

LORD OF MYSTERIES 2: CIRCLE OF INEVITABILITY

Chapter 26 Whistleblowing



The lady nibbled on a croissant before answering Lumian's question.

"I do."

She really knows... Lumian's heart leapt with hope. He deliberated over his words before asking, using honorifics to show his respect, "May I offer to pay a certain price to commission your help in solving Cordu's problem?"

From his point of view, this mysterious lady woman was much stronger than Leah and her companions. If she agreed to help, the problem with Cordu would be solved, and he and his sister wouldn't have to risk their lives to escape. But he was worried that he couldn't afford the price.

Lumian wasn't optimistic that the woman would agree to help. But he felt it was necessary to try. Even if he was rejected, he wouldn't be too embarrassed. He was not a stickler for such things.

The woman turned to him and spoke calmly, "I can indeed solve the problem here, but the corresponding price is that everything will be destroyed, including you.

"If you want a better outcome, you can only rely on yourselves."

Lumian's eyes widened in disbelief. Could the problem with Cordu be that serious? He searched the woman's face for any sign of jest, but found none.

He wasn't surprised or disappointed that she refused to help. What shocked him was the severity of the problem. It could even lead to the destruction of the entire village!

He was puzzled and alarmed by the situation. Since she can resolve it, why is it that the entire village will die, while us ordinary people and Beyonders who aren't strong enough capable of producing a better outcome?

If he didn't hear back from Novel Weekly by the day after tomorrow, he would urge his sister to leave Cordu immediately. He couldn't delay any longer even if it meant taking a huge risk! He had to act fast!

"What's the problem?" Lumian pressed, his dignity never a priority.

The lady smiled.

"Me telling you and you finding out through your investigations will give rise to completely different results."

Lumian gritted his teeth instinctively. He didn't stand her behavior of always holding back something.

For some reason, he sensed that peculiar feeling in the woman's eyes, something he couldn't quite put his finger on.

"Okay." Lumian paused for a moment, weighing his words carefully. "Do you have any information about Madame Pualis? Is she a Warlock—uh, a Beyonder?"

The woman lifted her coffee cup to her lips and took a small sip before answering, "Yes, she is."

Indeed... Lumian asked further, "What pathway, which Sequence?"

The lady's expression turned serious in an instant.

"It's not a normal pathway."

"What do you mean it's not a normal pathway?" he pressed.

The lady smiled.

"You'll find out later."

I want to know now... Lumian struggled to keep his expression in check.

Already standing and about to leave, Lumian suddenly remembered something crucial.

"Madame, how am I supposed to bring those supplementary ingredients into the dream?"

In the dream ruins, he could only find basic ingredients like red wine and basil in the dream ruins, but for the Red Chestnut Flower and poplar leaf, he would have to collect them in reality.

The task wasn't impossible, and Lumian had already thought of a way to "borrow" them, but he knew it would all be for naught if he couldn't transfer them to his dream.

The lady smiled and said, "I'll offer you a little assistance again, free of charge.

"Find those materials in reality, put them on the table in your bedroom before you sleep. I'll help you send them into your dream."

She can send those things into my dream? Lumian was first shocked before feeling a wave of relief wash over him. At least his problem was solved.

He never thought he'd encounter someone else with the ability to "enter" the special dream world like he could.

Lumian couldn't shake the feeling that his ability to enter dream ruins had something to do with the cryptic symbols etched onto his chest. As he gazed at the woman before him, he couldn't help but wonder if she was connected to those same markings or that bizarre and terrifying voice that had been echoing in his mind.

Lumian had just left the Ol' Tavern and had plans to collect the Red Chestnut Flower and poplar leaves.

But as he turned the corner, he saw Ryan, Leah, and Valentine exiting the back door of the tavern. They were still dressed in the same clothes and outfits.

Lumian's heart skipped a beat as he greeted them with a smile.

"Good morning, my cabbages."

Leah turned her head and laughed amidst the tinkling sounds.

"You're early, too."

Lumian tried to act sneaky and looked around before speaking in a hushed tone.

"I noticed something unusual yesterday."

Ryan's expression turned serious as he exchanged glances with Valentine and Leah.

"What is it?"

Lumian's voice quivered slightly as he spoke.

"I suspect that Naroka's death is abnormal. You attended her funeral yesterday."

Ryan gave Lumian an encouraging look to continue, and Lumian took a deep breath before proceeding with his suspicions.

"I told you about the funeral customs in the Dariège area, didn't I? After everyone went to the cemetery, Pons Bénét entered Naroka's house without any objection from the owner.

"Isn't this destroying the influence of their family's horoscope and taking away the corresponding good luck?

"There must be something wrong!"

"Pons Bénet, the brother of the padre?" Ryan thought for a few seconds and asked.

Lumian nodded heavily.

As Lumian thought about the padre's strange group and his impending departure from Cordu, he realized he had nothing to fear from speaking his mind. With a deep breath, he declared, "The padre is not a good man!"

"Why do you say that?" Leah asked with a grin, clearly unsurprised by Lumian's criticism of the padre.

Not one for formalities, Lumian launched into a detailed account of a villager who had snitched in Dariège and subsequently vanished. His focus was on the accusations against the padre, and he held nothing back.

Finally, he said, "I really question how he's a clergyman of the Church.

"One time, I said something that was deemed too real, and I had to hide temporarily in the cathedral.

"I was about to doze off behind the altar when the padre walked in with Madame Pualis. And let me tell you, they were doing the dirty deed right under the deity's gaze.

"In the conversation that followed the deed, the padre even lamented to Madame Pualis, saying, 'Why can't a man marry his sister?'

"Madame Pualis was appalled by his words and begged the padre to repent.

"However, the padre said, 'Many wealthy families lose their fortunes when their daughters marry and their sons start families. But if a son could marry his sister, these problems would disappear. Unfortunately, the law and morals don't allow it'..."

The frigid Valentine's face contorted with anger at the news.

"Is he a servant of God or a servant of the Demon?"

Ryan nodded as if in thought.

"No wonder Pons Bénét hasn't been able to start a family despite being married after all these years..."

Leah surveyed Lumian as she chuckled.

"You knew about Madame Pualis and the padre's affair. You wanted to use us that day."

Lumian's smile was uneasy, but his tone was resolute.

"As a believer of the Eternal Blazing Sun, I cannot tolerate such a person in the cathedral."

The cold Valentine's expression softened, and he nodded approvingly.

"If only Cordu had more people like you."

A few more like me? Lumian shuddered at the thought of Cordu overrun with more people like him.

He continued, "That time, I overheard the padre warning Madame Pualis that he was planning something and might be targeted by the Inquisition. He told her to be careful and keep quiet."

Ryan's expression turned solemn.

"Did he say anything more about it?"

"No." Lumian didn't fabricate the matter.

He couldn't risk saying more than that. If he did, trouble could erupt tonight. He wasn't even a Beyonder yet.

After bidding farewell to the trio of foreigners, Lumian spent hours gathering Red Chestnut Flowers and poplar leaves.

As the sun neared its apex, Lumian arrived at the village square and made his way to the two-story building where official business was conducted.

Most of the villagers had already gathered, eagerly awaiting the selection of the Spring Elf, an important part of the upcoming Lenten celebration tomorrow.

Squeezing through the crowd, Lumian spotted Reimund, Ava, and the others.

"Is Ava on the list?" he asked.

Ava remained silent, her agitation palpable. Reimund shook his head. "We don't know."

"She must be on it," interjected Guillaume Berry, a frequent companion of Lumian and the others. "Among the unmarried women in the village, other than your sister, she's the most beautiful. Your sister doesn't meet the age requirements."

He was the Guillaume-junior that Lumian and the others were talking about. He hung out with them frequently. Guillaume had curly brown hair and prominent freckles on his face. His blue eyes seemed to narrow because they weren't large enough.

Ava's cousin, Azéma, also stood nearby, looking much like Ava but smaller and less striking.

She remained silent, but Lumian sensed her desire to be chosen as the Spring Elf as well.

In the Dariège area, being chosen as the "Spring Elf" was a coveted honor that not only recognized a person's beauty and character but also came with hidden benefits.

Upon hearing Guillaume-junior's words, Lumian grinned.

"If Ava's not on the list, I'll shout, 'I vote Ava!' when the administrator finishes reading it."

Ava blushed. "You don't have to do that."

It was a normal process for villagers to shout out additional candidates after the administrator finished reading the list of nominees for the Spring Elf. However, not many had the nerve to do so. Lumian, however, was not one to shy away from such things.

He had no misgivings about this.

Ava will be the one being embarrassed, not me.

Shortly after, Administrator Béost appeared at a second-story window, looking far more put-together than the padre. His neatly combed brown hair, light blue eyes with black lines, straight nose bridge, thin lips, and well-groomed mustache conveyed his status, accentuated by his double-breasted flannel coat.

He gazed down at the assembled villagers for a moment before speaking.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it's time. Those who are late will no longer have the right to vote.

"Next, I'll read the list of candidates for the Spring Elf."

"Ava Lizier..."

As Béost read out the list, Ava breathed a sigh of relief.

Unsurprisingly, she received over 80% of the votes.

After the voting, Lumian made an excuse about needing to go home and left without celebrating with his companions.

Upon arriving home, he immediately asked his sister, "Did we receive a reply?"

If they had, the telegrapher would have delivered it and collected a fee.

"Not yet," Aurore replied, shaking her head.

She then said, "The undercurrents have been turbulent lately. You can't let your guard down during combat practice. Speaking of which, we'll spar in the afternoon."

Lumian winced, feeling sore all over.

But then an idea struck him. He put on a pained expression and said, "I don't know if it's because I've been training too hard, but my whole body hurts today. Aurore, uh, sister, can you give me a massage? You're the most skilled at it."

Aurore nodded. "Sure, I can do that."

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Under the skilled hands of his sister, Lumian's body finally began to recover that night.

Before drifting off to sleep, Lumian placed three Red Chestnut Flowers and some powdered poplar leaves in a bottle on the table in front of the window.

He gazed at the bottle for a long moment, his heart beating with anticipation and nervousness, before finally crawling under the covers.