

## R. Paradise 701

Chapter 701: See Through

Facing the aggressively charging Kariya Matou, Diarmuid quickly assumed a combat stance. Despite the intense pain from his chest wound, he was, after all, an experienced warrior.

Kariya Matou was enveloped in billowing black smoke, exuding a tremendous aura. He rushed haphazardly towards Diarmuid and delivered a punch.

Diarmuid dodged the punch by tilting his head, looking somewhat incredulous. This Berserker, after all, seemed relatively weak.

Easily evading Kariya Matou's punch, Diarmuid maneuvered with agility, circling around Kariya Matou. He planted one of his short yellow spears into the ground, holding the long red spear with both hands.

Diarmuid's two spears served different purposes. The yellow short spear was the "Yellow Rose of Oblivion," possessing the ability to inflict "wounds that cannot heal." In other words, wounds caused by this spear would not heal.

As for the long red spear that Diarmuid held with both hands was called the "Crimson Rose of Exorcism." It nullified magical defences. In battles against Heroic Spirits, each thrust of this spear would bypass defences, causing true damage.

Facing an opponent who was a Heroic Spirit, Diarmuid chose to use the Crimson Rose to bypass defences, planning to utilise the opportunity to wound the enemy with the Yellow Rose.

Kariya Matou didn't care about the distinctions between the Crimson Rose and the Yellow Rose; his sole focus was on killing the enemy before him.

"Roar!"

Kariya Matou roared wildly, and the black smoke covering his body almost solidified.

Diarmuid stared at Kariya Matou, the long red spear in his hand twirling, creating several spear-like patterns in the air.

"What's going on..."

Diarmuid's brow furrowed. The Berserker's "aura" was strong, but his actual strength was rather unimpressive. What surprised him even more was that compared to this "Heroic Spirit," the enemy Master was terrifying.

When Diarmuid rushed into the residential building earlier, he couldn't identify the enemy's location clearly. A long blade had dominated his field of vision. He might have been killed inside the building if he hadn't reacted quickly.

Though currently facing off with Kariya Matou, Diarmuid's gaze inadvertently shifted to the residential building. It was pitch-black inside, and the hole he had crashed through resembled the maw of a monstrous creature.

Kariya Matou paid no attention to where Diarmuid was looking; Tokiomi Tohsaka had to die for him. He roared and charged forward. This time, instead of using his fists, he reached out with both hands towards Diarmuid.

Seeing this reckless charge, Diarmuid instinctively took two steps back, suspecting a trap.

Yet, after a few steps, Kariya Matou's charge seemed to confirm something for Diarmuid—this Berserker might have an imposing "aura," but he posed little actual threat.

Following Kariya Matou's advance, Diarmuid sidestepped and used a swift thrust with the red long spear.

The spear's tip pierced through the air, emitting a faint hissing sound like a cobra striking its prey.

An average person would instinctively dodge or step back, but Kariya Matou was not a normal person. He was a "Berserker." If he were to retreat, his Berserker's honour would be at stake.

As a result, Kariya Matou decisively met the thrust of the long red spear.

Bang!

A shockwave rippled outwards, and the long red spear pierced Kariya Matou's chest, leaving a bowl-sized indentation.

Blood spurted from the wound on Diarmuid's chest. It was as if the spear hadn't struck a human body but rather a solid piece of wood.

Swoosh...

A cold gust of wind brushed past Diarmuid as a man holding a long knife appeared behind him.

Diarmuid's pupils contracted. Instinctively, he lowered his head.

Cling!

The long knife swung overhead, aimed at beheading him.

"Roar!"

With his bare hands, Kariya Matou caught the long spear impaled in his chest. Observing this, Su Xiao's face lit up with a smile. He hadn't expected this guy actually to contribute to the fight.

Yet, in the next moment, Su Xiao's smile vanished as Kariya Matou lifted the long spear with brute force. This unintended action allowed Diarmuid to create distance between them. Indeed, Kariya Matou proved to be an "unreliable teammate."

Mid-air, Diarmuid raised his left hand and struck the grip of the long spear with his palm.

Buzz...

The intense vibration along the long spear made Kariya Matou let go. Diarmuid was flung backwards but landed on his feet, sliding a bit before regaining his stance.

Staring at Diarmuid from a distance of around ten meters, Kariya Matou's eyes gleamed with red, reflecting his pent-up anger.

At that moment, Su Xiao stomped on the ground and charged toward Kariya Matou's back.

Su Xiao stood behind Kariya Matou and delivered a sidekick.

Bang.

Kariya Matou was sent flying. This action puzzled Diarmuid and the onlookers alike, giving rise to a strange thought—they wondered if this Master was finding his Heroic Spirit more of a hindrance.

Kariya Matou was launched several meters away. After rising to his feet, he locked eyes with Su Xiao.

Energy swathed around Excalibur Sheath, and upon seeing the energy, Kariya Matou's expression turned fearful. He didn't dare rush forward anymore.

Observing Kariya Matou's reaction, Diarmuid smirked. The "electricity" that hindered magical effects and caused annihilative reactions with other energies...

A realisation dawned upon Diarmuid, causing him to look at Kariya Matou from afar.

This was an embodiment shrouded in darkness, an irrational Heroic Spirit. And this Heroic Spirit had no battle experience; he only charged forward recklessly. Even though he had been given the Berserker's "Mad Enhancement" upon summoning, it still didn't explain everything.

In contrast, the enemy Master was proficient in swordsmanship and possessed extensive combat experience. There was no way a magician could compare in terms of timing, capabilities, and strategy.

"So that's it... a berserk Heroic Spirit!"

Diarmuid's eyes filled with anger. He now understood the unusual combination before him.

"To let his own Master become like this... you're not worthy of being called a Heroic Spirit. At the very least, I, Diarmuid, won't recognise you as one."

With the "Crimson Rose of Exorcism" in his hand, Diarmuid danced with it, ultimately pointing the long spear at Su Xiao.

"..."

Su Xiao didn't speak. He had anticipated that his true identity might be discovered. His strategy to deceive the enemy was a one-time ploy, and it had worked effectively earlier, catching Diarmuid off guard.

Su Xiao stomped on the ground and dashed towards Diarmuid.

Although Su Xiao was fast, Diarmuid's Agility attribute was also rated as A+.

They clashed once again, the battle between a rational Heroic Spirit and an irrational one, a skilled swordmaster and an untrained one, a battle that would decide the fate of the Holy Grail War.

Chapter 702: Devour

Perceiving the oncoming pressure, the anger in Dilumudo's eyes subsided. Although he disagreed with the opponent's approach, he acknowledged their strength and intended to respond fully.

Dilumudo pressed the ground, embedding the yellow short spear into it to conceal it.

Although the invulnerable yellow rose had characteristics of unhealable wounds, the strength of this spear was far inferior to the red rose. It could be used as a one-shot kill weapon, but he preferred to use the red rose if facing the enemy head-on.

Suddenly, Su Xiao rushed to Dilumudo, surrounded by dozens of counterattack shields floating around him.

He swung his long knife forward, a mere probing attack. Dilumudo instinctively used the red rose to block.

Clang.

As Dilumudo felt a tremendous force in his hand, sparks flew, and his feet sank into the ground.

"This power..."

Before Dilumudo could adapt to the immense force, Su Xiao launched a powerful sidekick. Dilumudo's reaction was swift; he bent his leg and used his shin to block Su Xiao's kick.

Dilumudo staggered back a few steps with a loud thud, his leg entirely numb.

Sizzling~

The sound of contracting metal wires resonated as dimensional threads entangled Dilumudo from all directions.

Dilumudo immediately jumped, using the support of the red rose embedded in the stone slab beneath to suspend his entire body in midair.

The dimensional threads wrapped around the long spear, the red rose. Su Xiao pulled on the dimensional threads, causing the spear's tip to leave a mark on the stone.

Just as Dilumudo was about to land, Su Xiao stepped forward. Instead of attacking immediately, he waited until Dilumudo touched the ground.

Just as Dilumudo's toes touched the ground, Su Xiao executed a diagonal slash.

The Dragon Slayer Flash traced a faint golden "thread" in midair. Its sharpness was chilling.

At this moment, Dilumudo had just landed, and his posture was unstable. This cunning strike made him uncomfortable, leaving him with little room to manoeuvre.

This was a testament to the importance of battle experience. Combat involved numerous factors, and victory didn't solely depend on strength or the number of skills.

Dilumudo continued using his long spear to dodge with no better option. He knew that by choosing to dodge, he would be at a disadvantage in the upcoming exchange. The enemy's power was just too overwhelming.

As Dilumudo prepared to brace himself against Su Xiao's attack, facing the danger of being struck down, Su Xiao suddenly halted his swing and stepped back.

Boom!

Flames erupted from beneath Dilumudo's feet, and the ground beneath him exploded inexplicably.

Shrapnel from alchemical bombs scattered, consuming Dilumudo in the blaze.

Su Xiao shielded his face with his left hand, clad in a metal bracer, to prevent stone fragments from hitting his eyes.

Su Xiao executed several more slashes into the flames as the fiery explosion subsided. A faint blue sword aura detached from the Dragon Slayer Flash's edge and flew into the fire.

Ding, ding, ding...

The sword aura shattered utterly, and amidst the burns, Dilumudo, his leg injured and his flesh torn, emerged from the flames.

As soon as he broke free from the inferno, Dilumudo locked eyes with Su Xiao.

"Oh no!"

Dilumudo thrust the red rose in his hand forward. Su Xiao voluntarily met the thrust with the long red spear.

Clang.

The Counterattack Shield blocked the Red Rose of Exorcism. The sensation from the long spear puzzled Dilumudo. To him, the Counterattack Shield was clearly an energy body. Why could an energy body block the Red Rose of Exorcism?

The answer lay in the disparity between the energy levels of the Blue Steel Shadow and the Red Rose of Exorcism. The long red spear could certainly exorcise evil, but it couldn't ignore energy levels.

If the magical energy level of the Holy Grail world was a 3, then the Blue Steel Shadow energy level was at least ten or more. Furthermore, this energy level would increase as the Blue Steel Shadow's skill level improved.

Just as the Red Rose of Exorcism was blocked, Dilumudo knew he was done for. He couldn't afford any mistakes when clashing with his opponent. Otherwise, the price would be steep.

His suspicion was correct. Su Xiao struck with his long knife when the Red Rose of Exorcism was blocked.

Almost instantly, the blade cleaved through, blood spraying profusely. The speed of the strike, combined with the sharpness of the Dragon Slayer Flash, left Dilumudo with hardly any sensation.

Two seconds later, a searing pain shot through Dilumudo's left shoulder. He turned to look, realising his left arm was now missing. Blood gushed from the severed limb, a faint blue energy visible on the wound's surface.

With a snap, the entire arm fell to the ground.

Blood dripped onto Dilumudo's face, tracing a path down his chin. He couldn't help but chuckle bitterly.

What might your name be? I surely can't lose to an unknown underling."

Upon hearing Dilumudo's question, Su Xiao remained silent. He never wasted words during battle. Temporarily ignoring Dilumudo, Su Xiao picked up the severed arm from the ground. A pale blue vapour emanated from his left hand, enveloping the arm.

Su Xiao held his knife in his right hand, and the pale blue vapour rose from his left, not unlike a magician.

Su Xiao activated the Devouring Core, attempting to absorb Dilumudo's severed arm. In theory, Heroic Spirits were composed of energy and manifestation, not flesh and blood. This made them ideal for the advanced biological energy Devouring Core required.

The pale blue vapour enveloped Dilumudo's severed arm, and its bloodstains began to rise. The arm began to undergo energy transformation.

After a moment, Su Xiao held a mass of golden energy in his hand—the advanced-level energy that composed Heroic Spirits.

The energy of the Heroic Spirit entered Su Xiao's palm. He didn't absorb it directly; he needed to convert it.

The Heroic Spirit energy first entered the Devouring Core, where it underwent transformation, refinement, and filtration, ultimately becoming a colourless energy.

When the colourless energy emerged from the Devouring Core, the Blue Steel Shadow energy within Su Xiao surged towards it as if drawn to an irresistible delicacy. In moments, the Blue Steel Shadow energy consumed the colourless energy entirely.

Su Xiao immediately sensed his Blue Steel Shadow energy growing stronger. Although it hadn't reached a level of advancement, his Blue Steel Shadow ability was undeniably enhanced.

"Compared to Tailed Beast energy, although Heroic Spirit energy is scarce, it's purer."

A flash of blue flickered in Su Xiao's eyes. The Devouring Core was formidable, but using its power could easily lead to mental confusion. It required unwavering determination.

"After a dozen seconds, the blue light in Su Xiao's eyes disappeared. When he looked at Di Loomuduo again, Di Loomuduo instinctively took a step back.

Su Xiao didn't immediately engage in battle with Di Loomuduo. He was waiting to see if there would be a backlash from the Great Holy Grail after devouring the heroic spirit energy in reverse order.

This was entirely Su Xiao's excessive concern. The Great Holy Grail had not yet appeared; even if it were powerful, he couldn't do anything to it.

"It seems there's no problem."

Blood dripped onto the Dragon-Slaying Flash. Su Xiao approached Di Loomuduo step by step. Even though Di Loomuduo was a heroic spirit, his severed arm couldn't regenerate. Whether it was his inherent recovery ability or his Master Kenneth's healing magic, it didn't matter.

Supreme Edge's Effect 2: Wanren Sect (Passive), Sharpness +10. When slashing, it causes a dismemberment effect on the enemy. The enemy cannot recover severed limbs through any abilities below the fourth rank, including surgery, potions, skills, and bloodline abilities.

#### Chapter 703: Loyal Gunner

"The situation on the battlefield is somewhat strange. Initially, it was a standoff between three parties, but after a clash between two sides, the Lancer faction surprisingly showed a trend of defeat.

Ding~

The sound of clashing metal and iron echoed from afar. Mars was particularly prominent in the night sky. Su Xiao and Dilmundo were locked in combat, and Dilmundo, who had already lost an arm, retreated repeatedly. It wouldn't be long before he would be defeated.

The counterattack shield once again blocked Dilmundo's thrust. Su Xiao swiftly swung a blade, leaving a deep bone-deep wound on Dilmundo's right arm.

...

Dilmundo's Master, Kenneth, observed the battle from a dilapidated building in the distance. His expression was bleak. If Dilmundo were to die in battle, he would also lose the qualification to continue participating in the Holy Grail War.

"Why... why is there such a huge difference in strength? Dilmundo, this waste... sigh~ there's no other choice; I can only temporarily retreat."

Kenneth raised his arm, preparing to use his Command Spells to save Dilmundo. If he issued an order now, commanding Dilmundo to appear by his side, even if Dilmundo didn't have spatial abilities, under the effect of the Holy Grail and the Command Spells, he would still appear by Kenneth's side.

This kind of forced command had many limitations. For instance, if he ordered Dilmundo to become stronger, it would be ineffective and a waste of a Command Spell. Each Master only had three Command Spells, which were the only means of controlling Servants.

"Dilmundo, I command you with a Command Spell to appear..."

Kenneth's Command Spell on the back of his hand flickered with a red light. Just as he was about to issue the order, footsteps could be heard coming from downstairs.

Kenneth's face changed drastically; his position had been exposed. Other Servants or Masters were approaching.

"I command you with a Command Spell to appear by my side immediately."

One of Kenneth's Command Spells shattered, and Dilmundo appeared beside him out of thin air.

With a thud, Dilmundo fell to the ground. He had over a dozen cuts on his body, and the marks from the lance of the Red Rose of Exorcism could faintly be seen, illustrating how sharp the Zanryuu Flash was.

As Dilmundo appeared, he vomited a mouthful of blood. Kenneth immediately used healing magic to treat Dilmundo, but a violent energy raged within Dilmundo's body, significantly reducing the effectiveness of the healing magic.

"Retreat."

Kenneth urgently wanted to leave this place now. With Dilmundo heavily injured and two other Servants present, staying here would be seeking death.

However, Kenneth's decisions weren't the only factor at play. Even if he wanted to leave, he needed to ask Emiya Kiritsugu downstairs for permission. The Mage Killer had quietly infiltrated the ruined building.

Dilmundo stood up from the ground, wiping the blood from his mouth. Just as he stood up, a figure charged up the ruined building and blocked the staircase.

"Emiya Kiritsugu."

Kenneth had thoroughly investigated Emiya Kiritsugu's information, so he recognised his identity as soon as he appeared.

"How's the injury?"

Kenneth looked at Dilmundo.

"I'm fine. At least protecting the Master and retreating isn't a problem."

As Dilmundo stood up, the motion caused his wounds to bleed again, and he began coughing up blood.

"You..."

Kenneth was momentarily speechless. He understood Dilmundo's intention. Dilmundo was trying to cover their retreat. This way, Dilmundo would likely die in the process.

"Master, I won't be able to hold on much longer. The Berserker-class Servant's nature is contrary to that of the Master. Only those with Command Spells possess the true power of Berserker. Perhaps due to the amplification effect of Mad Enhancement, that guy is a true monster. Moreover, his ability counters my Noble Phantasm. I'm no match for him. Hurry, Master."

Dilmundo stood before Kenneth, his gaze fixed on Emiya Kiritsugu at the staircase.

"A mere Servant won't be able to command me."

Kenneth raised his arm.

"I employ the power of the Command Spell. Dilmundo, heal your injuries."

A blood-red light flickered, and another Command Spell on Kenneth's hand disappeared, along with a considerable amount of his magical energy. This Command Spell forcefully treated Dilmundo's injuries with his magical energy.

The wounds on Dilmundo's body rapidly healed, but his severed arm couldn't be restored. It seemed that specific rules suppressed the power of the Command Spell.



"I employ the power of the Command Spell. Dilmundo, restore your lost arm."

Kenneth used up his last Command Spell, and the muscles around Dilmundo's severed arm began to move. The arm was slowly regrowing at a languid pace.

Just as Dilmundo's arm was halfway regenerated, a golden light emanated from the wound where his arm had been severed. It was as if he was wearing a golden armlet.

Dilmundo's newly regenerated arm shattered with a crack, and the golden armlet acted like a seal, suppressing the regeneration and recovery of the arm.

While Dilmundo couldn't restore his severed arm, his injuries had been healed, and Emiya Kiritsugu, who had been blocking the staircase, had disappeared. He seemed unwilling to confront a partially recovered Dilmundo head-on.

"Retreat."

Sweat covered Kenneth's face as his magical energy had been overextended.

"I'm sorry, Master. I still can't retreat with you."

Dilmundo knelt on one knee, bowing his head and performing a knight's salute to Kenneth.

"Don't think that I can't..."

"That 'monster' is coming."

Dilmundo took a deep breath, turning his head to look at the staircase of the ruined building. That was where Emiya Kiritsugu had stood before, but now, Su Xiao was standing there.

"Damn it."

Kenneth stared at Dilmundo for a while, then sighed.

"Dilmundo, you are a commendable knight."

After saying that, Kenneth turned and walked deeper into the ruined building. He was retreating; he didn't intend to live or die with Dilmundo.

"Being recognised by the Master, I, Dilmundo, have no regrets even if I die."

Dilmundo stood up, waving the Broken Red Rose in his one remaining arm.

"Come at me. Even if your abilities counter mine, you won't leave this place unscathed today."

Facing the determined Dilmundo, Su Xiao's emotions remained steady. First of all, Dilmundo wasn't summoned at his 'full strength'; his identity as a lancer greatly limited his abilities.

In this Holy Grail War, several Heroic Spirits were difficult to deal with, and some even had the ability to kill Su Xiao, but Dilmundo was definitely not one of them.

Di Lu Mu Duo's Master wasn't a top-tier magus and combined with his weak Heroic Spirit attributes, limited abilities, and Noble Phantasms, and his actual combat strength wasn't very high.

Moreover, the Counterforce Shield countered Dilmundo's Broken Red Rose, so he was no match for Su Xiao, which was quite reasonable.

If Su Xiao were to face Gilgamesh, Iskandar (King of Conquerors), and others, the outcome would be uncertain.

As for the Saber-class King of Knights, Saber, in close combat, several of her attributes were ranked at A. She could hold her own against Su Xiao and had a Noble Phantasm ranked at A++, a single strike of which could threaten Su Xiao.

The strength of Heroic Spirits wasn't fixed; it depended on the strength of their Master. A powerful Master could enhance a Heroic Spirit's attributes.

Currently, Emiya Kiritsugu serves as Saber's Master, resulting in Saber having A-ranked endurance, agility, magical energy, and an A++ Noble Phantasm.

Su Xiao and Dilmundo charged at each other inside the ruined building simultaneously, leaving behind a footprint with bloodstains. Su Xiao had been pierced by Dilmundo's lance earlier, but it had missed any vital areas.

Five minutes later, Di Lu Mu Duo leaned against a cement pillar while a faint blue smoke wafted around Su Xiao's hand as he approached Dilmundo.

"Why can't the Red Rose pierce that shield?"

Blood dripped from Dilmundo's mouth as he spoke. His arms had been severed, and he had wounds of varying depths all over his body. If he weren't leaning against the pillar, he would have collapsed.

"Who knows."

Su Xiao's hand, wreathed in a faint blue smoke, reached towards Dilmundo's face.

"Devourer of Spirits, indeed, you're a monster..."

The faint blue smoke gradually enveloped Dilmundo, and a smile appeared on his lips. He had successfully covered his Master's retreat and engaged in a satisfying battle against a formidable opponent. Even though he disapproved of Su Xiao's methods, he admired Su Xiao's straightforward and honourable fighting style.

"At least let me know who defeated me."

As the faint blue smoke fully enveloped Dilmundo, he said these words.

[You have slain Dilmundo (Heroic Spirit).]

[Dilmundo is one of the seven Heroic Spirits participating in the current Holy Grail War. He has obtained 10.5% of the World Origin. Currently, he has accumulated 15.7% of the World Origin.]

[Your talent 'Spirit Devourer' is triggered, permanently increasing your magical energy by 15 points. You now have 2148 points of magical energy.]

[You obtain the Heroic Spirit Pouch - Dark Purple (Heroic Spirit Pouch: Grants a random skill or Noble Phantasm of this Heroic Spirit).]

Chapter 704: Awakening of the Shadow King?

The pale blue smoke wrapped around Di Lu Mu Duo, and at this moment, Di Lu Mu Duo had begun to become energy.

Di Lu Mu Duo had turned into a ball of golden energy in just a few seconds. This ball of Heroic Spirit energy swam in Su Xiao's palm while Di Lu Mu Duo's soul drifted away.

"Less substantial than imagined."

Due to the consumption during the battle earlier, the Heroic Spirit energy Su Xiao obtained wasn't much. Although it wasn't much, it was still much more abundant than a single arm's energy.

The golden Heroic Spirit energy entered Su Xiao's palm and, using his arm as a channel, entered the Core of Devouring near his heart.

The precisely constructed Core of Devouring immediately started running, beginning to purify and transform this Heroic Spirit energy into a colourless energy.

When the first wisp of colourless energy drifted out of the Core of Devouring, the Azure Steel Shadow energy within Su Xiao's body had become extremely active, surging up instantly and absorbing all of that colourless energy.

As the Heroic Spirit energy within the Core of Devouring decreased, more and more colourless energy drifted out. Several minutes later, all the Heroic Spirit energy had been transformed.

Su Xiao stood in place, with a faint blue light flashing in his eyes, and the blue smoke that had been floating around his arm disappeared.

"Phew~"

Su Xiao exhaled deeply. Each time he absorbed energy from higher-level creatures, it tested his mental strength.

He turned his head to look outside the ruined building. Because he had just absorbed Heroic Spirit energy, he was now susceptible to this kind of energy.

"Have they gone far? Compared to Di Lu Mu Duo, your energy is so rich that it makes one drool."

The direction Su Xiao was looking at was where Saber and the others had strategically retreated to.

In the distance, Saber, dressed in a black suit, suddenly stopped in his tracks and instinctively turned his head towards a specific direction.

"What's wrong, Saber?"

Alice Phil, Emiya Kiritsugu's wife, looked at Saber in confusion. She was a beautiful white-haired woman.

Alice Phil's identity was not simple. She wasn't human but an artificial human created by the "Einzbern family." More importantly, she was the vessel prepared by the "Einzenbern family" for the arrival of the Holy Grail.

As the Holy Grail War continued, Alice Phil became increasingly weakened whenever a Heroic Spirit fell. The weaker she became, the closer the Holy Grail's arrival came.

Tragedy was destined from her birth; this was the life of the beautiful woman Alice Phil.

Alice Phil wasn't too weak at the moment; after all, only two Heroic Spirits had fallen (Di Lu Mu Duo + Lancelot).

Hearing Alice Phil's question, Saber shook his head.

"Nothing, just a vague sense of foreboding. The combination of that Heroic Spirit and the Master is too strange, as if..."

"As if their roles were swapped."

Emiya Kiritsugu picked up where Saber left off, also noticing the oddity.

"That's right, roles swapped!"

Saber agreed wholeheartedly.

"The Command Spells on that 'Master's' hand... they're drawn on."

Emiya Kiritsugu's words left Saber and the others stunned.

"Drawn on?"

Saber was surprised and clearly found it difficult to accept such a method.

"Yes, drawn on. Although no Master in previous Holy Grail Wars has done this, it's not a bad idea."

"What about us..."

Alice Phil raised her fair hand, seemingly considering drawing a Command Spell on her hand as well.

"No."

Emiya Kiritsugu decisively rejected the idea.

"While drawing a Command Spell on your hand can deceive enemies from a distance, it requires corresponding combat strength and various conditions. You can't do it, but Saber can consider it."

Hearing Emiya Kiritsugu's words, Saber fell silent. Evidently, she didn't want to draw a Command Spell on her hand to deceive others. Her knightly character of 'honesty' wouldn't allow her to do so.

The group fell silent. After a while, Emiya Kiritsugu suddenly spoke.

"Saber, how much chance do you have if you were to face that Heroic Spirit?"

"Sixty per cent... no, at most fifty per cent. I have the upper hand with Noble Phantasms, and I can deal with that Heroic Spirit's swordsmanship, but the blue smoke drifting around them, that smoke seems to be able to... devour me!"

Saber's swordsmanship was not weak, but it was somewhat lacking compared to Su Xiao's swordsmanship. However, Saber possessed the A-rank ability "Instinct," which allowed her to foresee the future quickly. For example, she could anticipate the angle of Su Xiao's strikes in advance.

"I see. In that case, the best strategy is to avoid their strengths."

Emiya Kiritsugu began pondering the following strategy. He was currently retreating to allow Su Xiao to eliminate several Heroic Spirits, thereby reducing the competition.

Unfortunately, Su Xiao wouldn't reappear in Fuyuki City in the short term.

...

Inside the ruined building, Su Xiao sat cross-legged on the ground, faintly hearing the roaring of Yang Ye from the empty lot downstairs.

The Azure Steel Shadow energy within his body gradually stabilised. Su Xiao opened his eyes, and the notification from the Reincarnation Paradise appeared.

[Due to the converted energy absorbed from the Devouring Core, the level of Azure Steel Shadow has increased.]

[Azure Steel Shadow has been raised to LV.27.]

[Azure Steel Shadow has been raised to LV.28.]

Azure Steel Shadow had increased by two levels, or more accurately, by one and a half levels. This skill would gradually improve with Su Xiao's continuous use of the Azure Steel Shadow ability.

Raising a Heroic Spirit's level by about one and a half levels was far less than what a Tailed Beast could achieve. After all, the energy bases of the two were vastly different.

The combat power of Heroic Spirits was different from Tailed Beasts. Moreover, the power systems of the Naruto world and the Holy Grail world were also different.

Compared to chakra, the magical energy of the Holy Grail world was lower by several orders of magnitude, not in terms of power, but in terms of various aspects, such as the functionality and nature of energy.

"Electric Arc" flickered at Su Xiao's fingertips. The manifested Azure Steel Shadow energy resembled lightning, but the nature of the two was different.

Although he had only raised it by two levels, Su Xiao felt that the density of the Azure Steel Shadow energy had increased significantly. He opened the skill list to check the detailed information on the upgraded Azure Steel Shadow skill.

[Azure Steel Shadow: LV.28 (Active Skill)]

Usage Conditions: After activating (Azure Steel Shadow), the Devourer consumes 66 mana per minute (increases mana consumption by 4 points), automatically deactivating when mana drops below 1%.

Skill Effects: After activating (Azure Steel Shadow), each melee attack will burn the enemy's mana by 140 points (increases by 10 points), and deal true damage equal to the burned mana value + 10% of the enemy's consumed mana (increases by 1%). The enemy will suffer intense pain after experiencing mana burn.

Lv.20 Additional Ability

Master of the Shadows: Can highly solidify the Azure Steel Shadow energy into three forms.

Form One, Demon Hunter: This is the basic form of Azure Steel Shadow, which burns the enemy's mana and inflicts actual damage.

Form Two, Proud Song: This defensive form can create an energy shield of any shape to defend against enemy attacks. The strength of the energy shield is related to the mana consumed, with a maximum single consumption limit of 400 points.

Form Three, Azure Shadow King (Awakened by 2%).

...

All attributes of the Azure Steel Shadow skill have been upgraded. When he saw the description at the bottom, he suddenly noticed that the 'Azure Shadow King' ability had awakened by 2%.

This left Su Xiao both surprised and puzzled. He hadn't done anything, so could it be because he had raised the level of Azure Steel Shadow?

Perhaps not for this reason. Previously, when he was in the Naruto world, despite raising Azure Steel Shadow from LV.20 to LV.26, there had been no sign of the 'Azure Shadow King' awakening.

Could it be a natural awakening? This possibility was also relatively low.

Su Xiao was feeling a bit overwhelmed. Without a doubt, the 'Azure Shadow King' ability was one of the significant moves of the Shadow of Annihilation, but now he couldn't use it, and the method of awakening was unclear.

Chapter 705: Strong Luck

The ruined building was deathly silent. Su Xiao confirmed that no other Heroic Spirits were around and reunited with Bubu Wang.

In their original formation, Bubu Wang followed Su Xiao, while Matou Sakura followed Bubu Wang, and Matou Zouken followed Matou Sakura.

The group gradually moved away from the battlefield, and since Matou Zouken was too conspicuous, Su Xiao could only search for an uninhabited residence on the outskirts of Fuyuki City.

Half an hour later, inside an abandoned warehouse.

A faint smell of dust permeated the warehouse, but Su Xiao didn't mind. He was waiting for the previous battle's aftermath to subside.

Undoubtedly, the previous battle would attract the attention of other Heroic Spirits or Masters. The Ryuudou Temple was nearby, so it was safest to wait a few hours before searching for it.

With some time on his hands, Su Xiao took out the Heroic Spirit Casket dropped by Di Lu Mu Duo. This item was similar to a treasure chest but could only yield one item or skill.

To open this "treasure chest," Su Xiao naturally used the Destiny Redemption Lighter. Destiny Redemption had been upgraded, and due to its compatibility with the Golden Wax, it had naturally ascended in quality, going from blue to purple. And there was a surprise as well.

He took out the Destiny Redemption Lighter. The all-metal lighter had become even more exquisite.

Destiny Redemption +5 (Due to quality upgrade, enhancement level -2)

Origin: Reincarnation Paradise

Quality: Purple

Category: Jewelry (Extremely Rare)

Durability: 60/60 (Increased by 4 points)

Equipment Requirement: Luck attribute 8 points or below (Increased by 3 points)

Equipment Effect 1: Seizing Fortune (Passive), Seize the fortune of any creature defeated or killed, storing the fortune in "Destiny Redemption."

Note: Fortune has been stored 100%.

Equipment Effect 2: Power of Fortune (Active), release the stored fortune within "Destiny Redemption," the holder's Luck attribute +4 (increased by 1 point), effect lasts for 3 minutes (increased by 1 minute duration). If there is no stored fortune in "Destiny Redemption," 500 Paradise Coins will be paid instead of fortune, achieving the same usage effect (-300 Paradise Coin consumption).

Note: Power of Fortune (Active) has a cooldown of 4 natural days (reduced by one natural day).

Equipment Effect 3: Strong Luck (Passive), Luck attribute +1.

Rating: 150+ (Purple equipment rating of 70 is 150 points)

Introduction: A product of combining destiny and luck, the smile of the goddess of luck.

Price: 46,000 Paradise Coins.

...

When Su Xiao first entered the Holy Grail world, he had already checked the attributes of Destiny Redemption. Looking at it again now, he still felt a racing heart.

Destiny Redemption had gained a new "Strong Luck" attribute. The skill effect was simple: Luck attribute +1!

This was the reason why Su Xiao's Heroic Spirit luck attribute was E- to C+. Don't underestimate this C+ attribute; it meant that Su Xiao was luckier than the average person. If his original luck attribute was considered, he would have been E- to D, and the upper limit of his luck attribute might have been D+. Achieving a C+ was currently an accomplishment.

As for why his luck varied so dramatically, Su Xiao wasn't sure. Could it be due to his tumultuous fate?

It made sense. When Su Xiao was young, his biological parents tragically died, and a pair of Contractor husband and wife later adopted him.

According to Su Xiao's estimation, the Contractor couple who raised him were likely compelling, conservatively estimated to be above Rank 3. He wasn't sure how strong they were specifically, but even such adoptive parents were ultimately 'overcome' by him. This demonstrated the power of an E-luck attribute.

If his 'innocent' adoptive parents knew about Su Xiao's luck attribute, they probably wouldn't have chosen to adopt him.

Su Xiao shook his head. Although his Contractor's adoptive parents used him to conceal their identities, he didn't harbour much resentment. Regardless of the motives, nurturing was an act of kindness, and he had already avenged the death of his adoptive parents. Dwelling on these matters now was meaningless; some things didn't have clear right or wrong.

Su Xiao's current goal was to survive. Indeed, to survive. In this harsh Reincarnation Paradise, only by surviving could he make life worthwhile.

Not only did he need to survive, he also needed to grow more robust continually. Not getting stronger meant chronic death, bullying, lack of freedom, and feeling stifled.

Therefore, thinking about ideals and the future at this moment was empty talk. Becoming stronger was the top priority in a place like the Reincarnation Paradise. Other matters could only be addressed when he had grown to a certain extent.

Taking a drag of his cigarette, Su Xiao lit it with Destiny Redemption. His base luck attribute was 2 points, and with the addition of the "God of Gamblers" state's 4 points, his luck attribute reached an astonishing 6 points.

This was a significant concept. Ada (the God of Gamblers' sister), who had fought Su Xiao in the Survival Trial, had a luck attribute of 8. Once luck attributes exceeded 5 points, they transformed into actual combat power.

With the enhanced God of Gamblers states active, Su Xiao felt as if the entire world had turned in his favour.

Picking up the Heroic Spirit Casket, Su Xiao hesitated momentarily before opening it.

[You have opened the Heroic Spirit Casket·Dark Purple.]

[Please start the random draw.]

A spinning wheel appeared in front of Su Xiao, with a black pointer above it. The wheel was divided into several sections, each with a different colour: purple, dark purple, light gold, and the same colour as the equipment quality. Higher-grade sections occupied less space on the wheel.

For instance, the "Basic Footwork LV.10 Scroll" had a pattern in the purple section, which occupied one-third of the entire wheel.

There were also a few sections of dark purple, with patterns such as "Crimson Rose of Exorcism" and "Golden Rose of Obliteration."

The most minor section was light gold, with only two blocks. The patterns on them were "Insight (True)" and "Seal Scroll·Love's Black Mole."

Su Xiao's gaze locked onto "Insight (True)." He was already familiar with the Insight ability, and this "Insight (True)" was likely an enhanced or upgraded version.

When he fought Di Lu Mu Duo earlier, Su Xiao noticed that even though the Counter Shield countered Di Lu Mu Duo, there was a significant difference in their strength, as well as Di Lu Mu



Duo's proficiency with the spear being inferior to Su Xiao's swordsmanship, it still wasn't easy to strike him. This was likely due to the Insight.

At the moment when the enhanced God of Gamblers state was active, Su Xiao was brimming with confidence. He rotated the wheel with his consciousness, and the wheel began to spin rapidly.

Su Xiao's gaze remained fixed on the area for Insight (True), which was far from the pointer. The power of the E-luck attribute's lower limit was beyond doubt.

Chapter 706: Around Ryuudou Temple

A scroll appeared in Su Xiao's hand, shimmering with a faint golden light.

[Seal Scroll·Love's Black Mole]

Quality: Light Gold

Type: Seal Scroll (Contains the Seal of Love's Black Mole).

Effect: After using this scroll, the "Love's Black Mole" will appear at the current location, and the sealed scroll will be consumed.

Love's Black Mole (Passive Skill): After use, the Luck attribute will be permanently fixed between -1 and 1 point. When interacting with females, Charm attribute +20 points, and an added "Mind Hunt" effect will apply. This effect subjects females to a Will attribute judgment. If the female fails the Will judgment, she will madly fall in love with you.

Note: If the hunt fails, interactions with females will be judged based on the +20 Charm attribute effect.

Rating: 305 points.

Introduction: An extremely precious seal scroll can be opened.

...

Su Xiao looked at the scroll in his hand, feeling conflicted. This skill seemed quite terrible, as it would decrease his Luck attribute and only provide a Charm boost when interacting with females.

In certain derivative worlds with high-ranking yet weak-willed females, the Mind Hunt ability could be potent. For instance, in the Hunter world, Su Xiao previously participated in controlling a female executive within the V5 Department using the Mind Hunt ability could bring remarkable benefits.

However, the fact that it decreased his Luck attribute was something Su Xiao strongly resisted. His luck was already unpredictable, and after investing heavily to enhance his Destiny Redemption, he had managed to raise his Luck attribute to 2 points. Fixing his Luck attribute permanently between -1 and 1 points was unacceptable. It would mean he couldn't use the "God of Gamblers" state and that his Luck attribute would practically not increase anymore.

Increasing the Luck attribute was a difficult task in the Reincarnation Paradise, and any ability or equipment that decreased it was generally considered useless. While equipment could be stored away when not in use, skills, especially passive ones, were impossible to accept.

Frustrated, Su Xiao was about to discard the scroll when he unintentionally read the introduction. It described the scroll as "an extremely precious seal scroll that can be opened."

Su Xiao's interest was piqued. This description seemed odd. It should have described the "Love's Black Mole," but it talked about the scroll itself.

Upon closer examination, Su Xiao realised that the light gold quality assigned to the scroll was not for "Love's Black Mole" but for the scroll itself. In contrast to the "Skill Scroll" label on previously acquired scrolls, this one was labelled "Seal Scroll." "Love's Black Mole" was merely a sealed ability within the scroll.

Su Xiao tried various methods to open the seal in the centre of the scroll, but none worked. After multiple experiments, he found that injecting mana was the way to open the scroll.

After infusing more than 200 mana points, the seal scroll emitted a light.

[Open the seal scroll: Yes/No. If you open this scroll, the sealed ability "Love's Black Mole·Purple" will dissipate.]

"Open."

The black mole on the seal scroll gradually disappeared, and its attributes changed.

[Seal Scroll·None]

Quality: Light Gold

Type: Seal Scroll (No sealed ability).

Effect: Can seal one ability, which can be stolen from a corpse within 10 minutes of death. The enemy must be a living being (energy-based beings like Heroic Spirits cannot have their abilities stolen), and the corpse must be more than 60% intact.

Note: The highest level of sealed ability is dark purple grade.

Note: Sealing an ability requires 800 mana points + Soul Crystal (Medium) ×3 + 10,000 Paradise Coins.

Rating: 280 points.

Introduction: Extremely precious seal scroll, already opened.

...

Su Xiao no longer wanted to discard the scroll. It provided an opportunity to take enemy skills freely. By killing an enemy in battle, he could use the scroll to steal their abilities from their corpse.

Despite the limitations and the fact that the scroll would become damaged and ineffective after studying the sealed ability, its value was still considerable. Su Xiao decided to be more careful when examining item descriptions in the future. He nearly missed this light gold quality scroll, a lesson that appearances could be deceiving.

Satisfied, Su Xiao put away the scroll. Stealing skills from enemies required caution, as the cost was not insignificant.

After putting away the scroll, Su Xiao turned his attention to Matou Sakura. Although they hadn't spent much time together, he noticed that the young girl's mental state had changed considerably. She wasn't as innocent as before and had transitioned from a doll-like state to a more mature demeanour. Bobowang's charm attribute was undeniably formidable.

As Su Xiao gazed at her, Matou Sakura appeared visibly afraid and shrank timidly beside Bobowang.

"Do... do you want to drink? I'll give it to you, no bugs."

Once again, Matou Sakura handed over a yoghurt with three empty bottles already by her feet.

"No, thanks."

Su Xiao removed a set of unique tarot cards from his storage space. This item was used to test one's psychological state. He had studied psychology for a while, although he wasn't an expert.

Laying out a few unique tarot cards in front of Matou Sakura, the cards were: Death, Witch, Cat, Horse, and Chocolate.

"Choose one."

Holding the straw in her mouth, Matou Sakura decisively pointed to the Cat card.

Su Xiao put away the tarot cards after a few selections. Although he couldn't be sure if his judgment was accurate, he made a rough assessment of Matou Sakura's psychological state. She is in the early stages of recovering from "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." She was inclined to follow others' orders, displaying a lack of self-awareness.

With this understanding, Su Xiao put away the tarot cards. Matou Sakura's mental state was decent now, and she wouldn't resist joining him. If Matou Zouken were to die, Matou Sakura could take his place and allow Su Xiao to continue his stay in this derivative world.

However, Matou Zouken had exceptional survivability. Despite being shot by Di Lu Mu Duo in the chest, his injuries had primarily healed in just a couple of hours.

After spending a few hours in the abandoned warehouse, Su Xiao left the warehouse at exactly midnight with Bobowang. Matou Zouken and Matou Sakura followed closely behind.

Making their way to the outskirts of Fuyuki City, which was the original location of Ryuudou Temple, Su Xiao proceeded with great caution. The Eye of the Apostle hovered in the sky, scanning the area within half a kilometre for any signs of pursuit.

Confirming that no one was tailing them and after circling around the outskirts for a while, Su Xiao arrived at the original location of Ryuudou Temple. Before his eyes lay a desolate land, his second time here.

As he arrived, Su Xiao's upper body suddenly heated up. It was the Goat Demon Skin.

Taking out the Goat Demon Skin, the palm-sized skin levitated and began to burn on its own.

As the Goat Demon Skin burned, the surrounding air ignited with it. But upon closer inspection, it wasn't the air that was burning, but rather a layer of barrier.

As the unknown barrier burned away to create a large hole, the Goat Demon Skin turned to ashes, and the barrier started to mend itself slowly.

After hesitating momentarily, Su Xiao rushed into the barrier's gap. Following him was Bobowang, whose loyalty was so strong that it would follow him even if he jumped into a volcano.

Boom~

A loud rumble echoed, and Su Xiao felt like he entered a different dimension. Looking around, he found himself in a field of waist-high grass, with a faint view of a nearby temple—Ryuudou Temple.

[Warning: Hunter has entered the outer perimeter of Ryuudou Temple!]

[Warning: Hunter has entered the outer perimeter of Ryuudou Temple!]

[Warning: Hunter has entered the outer perimeter of Ryuudou Temple!]

Three warnings appeared, coloured dark red, outlined by what seemed like blood. It gave an eerie feeling.

#### Chapter 707: The Monk Will Give You a Ride

As the blood-red hints gradually faded away, Su Xiao crouched in the waist-high wild grass while Bobowang lay on the ground. Behind them, Matou Sakura didn't need to crouch due to her short stature.

In this setup, Matou Zouken, who was emitting black smoke all over his body, stood out conspicuously. Su Xiao walked slowly towards him and kicked him down with one foot.

"Sakura, make him kneel."

Su Xiao looked at Matou Sakura. Among the team members, only Matou Sakura could control Matou Zouken.

"Kneel down?"

Matou Sakura tilted her head, and after a moment of hesitation, Matou Zouken, shrouded in black smoke, ultimately chose to kneel down.

Having reached the vicinity of Ryuudou Temple, Su Xiao had to be cautious. Even before finding the temple, he had sensed the malice emanating from it, especially after encountering the old priest. The feeling had become more prominent.

In the midst of the waist-high grass, Su Xiao lowered his body and looked towards Ryuudou Temple in the distance.

The temple was built on the top of a mountain, while Su Xiao was at the base. Due to the distance and the dim light, he could only vaguely see the temple's main gate.

Two square lanterns were hanging in front of the main gate. Typically, lanterns were white or red, but these two emitted a golden light, giving the temple a sense of sanctity.

Su Xiao had seen a detailed map of the temple. After entering through the main gate, a semi-enclosed courtyard resembled a traditional Chinese courtyard house. This was the Great Hall of Ryuudou Temple. Passing through the Great Hall and going deeper into the temple led to the

Dharma Hall, which was like the centre of the temple. Continuing further led to the Main Hall, equivalent to the temple's backyard.

Ryuudou Temple could be divided into three areas: Great Hall → Dharma Hall → Main Hall.

Despite its seemingly modest size, the temple actually covered an area the size of a football field, with dozens of buildings of various sizes. The three mentioned areas were just the main ones; smaller sections were not open to the public.

It wouldn't have become a local landmark if the temple wasn't substantial.

Su Xiao's goal was to enter the temple. The question was whether to do so openly or stealthily. It depended on the content of the second stage of his Talent Awakening Task.

Just as Su Xiao was preparing to approach the mountain where Ryuudou Temple was located, a prompt from the Reincarnation Paradise appeared.

[Prompt: The Hunter has entered the boundary of Ryuudou Temple. The first stage of the Talent Awakening Task has been completed.]

[The second stage of the Talent Awakening Task has been activated.]

[Talent Awakening Task (Second Stage): Soul Lamp]

Difficulty Level: Lv.21

Task Brief: Enter the deepest part of Ryuudou Temple, the Main Hall, and find the Soul Lamp inside.

Task Information: The Main Hall is located at the deepest part of Ryuudou Temple and is heavily guarded.

Task Deadline: 1 natural day

Task Reward: None

Task Penalty: Deduct one Talent Awakening opportunity; no more Talent Awakening tasks can be accepted in this world.

...

"Soul Lamp?"

Su Xiao wasn't sure what a Soul Lamp was. The task information didn't provide any visual aid, only text.

If it was about finding something, openly attacking the temple wouldn't be suitable. Sneaking in would be the way to go.

"Bobo, take the two of them and wait at the foot of the mountain. If enemies discover you, you can choose to sell one to save the other."

Bobowang made a light sound, conveying, "Master, understood. If there's danger, I'll sell Matou Zouken and Matou Sakura to protect her. I'll take her to you to form a Servant Contract."

"Alright, that's the plan."

Su Xiao removed the "Dragon-Slaying Flash" from his waist and stored it in his storage space. He adjusted his black windbreaker and, guided by the cover of darkness, moved toward Ryuudou Temple.

Navigating through the waist-high wild grass, Su Xiao's gaze occasionally turned towards the temple on the mountaintop. After a series of preparations, he had finally arrived here. But arriving wasn't the main point; he still needed to find a way to infiltrate the temple.

Swish~

A few pieces of grass were trampled, and a figure dashed out of the wild grass. Su Xiao had arrived at the mountain base where Ryuudou Temple was.

A staircase leading straight to the mountaintop appeared. It was designed for tourists to climb up to the temple. Usually, this would be no issue, but at this moment, Su Xiao wouldn't ascend this staircase.

Just as Su Xiao was about to detour around the staircase and use the cover of trees to climb the mountain from the side, a young monk in grey robes descended from the staircase.

The grey robe the young monk wore was somewhat tattered, with the most severe wear around the knee area. There were also traces of mud and grass stuck to it.

Su Xiao was about to step into the wild grass, but the young monk suddenly turned his head and looked at him.

Their eyes met. The young monk seemed to freeze momentarily, cold light flashing in his eyes. However, that cold light disappeared briefly, replaced by an expression of puzzlement, which then turned friendly.

"Traveler, it's dangerous in the wilderness at this hour. There are wild animals on this mountain that don't appear during the day but often come out to hunt at night."

The tone of the young monk was gentle, but what puzzled Su Xiao was the multitude of scars on his head.

While Su Xiao wasn't well-versed in identifying scars, there were at least a dozen scars near the young monk's forehead, densely packed. Not to mention the ones above his head. Roughly estimating, this 'monk' had dozens of scars on his head.

Moreover, these scars were crimson, faintly emitting light in the darkness. Although this 'monk' smiled mildly, Su Xiao felt that the smile could only be described as eerie.

"Traveler? Traveler?"

The young monk noticed that Su Xiao hadn't spoken and had descended the stairs.

"Seems like you're lost, traveller. Ryuudou Temple isn't open to the public at the moment. There's an internal ceremony taking place. I advise you to turn back. It will be open to the public in a few days."

As he spoke, the young monk had already descended the staircase. Normally, this wouldn't be alarming, but just a few seconds ago, the distance between the young monk and Su Xiao was at least several dozen meters.

"Ancestor of Ryuudou isn't here, right? He lives in Ryuudou Temple, doesn't he?"

Su Xiao spoke up. Upon hearing Su Xiao's question, the young monk nodded.

"It's true that Ancestor Ryuudou isn't here. He left Ryuudou Temple a month ago. Since you're Ancestor Ryuudou's friend, I'll escort you back to Fuyuki City."

At this point, the young monk had approached within ten meters of Su Xiao. However, Su Xiao was still getting closer.

"Thank you, but I know the way down the mountain. No need to trouble yourself."

Su Xiao turned around and was about to enter the wild grass. When he turned around, the corner of the young monk's mouth curled up.

Squelch.

A bone spur burst out from one of the scars on the young monk's head, with blood streaks visible on the bone spur.

"No, I must escort you to the Eternal Life Pool. The road back to Fuyuki City is too long. Let's go to the Eternal Life Pool."

Squelch, squelch, squelch...

Bone spurs continued to emerge from the scars on the young monk's head, and blood ran down his cheeks. This 'monk' was no monk at all. Even if he were a monster, he would turn and flee upon seeing his appearance. No, even monsters, when they saw this 'monk,' would likely be scared away.

Chapter 708: Resentful Monk

Su Xiao was facing away from the young monk at this time. The young monk stuck out his tongue and licked the blood that fell on his lips. After seeing the blood, the centre of his eyes flashed red.

No movement was seen from the young monk. He had disappeared on the spot, attacking Su Xiao like a shell from a barrel, very fast but silently.

With a pop, five sharp claws sprouted from the young monk's fingertips, like eagle claws.

These five sharp claws flashed with metallic light and grabbed directly at the back of Su Xiao's head. If these claws caught Su Xiao, it would be difficult to fight back.

The sharp claws struck silently, and the young monk grinned. He seemed to have seen the scene where he pulled the enemy's spine out alive.

Su Xiao turned his head slightly. Dragon Flash appeared in his hand, and a 50-point energy shield appeared behind him.

Click!

The five sharp claws directly pierced the energy shield. Although the energy shield was pierced, it was not broken.

Finding that the blow was ineffective, the young monk immediately realised that something was wrong. The thought of swallowing this human flesh and blood disappeared, and he immediately wanted to shout.

The energy shield disappeared, the sword's light suddenly appeared, and Su Xiao struck back with a sword.

The young monk immediately used his sharp claws to face the Dragon Flash, and he could keep up with Su Xiao's speed.

The blade struck the first claw, which was instantly cut off, followed by the second and third claws.

Ding.

Three sharp claws were chopped off, and the young monk's eyes widened in pain.

"Enter..."

Before the word "intruder" could be shouted out, Su Xiao turned around and punched the young monk on the chin with a powerful and heavy blow.

Su Xiao's knuckles, wrapped in metal arm guards, hit the young monk's chin. As the force advanced, the young monk's chin gradually became dislocated.

If you use X-rays, you will find that the teeth on the right side of the young monk's lower jaw fell out first, and then the entire jaw bone began to shift to the left.

boom!

Su Xiao punched the young monk so that he rolled his eyes. This was definitely not a reaction that normal humans would have.

With a plop, the young monk fell several meters away. His entire jaw deviated from the skull at a 90° angle, and his tongue was cut and dripping with blood due to the external force hitting his teeth.

"Woo~woo~"

The young monk let out several low growls of unknown meaning. After realising that he could not speak, he grabbed his chin and pulled it in the original direction.

Click, click...

After twisting several times in succession, the young monk's jaw was still soft and drooping, except for the blood gushing out of his mouth.

Taking this opportunity, Su Xiao used the apostle's eyes to detect the young monk's information.

[The intelligence attributes of both sides are being compared... The comparison is completed. Our intelligence is twice that of the enemy's, and we have obtained 100% of the enemy's information. ]

The information is as follows

Name: Resentful Monk (life assimilation rate 30%)

Category: Humanoid (intelligent)



Health: 94%

Mana: 300/300

Strength: 40

Agility: 42

Stamina: 55

Intelligence: 30

Charm: 3

Skill 1: Evil Faith (Passive LV.10): HP +200, Willpower +5.

Skill 2: Skeleton Extension (Passive LV.12), can partially expose bones, defence +8.

Skill 3: Life Assimilation (Active LV.18), which can increase the "Life Assimilation Degree" and restore HP by devouring the flesh and blood of creatures. When the "Life Assimilation Degree" reaches 100%, the Resentful Monk will evolve.

...

It can be seen from the information that the thing in front of me is not a monk but a humanoid creature called a resentful monk.

It can be seen from various attributes that this thing is not weak; more importantly, it can also evolve.

Not only that, but it would be fine if this thing was a creature like the little boss of Temple. According to the data, the other party does not have a front name like a boss; that is to say, this thing may be the "little boss" of the Temple.

Thinking of this, the corners of Su Xiao's eyes twitched. Although he had long thought that Liudong Temple was not easy to enter, it was not so perverted. If this 'little monster' appeared in other second-order derivative worlds, it would be a trim boss level.

The resentful monk cracked his broken jaw for a while, then gave up after finding that he couldn't recover it with brute force and slowly stood up.

With a pop, the pale bones broke out of the flesh of the resentful monk's arm.

Click, click, click...

A moment later, the resentful monk's arms were wrapped in pale bones, and the positions of his hands were sharp claws.

"Woo~"

A low growl of unknown meaning came from the resentful monk's throat. The drooping chin and tongue were getting in the way. He actually grabbed the chin and tongue with his claws and pulled hard.

Pfft.

Blood spurted out, and the resentful monk tore off his chin and tongue alive. That wasn't enough. He stuffed his chin and tongue into his throat and swallowed it with a grunt.

An astonishing thing happened. The monk's lost health value was quickly restored. After a few seconds, his health value was converted to 98%.

"this..."

Su Xiao has seen ghouls eat human flesh to restore health, and he has also seen artificial humans eat Philosopher's Stone to restore health, but he has never seen eating his own flesh and blood to restore health.

Although the world is full of wonders, the scene before me is too curious and terrifying.

Su Xiao looked in the direction of Liudong Temple. At this time, he was not close to the main entrance of Liudong Temple, so it was quiet in front of the temple.

If Su Xiao's guess is correct, after sneaking into Liudong Temple, there should be many such resentful monks, and stronger enemies should also exist, so it's not bad to test the opponent's strength now.

Su Xiao put Zhan Longshan before him, narrowing his eyes slightly.

With a whoosh, Su Xiao disappeared on the spot, and when he reappeared, he was already in front of the resentful monk.

Su Xiao rushed forward, stopped about one meter in front of the resentful monk, and slashed sideways with the long knife in his hand.

The resentful monk is not a soft persimmon. He blocked Su Xiao's slash with one hand and thrust the other hand into Su Xiao's chest, going straight to the heart.

Zhan Longshan's blade came into contact with the skeleton-wrapped arm of the resentful monk, and the flickering blade cut through the outer bone of the resentful monk's arm like a piece of paper.

The sword's momentum continued unabated, and after breaking through the exoskeleton, the Resentful Monk's muscles and internal skeleton could not stop the dragon-slaying flash.

Brush ~

An arm wrapped in an exoskeleton flew up. At the same time, Su Xiao turned sideways to avoid the claws of the resentful monk.

After the attack was over, Su Xiao and the resentful monk passed by each other. Su Xiao flicked the sword to kill the dragon, and the blood on the blade was thrown onto the grass.

The resentful monk behind Su Xiao stood there blankly, one hand cut off and the other in a forward-grabbing position.

A line of blood gradually infiltrated the grey cloth of the resentful monk. The bloodstains slanted across the entire torso, spreading from the shoulder on one side of the body to the waist on the other side. The upper body of the resentful monk began to slide sideways.

With a plop, the upper half of the resentful monk's body fell to the ground, and two seconds later, the lower half of his body also fell to the ground.

Cutting in two, clean and crisp, this is the sharpness of Dragon Slash now, and from the beginning to the end, the resentful monk did not even touch the corner of Su Xiao's clothes.

Although he kills the resentful monk with a single blow, Su Xiao's complexion is not very good because the resentful monk's abilities are not weak. If there are more than a dozen resentful monks simultaneously, Su Xiao can deal with them. If the number is hundreds, the result is hard to say.

[You killed the resentful monk]

[The resentful monk is an ordinary-level creature in Liudong Temple, who gets 0.2% of the source of the world. Because Liudong Temple is the hidden area of the derivative world, the reward is doubled, and he gets 0.4% of the source of the world. Now, he has obtained a total of 16.1% of the source of the world. ]

[Your talent "Soul Eater" is activated, permanently increasing the mana value by 10 points, and the current mana value is 2158 points. ]

[You gain ten merit points from the Holy Church. This merit can be exchanged for rewards at the old priest of the 'Church'. ]

Chapter 709: Convert

Su Xiao surveyed the body of the vengeful monk on the ground. No matter how he looked at it, he felt that this thing's 'style' differed from that of the Holy Grail world.

Not just this vengeful monk, but even the gate of the Durdin Monastery in the distance gave him a sense of incongruity. Could it be that the Durdin Monastery had been taken over by a group of 'monks'?

Su Xiao felt that this possibility was unlikely. The main forces in the Holy Grail world were the Church and the Mage Association. The likelihood of 'foreign forces' like 'monks' taking over the Durdin Monastery wasn't very high.

Thinking about this, Su Xiao suddenly realised that his thinking might have entered a misconception.

Firstly, this vengeful monk's fighting style wasn't that of a monk but more akin to a biological mutation style, like an exoskeleton bursting out of the body.

Moreover, when Su Xiao examined the information about the 'vengeful monk,' he noticed a piece of information: Life Assimilation Level of 30%. That was the key, rather than the identity of the vengeful monk.

With too little information at hand, the situation inside the Durdin Monastery could only be confirmed by infiltrating it.

Concealing the body of the vengeful monk on the ground, Su Xiao advanced towards the mountain through the trees beside the mountain path.

The surroundings were tranquil along the way. Ten minutes later, Su Xiao arrived near the main gate of the Durdin Monastery.

Entering through the main gate wasn't a wise choice, but upon reaching the vicinity of the main entrance, he realised that the two golden 'lanterns' he had seen earlier were not lanterns at all. He had been misled by the scene of the monastery, compounded by the dim light and the distance.

There were two door lamps in front of the Durdin Monastery gate, emitting a golden light due to their golden lampshades. The sense of sanctity was entirely an illusion.

At this moment, the Durdin Monastery gate was tightly closed, with no guards in front of it. Even so, Su Xiao didn't plan to get closer. He had a vague feeling that if he got closer now, he would be detected by the enemy. There was likely to be some kind of alarm mechanism or barrier near the gate.

Su Xiao's goal was to complete the talent awakening task. It was best to secretly infiltrate without alerting the enemy, but the likelihood of that was slim. He might have to fight his way in. Otherwise, the task wouldn't be this difficult.

Moreover, if he were to infiltrate secretly, no one was better at it than Bubu Wang. Unfortunately, a Level 21 difficulty task would likely involve combat with the enemy.

Su Xiao bypassed the front gate and began moving along the Durdin Monastery's perimeter wall. After walking a distance along the wall, he heard voices coming from within.

"Kill... kill me, I beg you..."

The voice was feeble, as if it could vanish in the next second.

"Kill you? That's not going to happen. You can't die until you enter the Pool of Eternity. Kekeke."

"Tender flesh and blood, I really hope..."

"Get your claws off; this human is the nourishment for the Pool of Eternity."

Argumentative voices came through. Su Xiao pressed his foot against the ground and clung to the outer side of the monastery wall, with only half of his head peeking over the wall.

After seeing the scene clearly, Su Xiao's pupils contracted, and he instinctively pulled his head back behind the wall.

The scene behind the wall was somewhat terrifying at the moment, not because Su Xiao was frightened by it, but because there were too many enemies.

Behind the wall was an open courtyard, and over a hundred people were in the courtyard, all shirtless and busy on the open ground.

From their demeanour and appearance, there were commoners, merchants, and perhaps other professions among these people. They had different appearances and varied physiques, but they had one common feature: their heads were covered in red 'scar rings,' just like the 'scar rings' on the vengeful monk from earlier.

If you looked closely, you'd find those weren't scar rings. Their scalps were often pierced from the inside, naturally forming these red scars, similar to the principle of piercing ears.

The situation inside the Durdin Monastery differed from what Su Xiao had anticipated. It wasn't a large group of monks. As deduced from the heavily worn fabric on his knees, the young monk he had encountered earlier was probably an ascetic monk.

How could a regularly prostrating, polite ascetic monk become a so-called vengeful monk?

After seeing the current situation clearly, Su Xiao knew what was happening. Not just the ascetic monk but also the over a hundred enemies on the open ground were probably transformed from ordinary people.

From their actions and gazes, they weren't losing their sanity or being controlled; they had already accepted their current appearance.

These shirtless people were busy on the open ground. Several large iron cages were placed on the courtyard's edge, containing dozens of ordinary people who looked fearful and were trembling slightly.

These ordinary people didn't shout or beg in vain. Some women tightly covered their mouths, silently weeping. This reaction only emerged after witnessing an extremely terrifying scene. They had lost the courage even to cry out loud.

In the centre of the courtyard was a magic circle. This magic circle was quite unique, not drawn with dye or blood but outlined with a white powder.

The Durdin Monastery had a lot of magical energy underground; this white powder could draw out the underground magic energy and form a magic circle.

The magic circle was circular, with a diameter of about five meters. Due to the abundant supply of magic energy, the magic process appeared very three-dimensional.

Su Xiao used the Apostle's Eye to check the information of a middle-aged shirtless man to confirm his earlier conjecture.

[Comparing both parties' intelligence attributes... Comparison complete, our intelligence is twice that of the enemy, obtaining 100% of the enemy's information.]

The information was as follows:

Name: Resentful Attendant (Life Assimilation Level 25%)

Category: Humanoid Creature (Intelligent Being)

Health: 100%

Mana: 300/300

Strength: 39

Agility: 43

Endurance: 53

Intelligence: 30

Charisma: 4

Skill 1: Evil Belief (Passive LV.10): +200 health, +5 willpower.

Skill 2: Bone Emission (Passive LV.10): Can emit bones locally, +7 defence.

Skill 3: Life Assimilation (Active LV.18): Can increase 'Life Assimilation Level' and restore health by devouring flesh and blood. When the 'Life Assimilation Level' reaches 100%, the resentful attendant will evolve.

...

Indeed, it was similar to Su Xiao's speculation. Monks didn't occupy the Durdin Monastery. 'Life Assimilation Level' was the key to transforming these resentful creatures.

And now, Su Xiao was witnessing this transformation process.

Several resentful attendants walked to the iron cages where the ordinary people were being held, desire clear in their eyes. They desired the flesh and blood of these humans, and for some unknown reason, they restrained this desire.

Squeak~

The rusty and blood-stained iron cage doors were opened, and the ordinary people imprisoned inside the cages started moving toward the interior of the cages like frightened livestock.

A resentful attendant walked into an iron cage, surveying the corner where these ordinary people were hiding. Among them were blue-collar workers and charming nightclub women.

"This one, this one, and this one."

The resentful attendant pointed to three ordinary people. The calves of those three individuals started trembling, their lips turning blue. It was clear they were heavily frightened.

"Don't... don't pick me. My son is waiting for me at home. He can't be without me, and he can't."

A despair-filled young white-collar worker finally couldn't bear the fear in his heart, shouting loudly and tightly grabbing onto the iron bars in the corner of the cage.

Chapter 710: Cruel

The crying of young white-collar workers triggered a chain reaction, and the ordinary people in the surrounding iron cages also began to cry and beg for mercy, creating a chaotic scene.

Strangely, the resentful servants in the courtyard weren't angry; they were even chatting and laughing in groups of two or three. This was because, not long ago, they had also been in this weak state.

"Don't waste time, you few, drag them out."

A leader-like resentful servant sounded impatient. Unlike the ordinary, resentful servants, he was identified as a leader due to his muscular build.

This individual stood at least three meters tall, covered in knotted muscles, and the exoskeleton protected crucial areas such as the heart and throat.

Several resentful servants entered the iron cage, forcibly dragging the three ordinary people out of it.

"No, please, help!"

"Sob~"

"I have money, and I can give you a lot of money."

The three individuals made their final struggles, but the resentful servants remained unmoved. They effortlessly lifted them and headed towards the centre of the courtyard, where a magic array was located.

Several resentful servants roughly threw the three ordinary people into the magic array.

Thud.

The three fell to the ground, stars in their eyes from the impact. As they struggled to get up, the magic array, brimming with powerful magic, emitted a radiant light, immediately rendering them powerless and limp on the ground.

Numerous tubes formed from magic emerged from the magic array—hundreds of them at least.

Seeing these tubes, even Su Xiao felt a tingling sensation on his scalp, let alone the ordinary people in the iron cage.

These tubes were as flexible as snakes and could extend and retract freely.

Squelch.

Blood splattered as a tube pierced the skull of the young white-collar worker. His mouth opened wide, attempting to scream but producing no sound.

Tube after tube was inserted into the heads of the young white-collar worker and the other two ordinary individuals. In an instant, their heads were filled with tubes.

The three individuals convulsed on the ground like an electric current had passed through them. The surrounding resentful servants were accustomed to this scene, and as for the ordinary people in the iron cages, they were too terrified to make any noise.

After convulsing within the magic array for a few minutes, one of them started rolling their eyes in their sockets. Observing this, several resentful servants nearby stood up.

"We have a new compatriot. Take him for the ritual, quickly!"

A smile appeared on the face of the resentful leader. After all, the probability of an ordinary person transforming into a resentful creature was very low, around 5% or so.

Two resentful servants entered the magic array. They first removed the tubes from the young white-collar worker's head, then supported him as they walked toward the centre of the temple in Ludiang Temple.

As for the other two ordinary individuals within the magic array, they lay there, twitching slightly. Although not dead, death was not far off.

"Kill... kill me..."

One failed conversion, an ordinary individual murmured. Immediately, a resentful servant approached and applied a kind of black mud to his head.

"Take him to the Eternal Pool as nourishment."

The resentful leader indicated to continue repeating this process.

Screams of agony, the strong scent of blood, and feelings of despair mixed together, turning the spacious courtyard into a hellish scene.

You can imagine the psychological state of those ordinary people in the iron cage. Nothing is more desperate than waiting for death or becoming a monster.

This is the Grand King Hall of Ludiang Temple, the closest position to the mountain gate of Ludiang Temple. Compared to the deeper halls and main offering halls, this place is relatively insignificant.

Su Xiao released his grip on the edge of the wall, falling silently. Clearly, this location couldn't be infiltrated.

Ludiang Temple wasn't a game dungeon where monsters waited for him to kill them batch by batch, allowing him to progress step by step.

If Su Xiao engaged with any resentful servant within Ludiang Temple and couldn't kill them immediately, a large group of resentful creatures would be attracted within three minutes. Within five minutes, all enemies in Ludiang Temple would swarm out.

Even if he fought against the resentful creatures, he had to kill them instantly without letting them make a sound.

Su Xiao continued along the perimeter wall of Ludiang Temple. He intended to bypass the main offering hall and directly reach the temple's position required for his mission—the Soul Lamp Vessel.

However, desires are beautiful, and reality is cruel. After spending an hour circling around Ludiang Temple, Su Xiao discovered that, aside from the front Grand King Hall's perimeter wall, there was a chance to infiltrate Ludiang Temple. Trying to enter Ludiang Temple through the perimeter walls of the main offering hall or temple hall was utterly impossible.

It wasn't because of a barrier blocking everything; instead, too many rats were near the walls.

The rats Su Xiao encountered weren't ordinary rats, of course. They were similar to hedgehogs, covered in bone spines.

According to the detected information, the life assimilation degree of these bone-spine rats was 3%.

Any creature with a life assimilation degree in the data is either an ordinary creature or an ordinary person converted by that kind of magic array.

After some observation, Su Xiao had a basic understanding of the conversion process of resentful creatures. First, ordinary people were thrown into that magic array for initial conversion. The specific principles were unknown to Su Xiao.



The success rate of this conversion process was meager. As for those ordinary people who failed to convert, they would be sent to the Eternal Pool for nourishment.

Su Xiao half crouched on the ground, closing his eyes to sense his surroundings.

After observing for a while, Su Xiao found that even near the front Grand King Hall of Ludiang Temple, there were bone-spine rats, albeit in smaller numbers. This allowed him to infiltrate successfully.

Walking a distance along the perimeter wall, Su Xiao pressed his ear against the wall. The other side of the wall was eerily silent. He decided to infiltrate Ludiang Temple right there, a location relatively close to the temple hall from the Grand King Hall.

After climbing over the wall, a quiet courtyard was on the other side. Just as Su Xiao was about to flip into the courtyard, footsteps approached.

Two blood-stained, resentful servants entered the courtyard. They occasionally nudged each other but made no noise.

"Quick, take it out..."

"Don't rush, I sealed it... Otherwise, there would be..."

The voices of the two conversing were very soft. Su Xiao, currently perched three meters high on the wall, waited for them to leave.

What surprised Su Xiao was that instead of leaving, the two individuals started walking towards the wall where he was located.

The two resentful servants arrived at the corner of the wall, huddled together. Just as Su Xiao began to suspect that these two suspicious individuals were about to engage in something indecent, one of them carefully pulled a plastic bag from his pocket. It contained jelly-like substances.

Gulp~

Su Xiao clearly heard a swallowing sound from the wall.

"Why has it turned into this state? It was liquid before."

One resentful servant rubbed the 'jelly' with his hand.

"Is this the pool water from the Eternal Pool? I've seen the pool water; it's clearly a pale green liquid, not this jelly-like substance!"

"How should I know that the pool water would turn into this?"

The two resentful servants started bickering in low voices, apparently losing interest in the 'jelly.'

"What do you mean? I was trying to help..."

"Go to \*\*\*\*\*, return my ten pounds of fresh human flesh!"

"You..."

"Give it back!"

A red light glinted in the eyes of one resentful servant, his emotions seemingly spiralling out of control due to being deceived.

Although resentful servants appeared capable of regular communication, it wasn't truly the case. Once they experienced significant emotional fluctuations, they would become extremely violent.