

Lord of Mysteries 2: Circle of Inevitability

Chapter 20 Customs

Lumian subconsciously held his breath and shrank back a little.

Naroka did not come in this direction. Slowly, she entered the small forest and disappeared into the deep night.

Lumian was slightly worried. She doesn't seem right... Did something happen?

Recently, there had been more and more abnormalities in the village.

He looked outside for a while, and the night had returned to silence. Only the swaying leaves proved the existence of the wind.

"What are you looking at?" Aurore's voice suddenly came from behind him.

Lumian turned around and was delighted to see his sister, who was wearing a two-piece pajama set.

"Did you also notice something wrong?"

"No," Aurore replied, her blond hair slightly messy and fluffy from just waking up.

Then she added angrily, "I don't see anything wrong. All I know is that there's a guy who's up in the middle of the night, loitering at the window."

"It'll be dawn in an hour tops. How can it be considered the middle of the night..." Lumian muttered out of habit. Then he asked, "Didn't you come over because of the owl? Didn't you see Naroka outside?"

"Naroka?" Aurore revealed a rare blank expression.

Lumian recounted everything from the moment he woke up and realized that there was a black shadow outside the window to the strangely-behaving Naroka walking into the forest.

As for the special trait he discovered while meditating in his dream, he planned to consult the mysterious woman first before considering how to tell Aurore or hide it for a while to prevent his sister from stopping him from obtaining superpowers.

Aurore furrowed her beautiful blond brows.

“Something might have already happened to Naroka...”

“Go check on them at dawn.”

Lumian asked subconsciously, “What could have happened?”

“How would I know? I didn’t see her; there’s no way I can make an accurate judgment,” Aurore snapped back.

“You really didn’t see her?” Lumian thought that his sister had been monitoring him the entire time.

Aurore scoffed. “Do you think you can see whatever you want? If you see something you shouldn’t, you have to consider which graveyard to bury me in. I won’t look outside for no reason. I’ll just monitor your condition. I’ll only wake up if something’s wrong.”

Lumian was stunned for a moment and couldn’t help but blink. Grande Soeur is taking such a huge risk to watch over me...

Aurore added earnestly, “That’s why I’m telling you, don’t look at what you shouldn’t see and don’t listen to what you shouldn’t hear. Pursuing extraordinary power is a very dangerous thing.”

“Got it.” Lumian nodded solemnly.

At the same time, he thought to himself, It’s precisely because it’s dangerous that I can’t let you go at it alone.

...

After breakfast, Lumian followed his sister’s instructions and headed straight to Naroka’s house.

As he approached, he saw many villagers standing outside the door, including his friends, Ava’s father Guillaume Lizier, Reimund’s father Pierre Greg, and the padre’s younger brother Pons Bénet.

“What happened?” Lumian carefully circled around Pons Bénet and the few thugs surrounding him and went to Reimund’s side.

Reimund replied sadly. “Naroka passed away.”

“Ah?” Lumian was prepared for something to happen to Naroka, but he didn’t expect her to be dead.

Reimund rambled on. "Before dawn, the padre came to give her the last rites. She was still fine and energetic two days ago when we asked her about the legend of the Warlock. Why would she suddenly pass away..."

Before dawn? Lumian was alarmed.

He realized that it was precisely that moment when he saw Naroka. The exact timing of the padre's last rites didn't make much of a difference.

Lumian's mind raced with thoughts. So, what I saw was actually Naroka's ghost? This happened after the owl flew over. Can it really take away a human's soul? Yes, Naroka was one of the witnesses to the Warlock incident that happened back then... If I hadn't listened to Grande Soeur and went out after dark, I might have been the one the padre did last rites with. Heh, his version of it for me is probably spitting at me...

Reimund didn't chat with him. He stood outside the two-story house and quietly mourned Naroka.

After Lumian reined in his thoughts, he saw Leah, Ryan, and Valentine walking over.

"Did something happen here?" Leah asked before Lumian could even greet her.

They saw many people gathered on the road.

Lumian sighed and said, "My cabbages, an honorable old lady has passed away."

"Then why are all of you standing outside?" Leah asked without offering any condolences, not fully convinced by Lumian's explanation.

She was still wearing the same clothes as before.

Lumian made an obvious sizing-up gesture, which made Leah panic.

"What's wrong?" Ryan asked.

Lumian smiled. "You're definitely not Dariège locals."

"We're from Bigorre," Ryan answered frankly.

Bigorre was the provincial capital of the Intis Republic's Riston Province, while Dariège was a city on the southern border of Riston Province. It covered a large area, including the village of Cordu.

Lumian nodded. "It's no wonder you don't know the customs of the Dariège region."

He had initially thought that these three foreigners were officials from Dariège, but it turned out that they were from the provincial capital, Bigorre.

Lumian silently updated his judgment of Leah and company. Looks like their status is much higher than I expected...

Leah asked with interest, "What kind of customs? Can you tell us?"

Lumian planned on forging a good relationship with them, so he smiled and said, "You're my cabbages. Why wouldn't I tell you?"

"As you know, everyone has their own corresponding horoscope. And in the Dariège region, we also believe that every family has their own horoscope that determines the amount of providence they receive. The death and funeral of the family, especially the head of the house, will take away such good providence.

"In order not to affect the horoscope and retain the providence, we will place the deceased in the center of a family before burial, which is the kitchen. Then, we will trim off some of her hair and nails and keep them in the house forever without letting them be discovered by any guests.

"At such a time, if a person attending the funeral enters the house, it will affect the corresponding horoscope and take away a portion of their providence. Therefore, we attend the funeral by mourning outside. At most, we will look in from the door and wait at the cemetery beside the cathedral."

"I see," Ryan nodded in understanding. "It's the same as how every cathedral in every region has holy bones stored. 'The sage is forever where a part of their body is.'"

He turned to face Naroka's house, removed his top hat, placed it against his chest, and began to mourn.

Leah and Valentine also expressed their condolences.

When they were done, Lumian said to them, "I'm going to the door to look at her. I'll see you later, my cabbages."

"Okay," Ryan replied with a gentle nod.

Lumian lowered his voice and added, "I'll help you find that livre bleu."

Before Leah and the others could respond, he stepped to the side and smiled.

"Why do you wear the same clothes every day?"

"We can't care too much about appearances when we are out in a foreign land for extended periods," Ryan explained simply, while Leah subconsciously touched the silver bell hanging from her veil.

After bidding farewell to Valentine and the others, Lumian walked to Naroka's door.

He had to queue for a while before it was finally his turn.

Lumian stood by the door and looked at the kitchen ahead.

Naroka's corpse had not yet been placed into a coffin. It was lying quietly on a simple bed made of a few benches.

Her nails had been trimmed, and her thin white hair was much neater than before.

Her face was pale, and her wrinkles deepened the lines on her face. Lumian didn't dare to look at her for too long.

Compared to when I saw her before dawn, her face is even whiter, Lumian thought to himself as he made a slight bow before leaving the door.

On the way to the cemetery with Reimund, Lumian suddenly slapped his head.

"Sacrebleu, I forgot to inform Aurore."

"What are you waiting for?" Reimund asked, understanding the importance of keeping Aurore in the loop.

Aurore didn't enjoy being out most of the time. She really wasn't kept in the loop if not for her brother.

Lumian saw an opportunity and said, "Coincidentally, this place isn't far from your place. Lend me your livre bleu for two days. A few pages of mine had been gnawed away by rats, so I need to copy it."

"Okay," Reimund agreed.

In any case, there was still some time before the burial.

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Lumian returned home and hid the livre bleu before informing Aurore about Naroka's passing.

She couldn't help but sigh.

“As expected, something happened. I wonder if it was caused by that owl...”

“I suspect so too,” Lumian agreed, echoing his sister.

Aurore tersely acknowledged and said, “You must not leave the house after dark. You have to find a way to warn the people who were seeking out the legend of the Warlock with you.”

Lumian had already scared Reimund with Naroka’s death, having just asked about the Warlock legend two days ago, and instructed him not to go out after dark for the time being. “Alright,” he replied.

“Naroka is a good person. I’ll change my clothes and attend her funeral,” Aurore said, walking towards the stairs. “Do you want to come with me, or do you want to read some books and do a test set before going?”

Why am I still doing test sets at a time like this? Lumian couldn’t quite understand his sister’s train of thought.

Considering that he had to compare the livres bleu, he said to Aurore, “I’ll do a paper before I go.”

“Very good.” Aurore was rather pleased.

After Aurore left, Lumian’s expression darkened.

He went up to the second floor and entered the study. He took out the livre bleu that he had borrowed from Reimund and compared it to the one at home where part of the words had been cut out.

Time slowly passed as Lumian pieced together the corresponding words one by one and wrote them on a piece of paper.

He made adjustments according to the length of the two sentences, and soon the contents of a possible request for help appeared in front of him: “We need help as soon as possible. The people around us are getting weirder.”