

Righteous Ps 371

The Righteous Player(s) Chapter 371

Jiu Er sighed deeply.

She wiped the blood-stained axe on the corpse severed in two and muttered sadly, "Why did Annan not come to see me when he arrived in the capital?"

"Is it that I have not unlocked the relevant plot yet? Do I have to wait until Miss Coffee arrives in the capital?"

"Miss Jiu Er?" Behind her, two neatly dressed and burly men bowed carefully and asked, "What did you just say?"

"Nothing." Jiu Er replied lazily, "I will hack you to death if you ask questions again."

Hearing this, those two men who were two heads taller than Jiu Er turned silent immediately and dared not to speak.

She had already gotten herself familiar with the royal capital.

She had found herself an excellent job in the past two days.

In the beginning, Jiu Er followed the RPG games approach and went to the tavern. She ordered a glass of milk and attempted to see if she could get some information.

In the end, she did not discover any new intelligence but got herself pestered.

A group of people saw Jiu Er alone in the tavern and wanted to ask her if she wanted to work in some shady jobs.

But after they got close, Jiu Er stood up impatiently with a stainless steel axe a bit taller than herself before they could say a word. Then, they immediately stopped in fear.

Luckily, the leader of the group was witty.

In the capital, the existence of transcoders was not as secretive as the circumstances in smaller and rural places.

At the very least, the stakeholders and people involved in these shady industries had clues of the transcoders here and there.

After all, they were in the capital of the Noah Kingdom. It was a large city with a population of more than four million. The palace alone covered an area of more than 100,000 square meters, and the area of one district alone exceeded the entire Roseburg territory.

The number of Gold Rank Transcender alone was already close to double digits. There were countless transcoders of Silver Rank and Bronze Rank. Sometimes, the Silver Sire could be seen strolling on the street.

For them, if they offended a transcender and were unaware of their situation, tragedy would fall onto them unknowingly. After all, the transcoders' curse and abilities came in multiple ways. The soul rank

might not determine their direct combat prowess. There were rituals too. Thus, having a Bronze Rank Transcender defeating a Silver Rank Transcender was not that surprising.

Moreover, ordinary people who could not fully understand the mechanism of “nightmare” and “curse” could only stay away from these powers they could not master.

After all, it was not easy to become a transcender.

It still depended on talent.

It was not an easy task just to become proficient in one's path and fully understand and master the basic profession (reaching Level 10). Furthermore, not everyone could acquire the training for their basic profession too.

There were multiple dimensions: physical training, practicing swordsmanship, going through the cruel training dedicated to lurkers in acquiring the knowledge and awareness of poisons and traps, searching for a beast companion and living with them for a long time and intimately, and cultivating spirituality. All of them required talent, resources, and long-term effort.

By the time they reached the end of the path, they had to make sure they were not too old. At the very least, they had to maintain sharp thinking, adequate spirituality, intelligence, and luck to maintain a clear mind in the dream and complete the decryption and purification of the nightmare.

In this case, it was a tough challenge.

The nightmare was just a stricter decryption game for anyone with transcended power.

However, ordinary people could not stay awake in nightmares. For them, it was real but illogical. Things were up to their talent and luck without the transcended ritual to keep them awake in their dreams.

When they reached the end of their path, they had to be lucky enough to resolve a nightmare, and it would be enough to embark on the path of transcendence.

Talents, resources, abilities, connections, and luck were indispensable elements to success.

To effectively control the number of transcendents so as to reduce the pollution of the surrounding living environment caused by the nightmares that appeared after the transcender's death, it was difficult for ordinary people to access the path of transcendence through the official channels.

As the wizards said, they must first consider their talents. The candidates had to be at least capable of fending for themselves against ordinary people. Then, temperament and morality were the second layer essential to be considered. They would not allow their candidates to venture into dishonest practices and crooked ways. Of course, they did not want their candidates to focus solely on personal gains with transcended power.

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Objectively speaking, it was a good idea.

The conditions were essential to be met to ensure the public's safety and control the density of nightmares in large population cities.

But on the other hand, this strategy also made ordinary people farther and farther away from the transcended world — almost blocking their access to the transcender's world.

Ordinary people could not identify the source of curses and nightmares without a deep understanding of the transcended knowledge.

For them, “killing transcendents” or even “approaching transcendents or their corpses” could lead to curses and nightmares.

Even many ordinary people could not tell the difference between the transcender and the ritualist. They even suspect that if they offended a transcender, they would be cursed and killed by the transcender.

So under the deterrence caused by this monopoly of knowledge, those gangsters realized that Jiu Er was a transcender. They did not even test Jiu Er's strength yet, but they immediately offered her a high salary and hired her as a thug.

Of course, even though Jiu Er was a hired thug, her status was high.

Jiu Er wore a gray turtleneck trench coat and black boots. She also had her profession nameplate on her chest, which indicated “Gray Swan Safety Insurance Company Special Technical Consultant Jiu Er” with the company address written as “No 117, Money Bag Street, St. Bernie District, Noah”.

“Gray Swan” was responsible for the underground boxing stadiums, casinos, and nightclubs in the entire St. Bernie District. These industries all belong to the Silver Sire's subordinate deity, who was occasionally dubbed the “Deity of Protection Fees”. He was the Deity of Extortion and Promise Keeping, falling in the category of “protector”.

In other words, even the pimp, drug dealer, killer, and thief had to pay their taxes obediently in the Noah Royal Capital.

Indeed, the income from burglary and killers had to be reported and taxed. Otherwise, the Silver Knight of the Silver Sire Church would come directly to you.

In Noah, “tax evasion” could get you the death penalty.

It was not run by the kingdom but by the Silver Sire Church.

But on the other hand, as long as taxes were paid and even donated money for welfare, the shady industries could become legitimate companies.

Of course, the question of whether this company's business was legal and how many criminals there were in it would not be handled by Silver Sire Church. Instead, the police station and the Attorney General Chamber would deal with them.

“Special consultants” like Jiu Er did not have much work. They were all hired to keep them from turning against the company.

They could not afford the price of recruiting a transcender.

The cost efficiency was pretty low.

After all, they were a regular and legal company. If a transcender stirred up trouble, they could directly report it to the Silver Sire Church.

What Jiu Er was in charge of was “dealing with the people who came to stir up trouble”.

Enemies who were not transcendents and not in groups.

The most challenging enemy she had ever encountered was a drunkard with a pistol.

However, she did not even have to use her axe. She punched him in the stomach and slapped him in the face before the fight ended.

The enemy she just hacked to death was a veteran lurker of a rival gang. The man used a trap to kill three of Gray Swan's men, including a leader. So, they sent Jiu Er for “brutal revenge”.

As for the scapegoat, the company had arranged for it.

All Jiu Er was responsible for was “killing enough people to showcase their deterrence”.

Of course, she liked the job.

Even though it was not much, it offered a lot of experience.

Hahaha, you have to pay me and give me enemies to kill for experience points. I'm so lucky.

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Speaking of which, I should take on this kind of job more.

Thinking of this, Jiu Er was interested.

She turned around and told her two underlings, “If there is such a mission in the future, assign it to me first. I am still relatively free in most cases.”

“...This kind of mission?” The man asked cautiously.

“As long as I get to kill someone, even a transcender is fine.” Jiu Er replied casually.

Anyway, her companions were coming soon. If she could not defeat the opponent, she could recruit for reinforcement.

Thinking of this, she laughed softly.

Like the playful little girl waving the branches she picked up, she lightly waved the battle axe in her hand. The heavy stainless steel axe whistled in the air, making a sharp shriek.

The two were so frightened that they subconsciously took two steps back.

Jiu Er couldn't help but laugh at them, “Don't be like this. I won't hurt you. I'll be careful.”

“You're right, Miss.” The two of them replied bitterly.

The two “underlings” assigned to Jiu Er were both elite employees of the Grey Swan Company. They were robust and proficient at rifles and hand-to-hand combat. At the same time, they were equipped

with relevant skills in tracking a target and counteracting stalking. However, they were short of a profession.

From Jiu Er's point of view, their combat power was about Level 7 or Level 8. If they were equipped with a firearm, they might be able to defeat a Level 10 Swordsman.

As far as street fighting was concerned, the regular army might be unable to defeat them.

The mission dedicated to them was to monitor Jiu Er's behavior at all times, ensuring that she would not get in contact with other underground gang forces. At the same time, they had to stop her from doing foolish things that could harm the company's interest. Those were the formal duties allocated.

Given Jiu Er's size and age, they had additional roles to play — to deter the ignorant fools so that Jiu Er would not have an excuse to go crazy and start killing people.

They had witnessed it clearly with their own eyes. When Jiu Er committed the murders, she showed no psychological pressure. Instead, there were hints of joy on her face.

However, it was unlike the fanatical smile the bloodthirsty [Berserkers] had when they enjoyed the killing process, nor the joy of getting money after killing. Instead, it was more like the joy of accomplishing an important mission or winning a game.

It was the purest joy for the act of killing itself.

That was terrifying.

Even when they were underground forces, they would not behave so.

She was simply a monster in their eyes!

When they discovered that there was no bounty or wanted order tagged on this Miss, they were even more afraid of her.

It showed that she had been well hidden for her madness and crimes!

Thus, the two acted more carefully in front of her.

Jiu Er brought them to the bar the day before yesterday, and they ordered her a drink. The reason being Jiu Er looked too young, and the bar owner refused to give her a drink. After Jiu Er drank too much, she became more irritable, complaining about things the two could not comprehend — exams, Annan, and many more. Thus, they made up their mind to quickly pay the bills and flee.

But, Jiu Er might have realized their thoughts. She directly stopped them and got them to hold her weapon.

After they tried to pick up Jiu Er's battle axe, that weapon put beside the table fell, almost splitting one of them in half.

The battle axe was taller than Jiu Er by roughly a head. The steel shaft was wrapped with a long hardwood handle for shock absorption. The face of the battle axe was bigger than Jiu Er's head.

What was surprising was that this gigantic weapon had a solid body.

Annan dedicated extra care to the weapon, increasing its weight and hardening the blade via a ritual.

It would take a burly man over 1.9 meters tall and weighing 200 pounds in the army to wield it. It could split a person in half just by swinging it down.

Moreover, the macho man had to use both of his hands to be able to wield it.

However, Jiu Er needed only one hand to lift this battle axe and wield it like a pointer [1] at will. She had no hesitation nor psychological pressure when she blasted the enemy's head with her bare fist or severed a person with her battle axe.

The company executives could not determine what Jiu Er's profession was. How could she have such overwhelming strength? Why was she so accustomed and joyful to killing people?

Was she a Fallen Hangman? Or Executioner?

Could she be a Scarlet Warrior of the Red Knight?

It was all possible.

They were not even sure how old Jiu Er was.

Some people in the company even speculated secretly that Jiu Er might be a transcender who could transfer her soul after killing people. After all, there were indeed transcendents that had this type of ability.

It also made them more afraid of Jiu Er.

But in fact, the [Berserker] profession was not rare.

It could even be said that it was pretty common.

There were some berserkers in the arena and many more on the battlefield. Austere-Winter Dukedom was a place that offered the mass production of berserkers.

Berserker was generally characterized by a bronze belt, a naked upper body with scars, and a lean but muscular body. Those curses that were like dried blood would be branded on their torso. When they were in battle, they would skillfully tear through the curses on their bodies with one hand and go berserk in an instant.

It happened at the level of tearing the flesh that revealed the internal organs or bones.

They never imagined that Jiu Er, with delicate skin, a dainty face, and no muscles on her, would be a berserker.

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It seemed more accurate to say that her physique was no different from ordinary young girls, but she had the strength threefolds of a berserker. This feature alone made it seem like a unique profession.

But at this moment, an old voice sounded, "Oh, young lady... Can I borrow a moment to speak with you now?"

“Hey! Old man, you...” The two elite employees were alerted. They immediately turned around and reprimanded.

This was the Miss they dared not provoke.

But when they saw the person behind them clearly, their voices dropped suddenly.

It was an old man in a pure black wheelchair, hunching like a shrimp.

He lowered his head and wore a white hood slightly yellowed because of long-term use. The bare hands were covered with dark yellow, dry and inflexible bandages; the bandages were covered with dense black runes that seemed to be squirming.

The old man was like a mummy, exuding the air of death.

As the old man smiled, he showed his teeth as yellow as a corpse, trying his best to make an amiable smile.

He repeated again, “Is it convenient to talk here, Miss?”

“My apology, Your Excellency!” The two responded quickly and immediately bowed their heads to apologize to the old man.

They were clear-headed.

In the capital, they could not offend the “peculiar folks”.

The old man did not intend to find fault with them.

To be more accurate, the old man did not bother looking at them at all.

While being stared at by the old man, Jiu Er gradually became serious.

She cautiously clenched the battle axe in her hand, loosened her coat a little, and unbuttoned a few buttons on her trench coat.

This pressure...

Those two mortals might not feel it. However, Jiu Er, who was close to Silver Rank, could feel her body shaking.

Just by hearing the voice, the body was instinctively in fear.

Her soul was trembling as if a chill wind seeped into her body.

Jiu Er knew this person.

She saw him from Longjing Tea's perspective. “Bernardino Telesio”, the pope of a false deity “Bell Ringer”.

A true Gold Rank powerhouse.

“Spiritual Monk” was the only servant of this class at present.

“Is there a problem?” Jiu Er asked cautiously.

The old man smiled and asked lowly, "Are you interested in living in another place?"

"I'm living well now, and I don't need it for the time being."

That's a fucking sexual harassment.

Jiu Er was silent for a while, then answered politely.

The old man shook his head slightly, "I didn't ask you."

"What?" Jiu Er was taken aback.

At the next moment, she suddenly felt an immense and invisible cold wind penetrate her body. Then, she suddenly lost touch with her physical body.

She suddenly heard the sound of a heavy object falling to the ground. Jiu Er looked down, only to find that her body held the tomahawk, and suddenly dropped to the ground weakly. Then, her body turned into dust in the blink of an eye.

She had turned into a translucent state and stood there in a daze.

Around her, there were dozens and even hundreds of souls.

Human soul;

centaur soul;

elf soul;

And the soul of the demon.

But in Jiu Er's current vision, she saw the old man in another state.

It was a kind and bald old man who had lost his hands. Instead of saying he was sitting on the wheelchair, he was more like being put on it.

He looks like Professor X, who has suffered a car accident. Jiu Er had such a thought in his mind.

"I'm asking your soul, Miss."

From the soul's perspective, the old man's voice was no longer so hoarse and displeasing but warm and kind, "You are from another world, right? I don't see your remaining lifespan, so you are an undead.

"Have you ever heard of the 'Book of Divine Transporter'?" Pure white flames flickered in the empty eye sockets of the old man.

The Righteous Player(s) C373– The Paper Princess's Vouch

Chapter 373: The Paper Princess's Vouch

Three days had passed since Annan came to the Noah Capital.

But even so, Annan still did not scout out the situation in the capital because Noah was too big.

Even if the Paper Princess could take Annan for short-distance teleportation, three days were only enough for the two to barely finish visiting the St. Victor area where the palace was located.

Still, they had a bountiful harvest too.

After all, the capital was worthy of being labeled the capital. Under the Paper Princess' guide, Annan found a place called the "Howl's Antique Store," selling curse materials at the corner of an alley.

Cheaper materials included "Pure Water" and "Ashes of Moth Dashed Into Flames". At the same time, materials slightly rarer to find could be found here: "Enslaver's Finger", "Antique Sword That Killed People", and "Liar's Facial Skin". High-end and expensive curse materials, like "Eternally Lit Blue Spark" and "Heart Beating Drums", were showcased too.

There were other curse vessels for sale, but Annan did not like them.

According to the Paper Princess, it was a legitimate store.

Even the official transcender and ritualist serving the kingdom bought their materials here. While ensuring quality and quantity, it could also ensure the freshness of the materials. Anything that could be crafted was available to be customized. That would guarantee the longest shelf life for the desired materials.

Since this place was legitimate, the customer could not purchase a certain level of curse materials without the corresponding identification and purchase license.

Of course, Annan had no identification proof and permission for the store.

However, that was why the Paper Princess brought him here.

The Paper Princess capitalized on Her reputation and granted permission to Annan via the shopkeeper.

Although the owner did not know Annan's origin, he recognized the Paper Princess.

As the Elegant Elder's subordinate deity, the Paper Princess could be said to be the second in liking travels among all the deities.

The only one who traveled more diligently than her was the "Bard Deity", who was also the Elegant Elder's subordinate deity. He was the intersex deity known as the Duo-Songwriter.

He had two heads, a "skinny woman" and a "fat man", so He could voice both male and female voices. With the addition of voice changes, He could cover all types of tones, make all types of sounds, and direct all kinds of songs. He could even sing a duet that required a male and a female.

He was also a mean, eccentric, and witty deity.

The way he administered justice was peculiar and not liked.

He often liked to infiltrate into forces in the form of an ugly little lurker. For example, joining a mercenary group, participating in an evil plan, or sneaking into the home of a person in power.

When He was scoped out with His identity discovered, or the information He wanted was collected, He would reveal his monster-like true body in the fog. By then, He would improvise what He saw and heard into songs or nursery rhymes and then leave while singing it.

After being sung by Him, those hidden sins in the dark would undoubtedly be exposed. Many people at the bottom of the society who had been wronged believe in the existence of the Duo-Songwriter as a legend, hoping that He would come to them one day.

But those who knew the deities better would see that this was not all about preaching justice.

The Duo-Songwriter was a doublethink deity. He hated the evil, but He would become the evil too, so He hated Himself.

He would try to trick others into doing evil deeds, thus fishing the criminals and enforcing the law. Some people would not do evil deeds and even occasionally help others. After being tempted in front of the interests, the Duo-Songwriter would turn His deeds into catchy nursery rhymes and sing them out.

However, He was also fair because the “ugly dwarf” or the “disfigured thief” He played would also be written into His poems and songs as He reprimanded Himself at the same time.

He was a contradictory deity who was eccentric, suspicious of all good intentions and abhorred evil deeds.

His contradictory property had escalated to the point of having an extra head.

Some grand events would even be compiled into gorgeous and magnificent operas by the Duo-Songwriter.

This deity did not know Annan. Of course, He might not care either.

According to the Paper Princess, the Duo-Songwriter hid in the capital, searching for “great sin” like a hyena.

This was why the Paper Princess wanted to accompany Annan.

Even if Annan were not attacked or kidnapped, it would be a considerable loss if his reputation was damaged by being deceived by the Duo-Songwriter.

Only other deities could identify the Duo-Songwriter.

Even the Gold Rank transcender could not do that.

That was because the Duo-Songwriter was in charge of the realm of “camouflage”, “deception”, and “fabrication”.

However, the Paper Princess could not follow Annan all the time.

Although the Paper Princess liked Her “junior”, who was not blood-related, She still had a job.

The Paper Princess was the protector of all painters.

She traveled worldwide and sold paintings to earn money to support those painters who had artistic dreams and passion for painting but were impoverished due to the limitations of talents, channels, and funds.

The aid came with the mysterious ritual that almost all painters knew — “recycling” paintings that they could not sell to the Paper Princess.

The Paper Princess would provide a base price based on the effort and passion the painters spent creating this painting rather than its artistic and aesthetic value. That was enough to ensure that the painters who painted with their hearts could survive and continue their pursuit of painting.

She would not dismantle nor destroy the paintings.

She had banks and warehouses all over the world dedicated to storing the paintings she received that were even considered “failures” by their creators. If the painter became famous in the future or missed his old works and wanted to get them back, he only needed to pay the original price. In other words, they could exchange the painting with the money they earned when they sold the paintings.

In addition, after the painters died, the Paper Princess would secretly wrap their paintings in the waterproof paper according to their wills and put them back in their graves or give them to their families lest their artworks only become famous after their death. Otherwise, the paintings would be rightfully the Paper Princess's possession.

The Paper Princess did not care how much money they got when the paintings went up in value.

She would not even ask for the maintenance fee.

Those painters might think that the Paper Princess could directly turn these paintings into power, and they would sell them with peace of mind. However, the reality was contradictory to it. It was true that the Paper Princess could absorb the painting to strengthen herself for a sufficiently outstanding painting.

However, most of the paintings that were sacrificed to the Paper Princess were far from being qualified.

Achieving that would require a lot of money.

The Silver Sire invited her to protect Annan's safety not because she had nothing to do but because Silver Sire gave her enough money.

After all, the Paper Princess could aid more and more young painters who devoted themselves to the painting industry during peaceful times.

The Paper Princess did not want to get money through illegal channels to avoid people venting their anger on those innocent painters.

She kept making her paintings as curse vessels and selling them to feed the painters.

Of course, the benefactors were not blind.

Society naturally respected such deities.

For example, the owner of this antique store.

Although he did not know Annan, Annan directly got the highest access here with the Paper Princess vouching for him.

Of course, this matter would also be reported to the palace and be known by the One-Eyed Crows.

Sure enough, Annan would not care about that.

The Righteous Player(s) C374– Dragon Language Dictionary

Chapter 374: Dragon Language Dictionary

“Howl's Antique Store” was an official store selling materials near the palace.

Besides that, the Paper Princess also took Annan to the St. Bernie District, which was densely populated with underworld trading. They found “Daddy's General Store” and “Alberta Used Bookstore”, which were illegitimate but offered reliable quality.

The owners of these two stores had purchased the Paper Princess paintings, so they were polite to Annan, who held the Paper Princess's hand. All products were granted 15% off permanently. He could buy whatever he liked.

When Annan heard the name, he thought it was Vasily who opened a branch in the capital.

Then, he asked about it, which confirmed his speculation. A former apprentice of the “Father” opened up this store. Hearing that Annan knew the “Father”, the man immediately gave Annan another 10% discount.

The variety of materials sold here was lesser than that at the “Howl's Antique Store”. However, the store manager swore not to leak the secrets here. If the customer's secret were leaked, he would be burned to death. No matter what you buy from him, it would not be leaked. Furthermore, the store was equipped with strict anti-surveillance measures. It was a safe underworld store.

No matter what you buy at “Howl's Antique Store”, it would be reported to the higher-ups.

That was why the Paper Princess brought Annan here.

The “Alberta Used Bookstore” disguised as a bookstore that sold used books, unique copies, and rare books. But in fact, they were secretly selling occult knowledge.

This was a genuine illegal store.

Annan bought a copy of “The Eighth Analects On the Sunray” and “The Birth and Initial Circulation of Silver Coins” from the store, intending to study the ritual in the realms of Mr. Ray and Silver Sire.

After all, his relationship with Silver Sire was great.

Learning the ritual related to Silver Sire would be useful in both reality and nightmares. Also, Annan was indeed a little curious about Silver Sire's real name.

It was good enough even when the name was only used as a method to communicate with Silver Sire in the future.

The Silver Sire would sense it as long as Annan spoke out the real name. The name itself could also be added to the ritual as a material.

This context applied similarly to “Mr. Ray”.

In the “Chill of the Winter Sun” ritual that Annan was planning to perform this winter, the effect of the ritual could be further enhanced if Mr. Ray's real name was added.

Mr. Ray held the authority in the realm of purification. He also specialized in purifying the undead and demons. For Annan, who might have to fight the demons later, it was good preparation for what would be coming.

Besides that, Annan also got himself a slightly tattered Dragon Language Dictionary.

Unexpectedly, the dictionary was helpful. Annan realized that the contrastive language [1] of the Dragon Language Dictionary was the “Frost Lingual”, which Annan had just mastered.

Then again, the logic connects.

Frostwisper's power was related to Old Grandmother. After Annan mastered the Frost Lingual and still could not comprehend Old Grandmother's language, he had a rough guess that Old Grandmother should be speaking the dragon language.

He skimmed through the dictionary for a while. Afterward, he focused on Mr. Ray's book and put the dictionary aside. At the very least, Annan had found out that “Frost Lingual” might have evolved directly from the dragon language.

A similar example to explain it would be the connection between French and Latin.

Dragon language was complex. There was a tone to it, similar to the distinction between feminine and masculine. If pronounced correctly, the words spoken could manipulate the corresponding temperature, like increasing or decreasing the temperature.

This might be why the only two dragons among the upright deities were Old Grandmother and Father Flint.

The two upright deities represented ice and fire, respectively.

“En?” At this moment, Annan was in deep thoughts as he looked into the distance.

Beside Annan, the Paper Princess, holding Annan's hand, detected it keenly.

She stopped immediately, turned around, and asked concernedly, “What's wrong?”

“Did you see something you wanted to buy? Just say it, I still have some money here.”

“No, of course not.” Annan shook his head quickly.

The Paper Princess herself was short of money, and he was embarrassed to ask the Paper Princess for it.

After Annan scanned the forum, he noticed Jiu Er asking for help. Then, he immediately switched to Jiu Er's perspective.

Then he saw someone he knew—Bernardino Telesio.

It occurred that his magic had easily knocked Jiu Er's soul out of her body. The player's body was constructed through the power of the Book of Divine Transporter. Jiu Er's body lost its vigor the moment the soul left her body, thus adding a death count under her profile.

Typically speaking, she should get a new body immediately.

However, under Bernardino's constraint, Jiu Er was kept in the soul state.

This was the first time Annan had seen someone who could interrupt the players' "respawn".

A Gold Rank Spiritual Monk...

At the same time, Bernardino utilized dozens of spiritual bodies directly, including the souls of supernatural races like demons and centaurs. This meant that he could manipulate a separate existence at will like Kafni; he also shared similar abilities to the Silver Rank's Prophet Wizard, reading into any time in the future. These were all features that could be achieved with the soul alone.

Annan even saw a soul dressed as a ritualist. The ritualist should be top-notch since Bernardino had the ritualist in his arsenal. In return, it would allow him to see through and decipher other's rituals in time or even set up a ritual by following the ritualist's advice.

From what happened to Longjing Tea previously, the soul detained by this old man could even directly interfere with the material world.

It should have been impossible.

Even the Pale Princess had to leave the soul state to interfere with the real world.

The souls seemingly could interfere with the real world without manifesting themselves. These ghosts were undetectable Dark Templars for a transcender with a lower soul rank.

Coupled with his ability to pull the soul of others out of the body at will and two wards whose abilities are unknown, Bernardino was an enemy Annan could not face.

From Bernardino's questions, he seemed to have an apparent hostility toward Annan.

This was a more dangerous enemy than Nicholas.

Annan was well-aware of his situation.

Thus, he went straight for another approach.

"I need to rescue a friend of mine, Paper Princess." Annan immediately asked the Paper Princess for aid, "She's right here. The exact location is seven blocks ahead and two blocks to the right. The enemy she faces is a Spiritual Monk. An old man who can extract the souls of others. This man asks her if she knows about the Book of Divine Transporter."

At first, the Paper Princess frowned upon hearing Annan's words.

But when she finished hearing the details, she immediately became serious.

“Spiritual Monk, Bernardino?” The Paper Princess whispered, “Why did he ask the Book of Divine Transporter?”

Obviously, for this kind of rare profession, the name of the profession identified the individual directly.

In particular, Bernardino was a pope too.

His relationship with the deities was closer than ordinary people.

“Do not be afraid.” After a brief thought, the Paper Princess replied, “I’ll handle this matter in your stead.”

Then, she grabbed Annan and summoned a piece of chalk in her right palm.

Immediately after, the Paper Princess and Annan instantly turned into white chalk powder and dissipated in the air.

The Righteous Player(s) C375– Bait

Chapter 375: Bait

Book of Divine Transporter? Jiu Er found the name a little familiar.

She thought she had heard it somewhere and even had an intuitive understanding of it. However, she was certain she had not learned about it in the past.

Jiu Er was relatively confident in her memory.

This might be the pride of being a youngster under the age of 20.

She was unlike the lazy Sister Hyphen who lived with her. The lazy Hyphen returned the knowledge she had learned in class to the teacher.

“I’m not sure.” Jiu Er pondered for a long time and responded seriously, “I think you should be able to see that I really don’t know.”

Indeed, Bernardino Telesio had lost the ability to manipulate the mind and read others’ memories. However, he still retained the ability to decipher the target’s emotion through expression and behavior, which he learned during the Soul Snatch Wizard stage.

Jiu Er believed that Bernardino took her soul out for questioning because it would be harder for her to lie in the soul state, or he would be able to identify lies more readily.

This deduction explained the situation reasonably.

Facing Jiu Er’s answer, the old man who lost his limbs and eyes like a plaster sculpture in the art classroom smiled peacefully and said nothing.

Wait. Jiu Er suddenly thought of the jewel-like eyes that Longjing Tea had seen before and vaguely realized something.

Instead of saying the old man had lost his eyes and limbs, it was more accurate to say he took the initiative to replace this part of his body with a prosthetic body without a soul.

Therefore, she could not see this part of the body in her soul state. What she saw was the upper half of the body levitating on the wheelchair.

Bernardino's eyes were curse vessels made of the finest gemstones. But what about his bandaged limbs? What about his skin?

Could they also be curse vessels?

Did Bernardino transform himself into a curse vessel?

Why so?

Increasing his power? Or extending his longevity? Or something else...

It occurred that Jiu Er's perception grew sharper in the soul state.

She sensed an inconspicuously cold and viscous malice from the smiling old man, adhering to her skin like a black and smooth silt.

However, that malice was not directed at her.

Jiu Er felt her consciousness getting blurry.

She was then pulled into an illusion.

Behind Bernardino, there seemed to be an indistinct translucent giant composed of countless black spiritual bodies rising from the ground.

Like the old man, the giant only had the upper body, but it had silt-like arms and a golden "eye" that slowly rotated like a nebula.

Hmm, this doesn't seem to be an illusion.

Shortly after the giant appeared, Jiu Er felt the surrounding air quickly become cold and sticky. The ground was covered with strange black mud.

What is this?

Is it Soulbringer or a Stand [1]?

Such a thought rose in Jiu Er's mind for a moment.

When the black slit approached her, she felt a chill like the overcast wind blowing through her body during rain. It was the same as the "invisible cold wind" that the soul felt when she left the body.

When the black mud touched Jiu Er, she felt an intense numbness, unable to utter a word.

However, she was only paralyzed.

Jiu Er could still see clearly in the soul state.

Under the giant made of translucent black mud, the unknown black entities quickly spread out along the ground. The moment the black mud touched the two "little underlings", their bodies immediately lost their lives and fell backward.

To put it into words, it was like the black mud “stuck” to the soul of the victims and slapped the body away. The victims died immediately without any resistance.

But, the victims were unlike Jiu Er, who had already embarked on the path of transcendence and thus had a gaseous soul.

Those two were just ordinary people.

Their souls had not formed at all. At the moment when their bodies fell and their souls were forced to leave their bodies, their gray and dull souls were exposed to the air, shattered and disintegrated like tofu. Then, the black mud absorbed the “powder” left after the victims perished.

Why do you kill them? Jiu Er had such doubts in her heart for a moment.

It seemed unnecessary.

When they previously saw Bernardino coming to trouble Jiu Er, they did not try to protect Jiu Er but turned around without hesitation. These poor souls did not dare to look at what happened or speak up.

Aside from the initial exchange of words, the rest of the inquiries happened in the soul state. The initial encounter did not seem to require confidentiality at all.

But even so, Bernardino killed the two elite employees of the insurance company.

Worse still, their souls were crushed into pieces.

As easy as it might seem, it should not be simple work. It seemed more than murdering the victims.

What unfolded put Jiu Er in great fear. She thought she would lose her life without the ability to resist it. It could be an elemental power of a higher grade or something obtained through the Gold Rank. But, Jiu Er was confident that this higher power was only accessible in Gold Rank.

Jiu Er recalled that Annan once told her about the difference between the Gold and Silver Rank. When it comes to Gold Rank, some powers are expensive to use. For example, it might require the host to burn their life energy as fuel, or the power might leave some defect in the body.

Thus, many Gold Rank transcendents would still use the enhanced normal skills to fight instead of using their ultimate move directly.

However, the power utilized to kill the underlings seemed to come from the Gold Rank.

If Jiu Er were at Silver Rank, she could detect the danger and have a chance to struggle before dying immediately.

Since the Gold Rank power was used against a Bronze Rank transcendent like her and two mortals, Bernardino wanted to prevent them from revealing any information.

But, what's his purpose?

Those poor souls did not hear anything significant.

Unless it was mandatory to keep it secretive that they had met him.

Jiu Er quickly thought through her situation.

If it was just the pressure of facing death, she might have gone crazy by now. However, she soon regained her senses upon realizing this might happen to other players.

She had to do something about it.

At the very least, I have to get some intel before it's too late!

“What're you trying to do? What do you want?” Jiu Er tried her best to ignore the two souls that were crushed and forget about the possibility that she might be obliterated here.

She maintained her calm demeanor and asked, “Book of Divine Transporter? Are you trying to get into doing something for you?”

“Be quiet, Miss.” The old man kept his kind and gentle smile and said softly, “Ah! You just reminded me to make you quiet.”

The old man glanced at Jiu Er, and the shadow giant behind him had the nebullike eye staring at Jiu Er.

It was an immense pressure that could only be felt in the soul state. Immediately after, Jiu Er's soul lost the ability to speak. She felt a strange, weak suction directed at her soul with its intensity gradually increasing.

The suction force had seemingly drawn her in, making her situation much more urgent and critical.

But, it only seemed so. She sensed that she would be fine even if the suction force attached to her had lasted for another day.

Was it because Bernardino was weak?

That was obviously not the answer.

Thus, there was only one answer.

At the moment of realization, chills crept upon Jiu Er.

She realized that she was probably just a bait.

Bernardino wanted to deal with Annan, who arrived in Noah's capital not long ago!

The Righteous Player(s) C376– Hey! Look At What Your Bait Had Caught You!

Chapter 376: Hey! Look At What Your Bait Had Caught You!

Jiu Er had a vague premonition that Bernardino was aware of her ability to communicate with Annan remotely.

Although he did not know the specifics, he seemed to have planned it all out. He held Jiu Er's soul as a hostage and allowed her to ask for help!

So, is the Book of Divine Transporter Annan's possession?

Then, I am afraid that at the moment I was asked about “Book of Divine Transporter” ...

Still, Jiu Er did not know what it was, and she probably could not find it in her memory.

Thus, something must have happened before this.

Before he approached me, he knew I was Annan's associate!

But, there are so many players in Noah's capital. So, why am I getting picked?

Thinking of this, Jiu Er shuddered.

A picture suddenly appeared in her mind.

Back then, in front of the viscount mansion, she blocked an attack for Annan. Then, Annan rushed over, hugged her with great concern and grief, and shook her to death on the spot.

Although she thought this scene was embarrassing, many other players loved it.

However, this might be a touching scene in Salvatore's view.

Thus, Bernardino thought Annan liked me? He also knows players have a way to communicate remotely, and Annan owns the Book of Divine Transporter.

But he does not know what a player is; he does not know what the earth is, let alone our identities and relationship with Annan.

Jiu Er soon had a clearer grasp of the situation.

So, the only channel for Bernardino to acquire this intelligence must be Salvatore!

Although Bernardino had lost some of his mind-altering abilities, he must still retain some techniques in stealing memories or someone he knew who could steal some of the information from Salvatore!

Bernardino must have failed to acquire Longjing Tea's memory!

At that time, he passed by Longjing Tea.

Wait, that's not right. Jiu Er quickly realized.

At that time, Bernardino went to the library and got into contact with Longjing Tea! But for some reason, he failed to steal the memory.

Was it because of the red robe wizard who looked like Harry Potter?

But when did he come into contact with Salvatore?

"Don't overthink. You should take a rest." The old man glanced at Jiu Er and said casually, "After all, this matter has nothing to do with you, Miss."

Jiu Er caught another piece of information from this reply. Bernardino could see her train of thoughts but could not see what exactly was on her mind.

Instead, he could find out the last thing Jiu Er was thinking about.

Jiu Er felt that her thinking speed was being suppressed by something.

An intense lethargy struck her, causing her mind to go blank.

This feeling of drowsiness... What's going on?

Jiu Er's thinking speed slowed, and even her eye movement grew sluggish.

She could still see and hear everything around her. But it felt like she was exhausted to the limit, which she would refuse to see, listen and think.

It appeared as if the mind was frozen by something.

Soon, Jiu Er was frozen even in the concept of time.

She did not know how long it had been.

But when she was half-awake, she heard Annan's smooth and clear child-like voice in her ears, "Your Excellency, what are you going to do to my people?"

Don't come here, Annan!

This is a trap.

Jiu Er was half asleep. That was the first thought that came to her mind.

The next moment, she felt a strange warmth coming from her body. It was like being put on a warm suit that improved her blood flow which soon made her wide awake.

"No need to worry. I'm here." Annan's reassuring voice sounded softly in front of Jiu Er.

Wait, I feel my blood flow?

Should I not be in a soul state?

Jiu Er opened her eyes, only to see she had escaped from the soul state, resurrected, and regained her physical body.

She wore Annan's black leather jacket. Her size was not much different from Annan's, so the jacket won't seem too small for her.

This was one of many clothes the Paper Princess pressured Annan to buy while shopping with the Paper Princess.

After all, the weather was getting warmer now.

It was a little hot for Annan to wear the previous winter clothes. Although Annan did not mind it, the Paper Princess was strict. She even bought a brand imported from the United Kingdom.

After all, the United Kingdom was the territory belonging to the Elegant Elder. The costume designers on Noah's side were not as high-level as there. However, they were at the royal capital after all. The Underground Falteration's transit allowed subways of all countries to be connected. Thus, the products of other countries could also be bought in the royal capital.

Of course, the price would be several times higher.

Although the original purpose of building the subways and inventing the steam airships was to transport transcendents across borders, not so many transcendents needed to leave the country during peaceful times. Soon these technologies were used for business and fortune.

The subways had not been fully utilized for civilian use. That was only because of the high cost, the concern over the guests in high nobility, and the fear of people with ulterior motives sneaking in. Thus, the regulations forbade civilian use strictly.

The most popular use of the subways was to officially purchase specialties from other countries and then sell them to the public. Due to commercial use, the United Kingdom had begun building an overground railway.

Indeed, since underground railways were built, the overground railways were developed too.

The market had the demand, after all.

“Are you awake?” Annan held the jacket at Jiu Er's neckline to prevent it from sliding down. At the same time, he wore a light gray turtleneck.

He said softly to Jiu Er, who was still a little confused, “When you're awake, put on your clothes first so as not to catch a cold.”

“...Oh, oh!” Jiu Er was stunned for a moment before quickly reacting.

Although she was successfully resurrected and freed from Bernardino's control, she still had a chill within her body, which gave her a faint throbbing pain in the abdomen.

She hurriedly grabbed the jacket that Annan was putting on her, raised her arm, and put it in the sleeves. During this process, she and Annan's hands touched, and she was seemingly jolted as she quickly withdrew her hand.

Annan smiled, put away his hands, and turned to leave.

It was only then that Jiu Er reacted and felt a little regretful.

I should have grabbed Annan's hand just now...

Wait no!

I need to warn Annan to escape immediately.

Jiu Er quickly reacted.

Why isn't Annan attacked? Bernardino should not be just wanting to see Annan, right?

She looked in that direction with some doubts.

Jiu Er's pupils dilated slightly.

What is this?

She saw the entire alley covered with densely colored “pen marks”.

It felt like the infrared rays traps in a spy film. The red silk threads were connected between the buildings and spread to the height of several meters.

The dim yellow ink reflected the sun's light, hung in the air, and froze all the objects in it like amber. Even the time was frozen too.

Pure white crayon traces kept appearing in the thin air. They resembled either a long sword, a lasso, or a cage. Every trace of crayon had souls lit in white flames. Some were bound and imprisoned by the white wooden cage suddenly appearing in the air.

As for Bernardino, countless tiny, shimmering silver chains wrapped around him.

The chains were at the thickness of a pinky finger, varying in length and protruding from the air. The end of the chains were shimmering ripples.

There was a strange resonance between the ripples. They were connected, sealing Bernardino in it.

A young girl with beautiful long silver hair stood in front of Annan.

The dragon horns were about 1.75 meters tall, which was a bit too tall for a lady's standard. However, her defined and tall figure would not make her height look strange but exuded an awe-inspiring aura instead.

Jiu Er could tell just from the back that she looked no more than twenty years old at most. A drawing board was suspended in front of her, and four brushes were tucked between her left fingers. Her right hand was put inside the pocket of her white trench coat.

Yi?

Isn't Bernardino having me as a lure to fish Annan out?

Who is this lady?

Jiu Er was vigilant with the new lady.

The Righteous Player(s) C377– Bell Ringer Oik

Chapter 377: Bell Ringer Oik

It was different from the previous “battle” with Nicholas.

Despite Bernardino being a pope, the Paper Princess showed no sympathy when She attacked him.

A large part of the reason for this was that Bell Ringer Oik, the “Deity of Terminal Illness and Fleeting Lifespan”, was a false deity without any backer, no thriving church, and no true deity's backing.

Although the Bell Ringer Oik and the Paper Princess were false deities that ascended in the same epoch, they were not familiar with each other.

It was different from the Paper Princess, who accepted the invitation of the Elegant Elder and was promoted to a subordinate deity and granted an asylum day. Bell Ringer Oik was invited by the three upright deities: Bone Burying Grandma, Silent Lady, and the Motherly Moth. However, He did not accept the recruitment.

Being invited by the three upright deities was not because of His good character or strong capability.

It was because its realm was critical, and its classification was vague.

The Paper Princess remembered that Bell Ringer Oik's Book of Truth was titled [The Gray Blood]. There were truths involving many fields such as disease, apoptosis, blood, frailty, aging, and fate. It was a mighty Book of Truth.

When Bell Ringer Oik completed the sublimation ritual, He chose "the Preset Death" as His core concept.

So He eventually ascended into "the Deity of Terminal Illness and Fleeting Lifespan", the "Bell Ringer Oik," who sounded the death bell marking the deaths of the mortals.

He was a loner false deity who was eccentric, lonely, and had few friends. Not only did He not create churches on His initiative, but even those who create churches for Him would not receive any additional benefits and protection. He rarely gave holy light engravings to His believers. Only those who purified nightmares would acquire the corresponding holy light engravings.

Generally speaking, false deities would issue holy light engravings to the believers they were pleased with. After all, false deities churches did not have so many rules and regulations, and they would not have a fixed territory, thus acting more freely.

The false deities would issue holy light engravings to their favored believers and even mortals and transenders who were not their believers. As long as it was pleasing to their eye, there was nothing that could not be done.

After all, the essence of holy light engravings was the authorization of believers to borrow the deities' power. Holy light engravings would be given after purifying the nightmare because the deities would get some benefits after the nightmare purifications. They would provide the believers with the corresponding reward.

It was like buying the original material; the factory dedicated to secondary processing gave the seller of the original material a certain amount of remuneration.

The holy light engraving was a form of "currency".

It was not something that could only be obtained through nightmares.

Even upright deities churches rewarded holy light engravings to those completing the church's missions.

It was just that upright deities churches had officiated rules, rewards, and punishments. The pope would record every holy light engraving given. Even deities could not give their blessings at will and could only reward the people in the church. Otherwise, it would interfere with the authority and work of the pope.

In other words, the deities were not involved in the management of the upright deities church. Instead, the administration was entirely entrusted to the pope.

It was like the celebrity's relationship with his fan base.

And so do subordinate deities.

Subordinate deities would not just get asylum days.

Their true deity would also direct some of the people from the main church to help them take care of the believers and the priest. It was like signing a contract with a big company. They would not need to be concerned with the follow-up operations.

This was also the reason why the authority of the upright deities' pope was much higher than that of the king/

Pope and Saint of upright deities were the real rulers of this world.

They were different from the stray false deities.

The false deities would directly participate in the management of the church.

Only the pope, as a secret keeper, would not easily betray the false deity. However, the cardinal bishop might defect. There were no rules for them to choose cardinals. Basically, it depended on the pope or false deities' liking.

In other words, it would be fine as long as it was pleasing to the eye.

The examples included the Tragedy Writer or the Pale Princess.

Given the need to relocate at any time, false deities' churches were small. Most false deities had their priests count under three digits. From this point of view, the Rotten Man was unique on its own as a false deity.

At the same time, the Bell Ringer Oik was another outlier in common sense.

However, He did not distance Himself from His believers because He abided by the rules.

It was because of His eccentric character.

He did not communicate with anyone other than necessary socializing and did not count on His believers to assist Him.

He even did the act of maintaining His realm by Himself.

There was folklore that when mortals were tortured to death by a terminal illness or were about to die without disease, they would occasionally hear three bells ringing from outside the door before going to sleep the night before they died. No others could hear the bell except the dying.

This was the Bell Ringer Oik's mercy to the dying.

He revealed the final death, giving man the last day to write his will.

This was why it was inconsiderate for those ignorant children to ring the bell in front of the elderly or the sick on Mist Continent.

This was also the reason the Bell Ringer Oik's priest was unwelcomed.

Even so, He also had some fanatic believers who believed that “the end is inevitable”. Those believers would craft bronze bells with bronze handles, rely on divine art to determine the dying people, and go to their door to ring the bell.

Even if they did, the Bell Ringer Oik would not give any reward.

He believed that the end was inevitable.

There was no help needed in the process.

There was no need to announce it.

No resistance could do anything.

Therefore, He also did not need any believers.

He even gave Himself the name “Bell Ringing Oik”. In fact, “Oik” was a somewhat derogatory term indicative of a “lowly and despicable person” in the context of the United Kingdom.

[TN: The United Kingdom refers to the Denizoya & Fildes Archipelago United Kingdom.]

At the same time, the Little Oik referred to the poor boys who steal and rob; the Boat Oik referred to those who smuggle goods and kidnap women.

Bell Ringer Oik's believers were even less welcomed than the Cup-holding Lady's believers. Once someone who held a bronze bell, was bandaged and wore a black hood said nothing if he entered the village, it meant that someone was going to die.

Bell Ringer Oik was not an evil deity and had never done anything illegal.

However, He was just not likable.

No deity would befriend Him after He had rejected the invitations of the three upright deities. On the contrary, several deities were irritated by His eccentric temper.

Being the pope of the Bell Ringer Oik was not necessarily a great identity.

Considering this point of view, Annan did not think the Bell Ringer Oik behind Bernardino was looking for the Book of Divine Transporter.

“So, what is the purpose of you looking for me?” Facing Bernardino, whose ghosts were wiped out by the Paper Princess and who was bound by countless silver chains, Annan spoke out all of his interpretations.

Standing behind the Paper Princess, Annan asked calmly, “The Book of Divine Transporter is with me. What are you going to do about it?”

“I warn you not to have an ill idea on Annan.” Before he could answer, the Paper Princess warned, “Not even the Bell Ringer Oik can save you.”

Bernardino, on the other hand, just gave an odd smile.

He laughed and asked, “If you can't rest at ease, why don't you just kill me on the spot?”

The Righteous Player(s) C378– Mr. Ray's Exorcism Ritual

Chapter 378: Mr. Ray's Exorcism Ritual

What does he want? Annan narrowed his eyes slightly.

If it weren't for the Reversed Winter Heart freezing his negative emotions, he would feel the anger of being teased now.

First, Bernardino came to seek trouble for his subordinates, killing innocent people for no reason. But after arriving here, Bernardino did not wish to communicate and taunt him directly.

Is he trying to make me angry?

Or do you think I won't hurt you?

Just then, the Paper Princess warned, "Don't be fooled, Annan.

"Bernardino has a special curse. Spiritual Monk is a profession who can continuously absorb the souls to strengthen the curse on his body. So the person who kills him will suffer an intense curse, while his soul can be reborn at a place set beforehand."

I see.

Is it a curse similar to "Destiny Bond" [1] combined with the self-revival ability of a lich?

Thus, the Paper Princess tied him up instead of killing him.

Annan frowned.

With this piece of critical information, Annan immediately understood Bernardino's behavior.

About two-thirds of his body that disappeared in his soul state should have been used to create other "Phylactery" — the soul fragments that allowed him to revive.

This guy is a bit difficult to deal with.

In other words, the Gold Rank transcendents were not opponents easy to be killed.

Relying on invisible but threatening spiritual bodies, he could quickly eliminate weaker enemies and force powerful enemies to attack his body directly.

If Bernardino were killed, the killer would be afflicted with severe curses while he would be resurrected elsewhere. The tactical approach in dealing with this would be sending out a weak summoned creature to do the killing blow and tank through the curses.

However, the weak summoned creature could not pass through the interception of his spiritual body and cause damage to him under normal circumstances.

This guy is a porcupine.

No wonder he doesn't even have the slightest fear when facing a deity.

His combat tactic revolves around "death".

However, the Paper Princess still did not give up on killing him.

She chose another way, using complex and unique techniques.

She bound Bernardino and his wheelchair with silver chains and fixed them on it. Immediately afterward, she established a sealing ritual to drain Bernardino's power.

The material to build up the seal was those spirits Bernardino enslaved.

The Paper Princess utilized her “white” to eradicate the more threatening spirits. On the other hand, She utilized her white oak cage to capture the ghost that moved slowly and had weaker power.

They were like corpses tied to a rock that sunk into the sea.

The revealed souls wailed without making a noise. The black threads protruded from the gaps in the cage, connecting them to Bernardino's fingers and legs, constantly extracting something from him. This had weakened Bernardino quickly.

Annan had supplemented himself with occult knowledge, including the book that taught about Mr. Ray's realm and ritual. With that, he quickly identified the essence of this ritual.

It was a temporary sealing ritual composed of simple exorcism rituals in a complex number [2].

The Paper Princess crafted it out after realizing Bernardino's essence.

This ritual belonged to Mr. Ray's “purification” realm.

The gold powder, white oak, green pear wood, and golden peach wood were materials that did not contain any curse. At the same time, the spiritual body could not pass through them.

As long as the spiritual body touched these four materials, it would manifest itself involuntarily. Once the manifestation occurred, it would continue to consume their power.

Under normal circumstances, oak, pear wood, and peach wood did not have such colors. Only the corresponding ritual could grant the materials their sacred properties.

Jasmine mixed with the Myrrh [3] was irritating to the spiritual body. Roughly speaking, it was like having excrement dozens of times thicker that could be smelled directly on the “skin”.

It was probably the equivalent of being splashed with shit for the ghost.

If the ghost smelled it, it would run away immediately. But, if it was to expel the ghosts, it was enough to light the incense.

Of course, this also had the potential to provoke powerful ghosts in an instant.

The only way for mortals to effectively kill ghosts was to use wood with sacred qualities or smeared with gold powder to make a larger cage with five sides sealed. Then, they would drive the soul in and close the gate at the sixth side.

When the power of the spirit body was exhausted, it would die naturally.

The Paper Princess did not require incense.

She created a cage made of white oak out of thin air directly through her canvas, forcing the ghost into it. However, these ghosts had a contractual relationship with the Spiritual Monk. If they needed power, it would be drawn directly from Bernardino.

In this way, when these ghosts suck Bernardino directly to death, the result would be “Bernardino killing himself”, thus bypassing his curse.

This allowed Bernardino to be killed safely without getting hurt, even though killing him had no benefits.

This was obviously because the Paper Princess was worried that bad things might happen to Annan, so She handled everything for him vigilantly.

The Paper Princess did not even let Annan touch Bernardino. As soon as the two of them teleported, She drew a yellow sticky rope with crayons and dragged Annan into the distance. Then, She drew dense red silk threads with a pencil and instantly arranged a barrier ritual of the Cup-holding Lady in the air.

The effect of this ritual was to make mortals feel dull and painful in their hearts and stay away from this place subconsciously after approaching. At the same time, the enemies in the barrier continue to feel severe heart pain and cannot move or even directly cause their death.

Annan resurrected Jiu Er directly. Of course, her clothes were intact. But her soul was stained with black mud and suffered slight damage.

The symptom would be a dull pain in the abdomen and the soul erosion rate that had increased by 15 points.

She had nothing to do with Bernardino trying to seek out Annan.

Jiu Er had suffered for no reason. Annan did not plan to ignore it but planned to give her some compensation.

Just think of it as “an unknown bug occurred”, “data error”, or something like that.

Of course, Annan knew Jiu Er favored him.

Unlike Lin Yiyi, who was simply lusting for his body, Jiu Er was a young girl. She was sick at home all year round because of her poor health. As a result, she was pretty estranged from her classmates, and the relationship between her online fans and she was too distant.

Annan was self-aware.

Jiu Er was young and rich, with high status, a promising future, calm and active character. She was gentle and kind but not timid, willing to uphold justice, robust and healthy. In addition, he even fought with her, and the cooperation went well.

Most importantly, she was gorgeous.

It was not surprising that Jiu Er liked him.

However, there was an adult soul contained in Annan's fourteen-year-old body. The two souls were now separated by a world, and it was difficult for Annan to take responsibility for her.

So Annan deliberately pretended to be young and innocent, acting as if he had no idea about romance. However, he also did not want to alienate Jiu Er. As long as Jiu Er was mature and sensible, she should not have such irrational feelings.

Lin Yiyi's feelings were much more mature.

She only craved the body, not the person directly.

So, when Annan took advantage of Lin Yiyi, he did not have the slightest psychological burden.

Thus, this was the so-called win-win situation.

The Righteous Player(s) C379– Soul Withering Curse

Chapter 379: Soul Withering Curse

After confirming that Bernardino was the Paper Princess's confinement, another question emerged.

Annan was sure that he had never offended the man.

Bell Ringer Oik never communicated with his priest, so it would not be Bell Ringer Oik's intention.

Being the Bell Ringer Oik's pope, Bernardino could not possibly do anything with the Book of Divine Transporter. The dead air around him would stop him from assimilating the “brilliance” attribute in the Book of Divine Transporter. He would not be able to perceive, touch, and gain the book.

There was no point and no benefit for Bernardino to go against him.

Also, he already knew who the person who held the Book of Truth was. There was no need to utilize Jiu Er as bait. He could find Annan directly through the eyes of passers-by.

It felt like he was intentionally seeking death from Annan.

You can't intentionally feed like this.

“What is your goal?” Ignoring Bernardino's provocation, Annan raised his voice and asked again, “Although you have harmed my people, I can still trust your words. As long as you can convince me...”

“Then, let me go first.” Facing his inevitable death, Bernardino was not afraid at all.

He just let out a low laugh and said calmly, “This is not how chatting should be.”

“This is not a chat. It's an interrogation.” Annan took a few steps forward, stopped at a certain distance, and responded coldly.

He looked directly at the old man in the wheelchair, as dead as a dry corpse.

Seeing this, the corner of the old man's mouth rose slightly. “At this distance, as long as I move my finger, I can hook out your soul.”

Although his body was bound by silver chains and his life was slipping away quickly, the old man squinted at Annan.

Still, Annan had no fear.

He nimbly played with two silver coins on the tip of his right finger.

The two silver coins fluttered at his fingertips like butterflies, reflecting the sun's brilliance.

"Do whatever you want." Annan smiled gently, "But do you really want to do that?"

"...Ha." The old man stared into Annan's eyes without the slightest fear. After a long time, he suddenly laughed, "You are really not afraid."

He spoke in a hoarse and low voice, "Fools don't know fear; heroes have nothing to fear. So which type of person are you?"

"I have no idea." Annan answered without any hesitation, "It doesn't matter."

"It doesn't matter, is it?" Seemingly surprised by this answer, Bernardino was silent for a long time.

He seemed to be thinking about something.

As time passed, Bernardino, who was continuously drained of life by the Paper Princess's ritual, became weaker.

When Annan could not help thinking about whether to let the Paper Princess stop first, Bernardino finally spoke up.

He glanced at the Paper Princess, then at Annan.

He opened his mouth and said slowly, "Do you know your lifespan is over?"

"Impudent!" The Paper Princess immediately reprimanded.

Annan was not angry but asked with interest, "You mean I'm going to die now?"

"Not now." Bernardino corrected, "You are already dead."

That sounds like you're cursing at someone. Jiu Er, who was watching on the sidelines, had such thoughts in her mind.

"So, are you seeking justice?"

"No, I just hope to communicate." The old man's tone became humble, "There are some things that I can't seek and certainly can't possess. At the same time, there are some things your excellency can't easily get and won't be able to do."

Unbeknownst to the crowd, Bernardino changed his address to Annan.

Annan had already realized what the purpose of Bernardino's visit was.

Not many people know that "Annan" died once.

Those who could not see through the past, future, and soul's fate could not confirm that "Annan" had changed.

Bernardino did not get the information from Bell Ringer Oik but obtained it through his divine art.

To be more precise, he must have confirmed that Annan was not the “real Annan” when he had stolen memories from Salvatore. He was confident that the “previous Annan” was dead and Annan was on his “second life”.

Based on the situation, Annan already knew what he wanted.

What Bernardino was looking for was the “Rebirth Skill”.

That's so ridiculous. Annan almost burst out laughing.

Bernardino's way of fighting was to cause trouble for his enemies by teasing and escaping death. As he approached the end of his lifespan, he was not thinking about facing the inevitable death but about how to escape this destiny.

What an irony.

Is this Bell Ringer Oik's pope?

I suggest you change your faith to the Venerated Skeleton.

That's hilarious.

Annan raised the corner of his mouth and looked at the old man.

“Just say what you want.” Annan said calmly in an unquestioning tone, “As long as the price is right, we can negotiate.”

Hearing this, the old man took a deep breath.

His face covered with bandages stopped the onlookers from making out his expression. However, it seemed like he had relaxed and understood something.

“So that is the case. Did you invent the ritual yourself?”

“That's right. It's me.” Annan replied calmly, “But I have resurrected and lost my previous memory. If you ask me how to perform the ritual, I won't be able to answer you.”

It's better to proclaim that I did use some kind of ritual for resurrection.

In the face of Annan's answer, Bernardino did not give up.

He just asked, “I heard that resurrection is passed down across generations of Motherly Moth's pope. They won't have their previous memory, but they retain the soul.

“Are you using the ritual in this realm? Can the divine art in the 'moth' realm resuscitate your soul?”

As expected. Hearing Bernardino's question, Annan confirmed his speculation.

Bernardino must have burned his soul to the end.

He refined the elements to the extreme and planned to sublimate his soul. However, he did not have a suitable Book of Truth.

Is he looking for a way to escape death and prolong his lifespan? Is he planning to snatch the Book of Truth so that he can be reborn?

"I don't know. But according to your description, it should be like this. But what I have forgotten is the corresponding knowledge aside from the relevant memory."

"This should be the divine art in the 'moth' realm."

Bernardino breathed a sigh of relief, "Thank you very much, Your Excellency Duke."

Annan pressed on, "Speaking of which, what if I killed you?"

Hearing this, Bernardino hesitated for a moment.

The face under the bandage was silent for a while, but he still answered, "As a reward, I will answer your question.

"I have a curse that has been strengthened to the limit and engraved with an inscription. Anyone who has killed me will be afflicted with the 'Soul Withering Curse'. When you sleep, your memory and knowledge will flow to me. This is one of the reasons why I'm strong."

"Oh?" Annan raised his eyebrows when he heard those words.

"Then, may I ask from whom did you learn of my existence?"

"That's another question, Your Excellency." Bernardino smiled. His voice was getting softer, and his head slowly lowered.

He was finally drained of his life by his ghosts.

The Righteous Player(s) C380– A Centaur's Soul

Chapter 380: A Centaur's Soul

As those black threads severed, Bernardino's life gradually died out.

Those spirits bound by the Paper Princess would surely perish soon afterward.

In this case, it was better to utilize their fleeting worth.

Annan thought for a moment, then raised his right hand and chanted softly.

"The frost is thy wheel, and the spirit is thy path." After Annan's chant, five transparent flames of blue crystal hue appeared and extinguished at Annan's fingertips. A hollowed-out gorgeous frost wheel flew out from his palm like a frisbee and quickly enlarged in the air.

As the Frost Wheel hit the ground, its ice broke and regenerated immediately, producing a crackling sound. At the same time, the ground was left with white frost marks akin to tire traces.

After the wheel was unleashed, it slammed into the spirit bodies trapped in the cage.

The Paper Princess had burned the relatively powerful spirit bodies to death in the first wave of attacks. For example, they were the spirit bodies of elves, demons, Silver Rank transcendents' souls, and two extraordinarily rare Golden Rank souls.

The rest of the bound souls, except for a Silver Rank centaur, were all Bronze Rank Transcenders' souls.

Also, this was the first time Annan encountered a centaur.

Through the soul state, Annan noticed that the centaur soul must be a muscular young man with wheat-colored skin before his death. His upper body was similar to a human male, but his chest was flat. Furthermore, his muscles were much more robust than humans. It had glossy skin, like a bodybuilder decorated with oil for modeling.

What lay from the waist down was a horse. The skin of the centaur's lower body was also shiny brown like his upper body, and its fur was unlike an ordinary horse.

The centaur had a weird outfit. The horse section was draped in what looked like chain mail, a mat, or a rug. After the clothing hung down a certain distance from both sides, there was a row of metallic dark iron thorns like shuriken, probably as decoration or counterweight.

The centaur had no shoes on, and his hoofs directly tread on the ground. He wore a leather vest for his upper body with a V-shaped opening at the back. At the same time, the frontal clothing draped down and covered the belly of the horse's body.

The centaur was an archer, but he did not attack Annan.

He showed complicated feelings and watched Frost Wheel tear himself apart calmly.

The reason why the Paper Princess did not kill the centaur was simple. The centaur did not proactively attack. He might not fight back if the offender explains and justify it clearly after the attack.

The centaur would not misunderstand others. At the moment of being attacked and even before that, they could see the dialogue choice that could resolve the conflict and even turn an enemy into a friend. Sometimes, the enemies were inexplicable to how it happened.

They would only attack an inevitable enemy. Even so, they would only fight back when they could not escape.

In comparison to the foreseen future, the conflict that happened contemporary was meaningless. What they lost was something they could afford. When they peered far enough into the future, they did not even care about their existence but what they could contribute and achieve in their lifetime.

In this sense, centaurs were silent lunatics.

They saw through their mortal nature, so they went mad.

This personality remained even after their death.

This was the "silent" persona etched in the depths of the soul.

Even when Annan was killing him, he did not try to resist. It might be because of the Paper Princess, or he probably saw something. Instead, he just stared at Annan silently, smiling. He lowered his left hand holding the bow, and there were no signs of his right hand trying to draw the arrow from his back.

The Frost Wheel ran over these souls, entangling them in it and slamming them into the cage. Unfortunately, none could escape and continued to roll forward inside the wheel. Most of the spirit

bodies were frozen by the curse and soon shattered into pieces, sending white ice fragments into the air.

[You have killed a Bronze Rank enemy in battle. 300 Shared Experience points are given.]

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At the next moment, pleasing experience point prompts were displayed in front of Annan.

Perhaps because they were in the soul state, these spirits only gave Annan half of the original experience's worth.

However, the prompt regarding the defeat of the centaur surprised Annan.

[You're given Shared Experience points for killing a Silver Rank enemy in battle.]

Why is the experience points unusually high?

Although the centaur was in the soul state, the experience given was higher than all Silver Rank transcendents Annan had killed so far.

Is it because he is a centaur?

Is centaur's experience so much higher than Yaselan folks?

For some reason, Annan felt that there seemed to be a story in the eyes of this centaur looking at him, and it seemed like there was some expectation in his gaze.

Did he peer into my future?

But it should not be...

The essence of the Prophet's spell was to acquire the information sent by the "future self". Since he would be dead, the aftermath pieces of information would not be revealed.

If the centaur were to die here, it should be impossible to know about the future.

Could it be that he knew Annan? A new thought popped into Annan's mind.

What the hell did Annan do in the first life?

He not only got acquainted with a bunch of true deities and false deities, he even got familiar with the centaur tribes who refuse to contact outsiders or use Prophet magic to avoid strangers.

How on earth did he do it?

Have you traveled the world in the first life?

"Forget about it." Annan looked away.

After he advanced to the Silver Rank, the required experience points for further upgrades increased significantly again.

However, these experience points were enough for him to promote himself by one level.

But at this time, Annan planned to hold on with his level upgrade first.

He planned to save some experience points first and prioritize his attribute points. Then, he would use the experience points to buy the profession level of [Frostwhisper] and directly push the Perception attribute to more than 50 points.

As for Bernardino's experience points, Annan would not even consider getting it.

Instead, it was luck that Annan did not kill him just now.

If Bernardino had access to Annan's memories and knowledge related to his original world, Bernardino probably had the chance to be compatible with the Book of Divine Transporter.

So far, Annan still did not know what the Book of Truth Book of Divine Transporter was about.

But for now, it had involved two realms: "immortality" and "ascension and change". As Annan continued with his collection process, it could generate four more domains. In the end, if Annan wanted to ascend to a deity, he had to choose two of them, or the selection process might happen at random.

For now, "immortality" and "ascension and change" were player-related realms.

This might be why Annan, as the game planner, was a good fit for the Book of Divine Transporter.

Bernardino's experience points might not satisfy Annan either.

Since it was only one-third of Bernardino's soul, the experience points gained after killing him would only be one-third of its original worth at most.

As a Soul Snatch Wizard, he lived up to the "Necromancer" title in ancient times.

This ascendancy process was simply like a typical lich.

"He has picked up a wrong faith." Annan's eyes did not show the slightest irony but a faint trace of pity when looking at Bernardino's dead body.

"What?" the Paper Princess asked.

She vaguely felt Annan exuding a saint-like aura.

"Being the Bell Ringer Oik's pope, he finds ways to escape death. He'll be held responsible for it for sure." Annan said calmly, "Of course, we have to watch out for another thing until then."

"Nicholas?"

"Right." Annan nodded and offered an idea, "Even if Nicholas is under Father Stone's control, what about Bernardino?"

"If he gets the power of Sage's Stone and acquires unlimited elemental power, it will extend his lifespan. Who can put him in check?"

"Will Nicholas grant his request?"

"I think so," said Annan solemnly.