price until the time was about to run out and then let Rio bid again. So as to waste his money.

Though they themselves wasted quite the coins since there were times when Rio too left them hanging.

He didn't need to think about who was behind the Korbil family.

He could literally see Edward and Alfred chatting with each other. Korbil family being the partner for Sinclair's and with Sinclair's backing Alfred for the throne, it was all plain as day.

Rio could just shake his head about how these people who were supposed to be on opposite parties suddenly became partners now.

Ignoring them Rio turned his focus on a middle aged man with blindfold on standing beside Edward. He felt familiar, yet Rio couldn't remember where he had seen him.

'System, show me all the juicy details about him.' Rio said and instantly a panel opened in front of him.

[Name - Dreyfus Finch

[Affiliation - Cult of Poena, follower of Dike (secret spy of Evil's Scion)

[Rank - A+

[Aura Manifestation

[Bloodline - Mirsyun(unpure)

[Hobbies - Loves to torture his enemies before killing them. Eating the hearts of dark elementals

[God - Algea/Algos (Greek)

[Role - Villain.

[Event - Midnight massacre

[Chances of winning (Rio) - 27%

[Chances of winning (Shiva) - 93%

[Chances of death - 7%]

'Wow' Rio said after seeing all the information system gave him for a couple thousand points.

'So another villain huh, I remember I gave his name to Riley.'

[Looks like your Eclipse ain't covering anything host. Forget the sun of Arcadia, it can't even hold this tiny island.] System joked seeing his thoughtful look.

'All the more reasons I need them sharp.' Rio said and waved his hand to Esme to move back a couple of steps and turn around, as he pulled his phone out and sent a message to Cersei, with the details and some photos of Dreyfus.

[Hire him or handle him.] That was the content of Rio's message.

'It seems Dante's first task has been found.' Rio said after getting confirmation from Cersei.

The auction kept going on and Rio was already hella bored just sitting there, spending money on scraps. Even the items he bought were thrown at Esme. Cuz otherwise Rio just might throw them in the trash can.

'Did the ring grandpa disappear from the auction and dropped at Leon's steps.' Rio joked to himself while yawning as he burned another Rubik's cube after finishing it.

He was about to buy some other game from the system shop to pass time, when the system suddenly closed its panel and formed an arrow, pointing at the stage.

"Next up on the list is a beautiful bracelet called 'Star sign'.. It's made of crystal stones and it shines brighter every day under the moonlight." The lady in red said while showing the silver bracelet to everyone. But seeing the full response to this useless bracelet, she further added with a longing gaze "I don't know about other girls, but I'd be quite happy if someone bought it for me."

"Starting price just 100 coins"

This time the crowd cheered and before she could even turn the sand clock, a fat middle aged man with greasy skin raised both his hands and directly shouted. "200 coins"

400 coins

"500. I'll buy this bracelet for you." The fat man said excitedly as his mouth salivated thinking about something not environmentally friendly.

"Huh, with your little money, keep dreaming. 1000 coins. Beauty, this young master will get this bracelet for you. How about we go for dinner afterwards?" Another dandy young master sneered and stood up to flatter the lady on stage.

While the crowd below the VIP rooms was excitedly bidding and increasing the price one by one, most of the guests just sneered seeing this beauty trap.

Only Leon was staring at the bracelet lost in thought. As if remembering something, he excitedly turned to look at Rebecca and then glanced at her hands. But not seeing what he was looking for there, he frowned.

But after shaking his past thoughts away, he looked back at the stage with determination and raised his hand to bid. "5 _"

But just before his words came out clearly, another loud voice interrupted him "50000 coins."

Everyone who was still arguing about the price and beauty's date, halted their words hearing the enormous price and then seeing it was someone from the VIP rooms.

Leon looked straight and saw it was Rio, who spoke. He was confused why he raised the price so much, but then he saw him looking at his direction with a smile.

'Did he sense something about the bracelet too?' Leon thought confusedly.

But then noticing something, he turned his head sideways and glanced at Rebecca who was disinterested throughout this auction, was eagerly looking at the stage and that bracelet now. As a slight smile formed on her face when she looked ahead at Rio's room.

'Damn it. He's buying it for her too.' Leon thought and clenched his fists.

[Leon feels pretty pissed host, you sure you wanna mess with him like this.] System said in a generous tone.

'You should say that after you stop smiling.' Rio said as he looked at the picture of angry Leon moving on his system panel, with extra effects of smoke leaving his head.

Chapter 287 Lunar gods

287 Lunar gods

Leon, who found out that Rio already raised the price to something he couldn't compete with, was hesitating to speak as he turned to look at Rebecca and then at Alfred. Yet didn't know what to say.

He himself didn't know clearly what that bracelet was, he just felt the same familiar feeling from it, which he got from the last bracelet he wanted to give to the princess at her birthday years ago.

"Leon, do you want that bracelet?" Alfred, noticing his strange behavior, asked instantly. He was just thinking about what trick he should use to lure this guy into his camp. Since healing his mom was probably not going to work out easily.

But now here's his chance.

"If you want you can bid on it. Don't worry about the money."

"No, _ how can I _ I was just curious." Leon said and decided to ignore it.

Anyway that guy will probably give the bracelet to Rebecca too. So there was no need for him to interfere.

Alfred thought for some time, but didn't push this matter anymore. He didn't need to take any action himself, seeing that Vanessa and Korbil's were already in a tight bidding war against Rio. As the original price of 100 coins was raised to 500000 coins in just a few moments. And was still on the rise.

"1 million" Rio said, directly doubling the amount.

Seeing his determination to buy this item Vanessa was about to bid more, but just at that moment the clock ran out and the lady in red bashed the hammer on the podium. Signaling the end of this round.

Soon the waiter brought the bracelet to him, taking the silver bracelet in his hands, Rio started playing with it. Looking at every stone tied with the string carefully.

Everyone around was looking at his actions closely, trying to see if there was something special about the bracelet. But then Rio just crushed the bracelet in his hands and threw it aside. While dusting his hands as if he didn't like the craft.

-Cough cough

Rebecca gave a dry cough seeing this and frowned, as she thought, she was expecting too much from this idiot. 'I should really get him to buy me something later.'

Vanessa and others just thought that Rio was just raising the price on a whim seeing their actions. But in the end he himself lost it. They even felt happy about it.

While Leon was the only one who felt dissatisfied with it. He was cursing himself about why he didn't tell Alfred or Rebecca about that bracelet. If he did, they surely would've bought it first.

But it was too late now, he couldn't even sense any aura of that stone anymore. So it was probably broken by Rio and got destroyed.

[Successfully stole the star stone - 25000 points.]

[Slightly altered the lunar scale event - 5000 points.]

[Several moon gods cast their eyes upon you.]

[Selene(Greek goddess of moon) asks you to give that stone to her chosen.]

[Chandra(Hindu God of moon) suggests you hand over that stone to his believers.]

[Tsukuyomi(Japanese god of moon) asks you to sacrifice that stone to his shrine in return for the blessing of Silver serenity.]

Seeing the notifications after he placed the star stone in his system storage and threw the rest of the pebbles aside, Rio had a bright smile on his face.

The auction continued and the routine remained the same.

Looking at Vanessa who was trembling in anger, as she just spent 5 million on a flame petal herb which she needed for her next big upgrade in skill, Rio smiled even more. Who asked her to mess with him. Doesn't she know he has the plot and knows exactly what she's here to buy secretly.

She had a few men arranged to buy that rare herb for her cheaply, but when it was auctioned, Rio just kept raising the price every time until she had to give in herself and join the bidding process before the time ran out.

Seeing her fuming, Rio was sure she spent almost all her savings in this auction competing with him.

As for Korbil's they were in the same zone too. Even if they didn't buy anything as outrageous as Vanessa. Collectively they also did lose a lot.

Alfred and Rebecca also bought a few stuff but Rio let them be. Simply cause just like him, they packed unlimited money and wouldn't even break a sweat spending it all. So why waste your breath on useless things.

Finally the time which Rio was waiting for came.

"The next on the selling list is a pair of ancient rings found in the remains of a crashed dungeon. Though it looks normal, it's made of some rare metals and is highly resistant to flames. So if anyone wants some research on rare metals of a foreign world, here's your chance. Starting price 2500 coins." The lady in red said and opened the jewel box with two rusty rings inside.

She tried to cheer up the mood but since everyone who was here to buy something had bought something, not many were enthusiastic about this pair of corroded rings.

"2600 coins." Someone spoke and the bid started.

2700 coins

2800 coins

The price was rising slowly with the minimal limit and it was sure this item would be sold soon. Some couldn't even wait to finish this item and move onto the next one. So this auction can be finished fast and they can all leave.

But at this time, Leon suddenly felt a string in his heart, like something was calling him. Following his gut feeling which always saved and supported him, Leon stared at the pair of rings and then raised his hand to bid.

"3000 coins"

Hearing someone from the VIP rooms was bidding, even the little guys who were willing to get this ring seemed to give up.

Leon curled his lips in a smile, when he saw that no one else was bidding anymore.

'What do these guys know, that ring is probably the only important thing in this auction. I should go back and properly check what's special about it tonight.' He sneered and thought, totally trusting his protagonist's sixth sense of luck.

But sadly luck wasn't on his side today.

"4000 coins" One of the guys with a hunched back stood up and spoke, while cupping his hands in the direction of Leon's room. As if asking for forgiveness before competing against them.

He was a little known figure in the study of metallurgy at floating islands, so not many were surprised when he spoke up to buy this rare metal ring.

"5000 coins." Another man stood up and glared at the hunched man and started shouting. "Morbien, how dare you bid against the Royal Prince's guests. Don't you want to live in Schilla anymore?"

"What, is the prince sitting in that room?"

"Of course, I saw it with my own eyes. Prince and the princess were walking on that side." Another man spoke from the side and soon the crowd churned in whispers.

"You should stop bidding, Morbien. So as not to anger royal highness."

"This doesn't concern you, old man. And I don't think his royal highness would mind something so little when I'm just following the rules of the auction." The hunched man said.

"You _ you're the old man. Your whole family is old. Auction, right _ I'll see how you bid then." The man said and waved a pouch filled with coins in the air. "5000 coins I'll take these rings and gift it to royal highness."

"6000 coins"

7000

7500

10000

Slowly and slowly 2-3 more people stood up and started competing for the ring, some wanted to end this farce early. Some wanted to research, while some wanted to lick Alfred by buying these rings.

Though Alfred felt happy seeing his popularity, Leon on the other side had a twisted look on his face. 'Where did all these people pop up from?'

His own pocket money was stolen outside this auction, but then by using the ring he got from the bandits and the warzy gang, he had around 40000 coins so he could still bid and buy stuff. But after buying the herb for her mother and a concentration pill for himself, he only had a little over 7000 coins left.

He could've still bought these rings at first, but now the price was already out of range for him.

Rio didn't look at Leon, he was staring at the rings. Especially one which looked almost on the verge of collapse and fully covered in layers of rust even from afar. His eyes closed and instantly he felt his consciousness getting pulled into the ring, the moment he stared at it.

In front of him he could see the silhouette of a man dressed in white clothes with his hands on his back, walking above the clouds.

Rio opened his eyes and breathed heavily. Beads of sweat appeared on his face but he waved them away, as system replenished his mana back to full without even asking. "So you're finally here." Rio said and smiled.

Chapter 288 Protagonist's Ring grandpa sold to the villain

288 Protagonist's Ring grandpa sold to the villain

"P_prince Alfred, can you lend me some money. I'll return it when we return to the academy." Finally after hesitating for a while Leon decided to ask Alfred for help.

As for Rebecca, well how can a hero always go around asking help from the beauty. He still remembered how Rebecca just threw him aside last time he wanted to ask her something.

Alfred looked at the stage and then asked "You want to buy those rings?"

"Ah_ yes." Leon said while thinking excuses about what to say if Alfred asked why.

But gladly Alfred wasn't all that interested in what goes around in this bumpkin's head. To him those rings looked just like rusted scrap sold at stalls.

After all this guy was a Baron's heir yet he was wearing the academy uniform to an auction and only carried some pocket change on him. If not for him being a high ranker and a little useful in keeping an eye on Rio, Alfred even wanted to keep a little distance from this stupid. Lest this guy infects him too.

"Okay." Alfred nodded his head and raised his hand. As the butler standing behind him passed him the tablet and he raised the price by 5 times.

50000 coins.

Instantly the crowd below who was still arguing and shouting prices calmed down. Seeing that some guys were still raising their fingers to continue bidding, Alfred signaled his butler, who opened the window shade and let everyone know it was HE, who wanted those rings.

Yet that became a mistake. As the moment his face became visible to everyone, a calm voice rang in the auction silencing everything. It wasn't loud, but somehow it reached everyone's ears.

"A hundred thousand" Rio said and walked up from his sofa and moved closer to the glass wall. Looking straight at Alfred's room with a smile.

"Five hundred thousand" Alfred said in return almost instantly. Already expecting Rio's reaction.

Seeing this the smile on Rio's face grew even more and he raised one finger. As Esme behind him raised the price till "One million."

"Two million" Alfred said and before the lady in red could announce the bid amount, Rio raised two fingers and bid doubled instantly.

"5 million" Alfred said again while frowning, but Rio tapped twice on the glass and the price doubled again by Esme.

Vanessa was smirking to herself as she saw Rio and Alfred competing against each other. One was a royal prince and the other was the rich kid whose company ruled the potion market. She was really hoping this bid would keep going on like this and in the end Rio ends up paying for that useless ring.

'Ahh what a sight that would be.' Just imagining it brought a smile to her face.

While Leon was looking at everything with a dumbfounded expression. He just wanted to let Alfred lend him some money, not start a freaking money war with Rio.

He was wondering now whether that ring was really worth it? Now even if he got the ring, how much longer he would have to try to pay back Alfred.

He regretted now sitting with Alfred. If he wasn't with him, then Rio wouldn't be so interested in bidding for those rings, and he could somehow get them cheaply.

Ohh what a sin it is.

But what Leon didn't know was that whoever bid on this ring from the beginning were all arranged by Rio. If Leon was alone, then he was right Rio wouldn't take action himself. As those others would buy that ring for him, without competing with any noble.

But now since Alfred joined the fun, Rio had to come forward himself.

Their bid continued and the audience was entirely silent, just turning their heads here and there. Looking at them with wide eyes and open mouths about how these rich guys didn't treat money as money.

The lady in red had eyes shining with dollar signs, as the smile on her face became dreamy thinking about how much commission she could get. This auction was just for low grade items and stuff, but looking at the two handsome boys competing like this, her earnings might even eclipse what she usually gets by dozens of times.

The price was already going on with around 80 million already. And there was no sign that any of them wanted to stop.

[Now]

"150 million"

Hearing system's voice Rio spoke directly. Increasing the price by almost double again. As he gave Alfred a provocative gaze that seemed to say keep it on pretty boy.

Seeing his mocking look Alfred hesitated for a moment before looking back at the clock which was about to run out of time. Looking back and forth between the little time left and Rio's extra smile, Alfred seemed to realize something and turned back. "Since my old classmate wants this so much. I'll let it be. Consider it my gift for coming back safely." He said and sat down with a smile.

'WTF ????' Leon wanted to ask what the hell this idiot was saying when _

-Dangggg

The metal sound rang as the time for the bidding ran out. And the lady in red announced the final bid as the winner. Thus giving the rings to Rio who accepted them with a sour expression. While laughing maniacally inside his heart.

(Cause the idiotic system was laughing hysterically in his head.)

"Forget this ring, I'll have Reggie take you to a shop after this auction. You can choose anything there. They have almost all kinds of rare metals and minerals, so don't worry about it." Alfred said, patting Leon's shoulder seeing him lost in thoughts. Who could just nod his head in confusion.

A feeling that he lost something very important to him rose in his heart, but he couldn't do anything about it now.

Vanessa too, like Alfred, was very happy seeing that Rio lost almost 200 millions on some junk metal that was originally priced at 100 coins.

Everyone else in the auction too thought the same thing. Some oldies saying that he was still too young, and younglings telling that he was too arrogant.

But there was one person, who noticed something strange. Something no one else did.

"Fools," Saisha said as she looked at everything from her room.

"He is, right?" An elven beauty sitting beside her asked. "Competition is enough but being prideful and foolish to spend so much like this. Humans sure are weird."

"Not him. But them." Saisha said and glanced at Alfred's room, seeing him smiling and chatting happily. "They got played and didn't even know it."

"What do you mean?" Her friend asked. But Saisha just shook her head and said "nothing"

'Was that the item he came to get here. I didn't sense anything special though.' She wondered as she looked at the waiter taking those rings away.

Unaware of the gaze staring at him, trying to see through his thoughts, Rio just closed his eyes and started looking through all the notifications from the system.

[Host snatches a major opportunity from the protagonist.]

[Changing the plot to a whole new level.]

[System asks host to have some pity on the protagonist heehahaha]

[System is happy. so the stingy host can now use the mid grade lottery 3 times for free.]

[Host gets 100,000 points.]

[Rest can be given once the plotline of this remnant soul is completely finished.]

[Congratulations for avoiding another death flag, host. Keep it up.]

Chapter 289 What happens to a protagonist when the ring grandpa wakes up?

Rio played with the pair of rings in his hands as Esme paid for them. Rio looked ahead and noticed Leon staring at him with fixed eyes. Thinking of something, he waved the rings in the air and caught them in his hands.

Next time he threw the rings again, but instead of catching them, he just snapped his fingers as a red flame appeared and burned the rings to ashes.

Leon, who saw this scene, nearly jumped from his seat and shouted while pointing fingers at him. Forget about that ring's special feeling he got, that guy spent 150 million on it, does it make sense to burn it right in front of everyone.

Alfred and Vanessa who saw this scene were smirking, thinking their previous guesses were right.

[If you want to play with people's emotions so much, how about you buy the feature called 'Negative meter' - with this feature unlocked, every time any protagonist or supporting character hates you or feels any negative emotions towards you, you'll receive corresponding rewards.]

System, who saw its host playing tricks after placing the real rings into its storage, spoke up. Promoting business.

But Rio knew all too well how this stupid system always eyed his hard earned points. So instead of agreeing instantly after hearing the fancy promo introduction, he decided to ask about the price first.

And counting how many zeroes the system placed before writing the word 'only' at the end, Rio directly slapped it away.

'half a million points for some sassy feature. Which I'll get eventually for free when I kill a few hidden ants in some towers.' Rio said remembering every tower floor is a separate world, and every world has a protagonist.

Ignoring the next up boring auction Rio just became indifferent to all the items and decided to leave. Informing the waiter, they waited for a few moments before they were led to a teleportation gate, once clear by some security checks, Rio and esme directly left the auction and appeared in a fancy hotel under Nishkal family's name.

Rio sent Esme back to do her work and then went to his office. And enacted the highest security options. Where other than him no one else could take even a step inside without triggering hundreds of traps. Not even SS rankers.

As soon as he felt that he was alone, he closed his eyes. And when he opened his eyes, he was standing in a lush forest with a giant tree in the middle. Where long long orbs of different colors floated being entangled by the branches. This was his system stage and his own VFX Yggdrasil.

[Reflection of system space onto reality started. Time limit - 10 minutes]

[I warn you host, it's all on you now. Once the timer goes over all the gods would be able to come and go or listen and see as usual. Finish your interrogation fast.]

Hearing the system's suggestions Rio nodded his head and prepared himself.

He brought the rings out and looked at them for quite a while. Using his True eyes he could see that a strand of black was wrapped all around the rings.

Bringing a small bottle filled with blood, Rio dropped two drops of it on both rings.

Instantly as if some magic triggered, one ring crumbled and got destroyed, while the other started to shine bright. The layer of black entangled and opened from the ring automatically, as it gained a new color.

A light shot from the ring to the sky at high speed, but his system space trapped it. Stopping it from leaving.

While Leon, who had just decided to leave from the auction, suddenly frowned and spurted a mouthful of blood. His expression twisted in pain as he clutched his chest. He felt his mana leaving his body at an alarming rate, until he couldn't even stand straight. Confused at this situation he wanted to ask Apollo for help, when he felt something and his expression turned to horror - he noticed his rank started dropping slowly.

The foundation he created for himself started to crack while his mana kept getting sucked dry.

From rank C- to D+

D+ to D

'What's happening?'

"God _ Apollo, what's wrong_with me?" Leon said chugging down a mouthful of pills to stabilize the pain and recover his mana. He kept drinking potions after potions not even seeing what effect they had. Started eating rare herbs whole without refining them - hoping to heal himself.

And finally after a long and hard struggle, his rank stabilized after falling 3 times. And stayed still at D-.

If not for him having a lot of treasures and treatment methods, he would've fallen back to rank E or even F. Cold sweat broke out on Leon's forehead just thinking about that possibility.

'What happened? God Apollo answer me? Why did my rank drop so suddenly?" Leon wanted to pray and ask his God but Apollo didn't answer immediately and soon he lost his consciousness and fell down.

Alfred and Rebecca, who were finally alone and started talking about their differences this time, got interrupted when someone knocked on their door frantically.

"Your majesty, your friend. T_ the one who was here with you. He _ he suddenly fell down." The waiter said, rushing in between with loud breaths.

Alfred stepped out of the room and frowned when he felt Leon being carried away by some guards. He looked at Leon's clothes covered in blood and waved at his butler.

Reginald/Reggie went forward to take Leon's pulse and frowned after sensing it. Coming back, he whispered something in Alfred's ears and stepped back.

"Prince, he's useless. His body has a lot of indisposed vitality and herbs aura lingering around. He probably ate too many pills or potions together to boost his rank in a short time and suffered a backlash."

Hearing Reggie's analysis Alfred finally understood how this idiot was able to rise so fast in ranks. From an unawakened cripple to a genius C- rank in just two years. It was clear, his foundation was poor and he relied on pills or potions to rank up. But today his body must've given up. Breaking his foundation with a backlash.

Leon would've still been somewhat useful at rank C but now this idiot even fell from his original rank and became a D- ranker. Which is normal for his age, but against geniuses of other noble families he was no match.

'Crippled bastard' Alfred said in disdain and waved his hands. Signaling the guards to take Leon away from him.

He was already raising a crippled heir of a Duke, there's no need to add another Baron's crippled son.

All the while Rebecca just kept silent and frowned even more seeing Leon's conditions. Her thoughts were the same as Alfred's. At first she thought Leon was a genius but looking at it now, she was probably expecting too much.

<In arcadia anyone with the help of proper pills and herbs can level up to rank A. So there are a lot of people who're still relying on them too much. And many times suffer a backlash and fall down in ranks like this or go completely insane.>

[Congratulations host, for destroying the foundation of protagonist Leon.]

[Host's calculations made Leon fall in ranks and lose consciousness.]

[Congratulations host for twisting the threads of fate for his own advantage. His understanding over Skuld's blessing increases.]

[Skuld sneers seeing the situation of the golden boy.]

[Loki giggles happily while planning something in secret.]

[Apollo feels confused and angry as host's action changes the mechanisms of God's plan.]

Rio ignored the barrage of notifications from the system as he carefully placed the vile of Leon's blood aside. And looked at the golden light in front of him, which slowly started shining brighter and taking the form of an illusory old man.

Chapter 290 Ring grandpa awakens, but where is the chosen one who woke me up?

?The ethereal form had only condensed the top of this old man's body when it stopped suddenly.

In front of Rio stood an ethereal form of an old man. With a long white beard and white clothes, white smoke covered his figure like clouds covering the sun. There was not a speck of dust or any impurity in that form, as if that man was the most pure person in this land.

Sunlight fell onto that unreal figure, giving a feeling like some fairy or a God had descended down to the mortal realm and the world was welcoming their arrival.

The old man was just standing there but an aura of presence fell over Rio's shoulder, forcing his eyes to be closed for a moment.

The old man slowly opened his eyes and his gaze landed on the white haired boy standing in front of him.

As if sensing something, he raised his hand in a gesture as if touching the space around him. Feeling the closed off enchantment done by the system which kept Rio and this old man saturated from the world, away from the eyes of peeking Gods and demons, the old man frowned and glared back at the young boy in front of him.

"You're not the chosen one." He spoke slowly, each word of his calm and clear, sending ripples in the heart of any listener. "Nor the one favored by the destiny who woke me up."

Rio looked at the old man whose lips hadn't moved for once, but his voice echoed clear in his mind.

To Rio, this reminded him of something he read in one cultivation which said, immortals or fairies, every action of theirs contains the rhythm of dao.

They rarely speak.

As every word of theirs could become an order that can turn over the laws of the mortal world.

Yet their thoughts can reach the end of the world without any obstacle. Using telepathy was just a thought.

"This seat is in a good mood today, so remove your locks and I shall let you live."

While Rio was lost in thoughts, contemplating the mysteries of this world, the clear voice sounded in his ears again, clearly a little impatient this time.

'System, we're safe right?' Before answering the overpowered old man, Rio asked his system again.

[Are you still doubting me after all our time together? I'm hurt, you know.]

System said in a playful tone and then went silent as if really feeling hurt by this host's disbelief in his golden finger.

Rio just shook his head and ignored this damn AI which started having mood swings at the drop of a hat nowadays.

"It seems you're baffled by the majesty of this seat. But that is no excuse _" The old man seeing Rio just staring at him spoke up again, but in the middle of his self praising lines, Rio cut him off.

"Shut up oldie. You're in my hands now. So I'd suggest you watch your attitude , lest I get angry and send you to hell to meet Hela."

The old man who was still reeling in the emotions of waking up in this new world after hundreds of years, was stunned hearing the arrogant words of a junior.

Glancing at the level of this kid's strength the old man shook his head in displeasure as if looking at an ant. His face showed no sign of displeasure or anger, just pity.

Pity the fool who couldn't recognize the height of heavens and thought the cloud of smoke was the top of this world.

Truly a frog at the bottom of a well.

"I don't like your look." Rio said, seeing this contemptuous look aimed at him.

As his words finished, an iron chain appeared in his hands, burning with a black flame atop the edges.

Not wasting any time, Rio just directly slapped it towards the old man.

The chain passed through the ethereal body like moving through air without any effect or resistance.

The old man looked at Rio with the same contempt and flicked his sleeves. "Looks like the people of this era had really forgotten the rules of survival. The strong reigns _"

Aaaahhhhhhhh

The old man was in the middle of his high speech after seeing that Rio's attack failed to hit him or harm him, when suddenly he felt like someone just set him on fire. Or threw him into an active volcano.

A painful scream echoed in Rio's ears, so loud that they started to bleed slowly. His internal organs felt the shock passing through his body and trembled in fright. Yet he didn't scream or cry.

Taking a potion from his ring, Rio gulped it in one big motion and all his injuries healed in an instant.

"That was the first and last warning of this young master to you. Next time, you look at me like that and I'll whip you so hard your soul will be in tatters." Rio said and waved his hands as a chair appeared from his ring and got pulled behind him.

Sitting down upon it like a king, he flicked his fingers and the iron chain disappeared from his hand and turned into a circular tattoo on his wrist.

"I'll ask you a few questions and you'll give me some answers. And then if I'm satisfied, I'll let you go in peace." Rio said calmly, still reeling in from the loud scream that echoed in his mind.

The old man who suppressed the burning pain coming from the depth of his soul, looked at the imposing young man in front of him and frowned.

He was caught off guard by the sudden attack and the level of pain it brought him, thus losing his composure for a moment, yet he suppressed its effects instantly.

He was very shocked that the young kid in front of him could hurt him in the slightest and still look so calm about it.

Yet the truth was far from it. Though Rio looked calm, he was praising this old man in his heart. To deal with this overpowered remnant soul grandpa he had especially made some arrangements with the system beforehand. Yet even then his best attack, which was meant to beat him half to death was solved just like this by this old man.

'He really does deserve to be the protagonist's grandpa bodyguard.' Rio thought and directly spent another 50000 points to upgrade the skill latched on Soul Striker, the whip made by the Dullahans. A legion, who's solely responsible for reaping the souls of the deceased.

"Who are you? Which God do you serve?" The old man asked after seeing him controlling the hellfire and soul striker (name of the chain artifact).

Hearing the cross question Rio brought the iron chain out again, but then seeing the old grandpa who started chanting, Rio sighed audibly and put it away.

'This barrier is quite expensive to hide his torture. Let's just go easy on him.' He thought and looked at the old man silently.

After thinking for a few seconds he motioned from his hands for the old man to sit as a chair appeared behind him too.

"It looks like beating you will be useless, so let's play a game."