

From Secret Clan to the Divine Dynasty

#Chapter 101: 110 Inferiority - Read From Secret Clan to the Divine Dynasty Chapter 101: 97 Inferiority

Chapter 101: Chapter 97 Inferiority

“Master Darren, be careful.”

In the banquet hall of the Fischer family manor, Vanessa held the small Lilian in her arms and helplessly gazed at the curious and extremely restless Darren, saying with some concern.

Seven-year-old Darren was standing on the table usually used for dining, his plump body jumping up time and again as he tried to reach the chandelier hanging from the ceiling.

“You’d better come down, if you fall, I’m sure Hospital Director Irene will have words with me.”

Vanessa helplessly put down the three-year-old Lilian and stepped forward.

Lilian’s hair, like her mother’s, was soft and light golden while her sapphire-like eyes were inherited from her father, pure and natural like the azure sky, quietly and curiously watching her brother Darren.

She was well-behaved, obedient, and sensible — a stark contrast to the always restless Darren.

Vanessa approached the table, intending to get him down, yet Darren didn’t listen to her at all.

Having mastered the Power of Consecution, she could jump onto the table and forcibly take the jumping Darren down.

But to jump onto the table herself would be quite unseemly, and Vanessa felt that doing so would definitely infuriate Master Darren.

Indeed, Darren shouted impatiently, “I won’t listen to you, who do you think you are? Stop meddling in my business!”

Vanessa frowned slightly; she didn’t particularly like Master Darren’s personality.

He behaved well in front of his parents and the Hospital Director, perhaps a bit too inquisitive, but when it came to dealing with elders otherwise, he tended to enjoy being mischievous and making trouble.

She thought it might be because of his young age, so his personality was a bit troublesome. He might grow out of it as he got older.

While pondering, Vanessa suddenly thought of Chris.

She actually remembered that Chris, as a child, liked to play pranks as well, but that teenager had become much more steady recently.

Only, that guy was still as taciturn as before.

Without Chris's help, capturing those two murderers wouldn't have been that easy.

She remembered how Old Abutte's granddaughter cried outside the factory, feeling deeply uncomfortable inside, pitying that, in the end, both murderers were ransomed.

She had not been able to grant her real fairness and justice.

All thanks to Chris.

"Sister, what are you thinking about?"

The quiet Lilian suddenly asked, her large eyes filled with curiosity.

"Ah."

Vanessa was taken aback, wondering how long she had been thinking about Chris.

She noticed that Darren, who had been jumping on the table, was also curiously looking at her.

"It's nothing. Master Darren, come down quickly!"

She deliberately emphasized her tone, yet Darren, standing on the table, remained disdainful.

"Come down!"

A sudden voice made everyone present startle, with Darren feeling as if he had fallen into an ice cellar, scrambling down from the table.

"I, I'm sorry, I..."

Irene stood calmly at the doorway, her expression stern. Vanessa immediately went to her side and stood straight.

“Hospital Director, it’s my fault for not being able to supervise him.”

Irene glanced at Vanessa and said,

“You used to be the king of children in the hospital, but now I know you truly can’t control him.”

Because of the difference in status, Vanessa had to hold back when it came to Darren, but Darren keenly sensed that she posed no threat and thus could act recklessly without fear.

Irene knew that the years of careful nurturing had filled Vanessa with loyalty and gratitude towards the Fischer family members.

That Vanessa dared not be strict with Darren at least ensured that she would also not rebel in the future.

But Darren’s character education still had to be strictly addressed; it could not be allowed for him to continue misbehaving. At seven years old, it was time for him to rein in his character.

According to the discussions between Irene and Byrne, they intended to gradually instill the faith of the Lord of the Lost in their progeny starting at the age of ten.

Each descendant was extremely precious; although they were Extraordinary Exponents with the Power of Consecution, they were still bound by rules set by the gods, and the number of offspring of an Extraordinary Exponent was naturally limited.

Irene pondered silently; Darren stood in front of her, silent and trembling with fear.

He feared Aunt Irene more than his parents; she managed all of the family’s internal affairs, and even his parents struggled to intervene when it came to his punishment.

“Why did you climb up there?” Irene’s inquiring tone was very calm.

Byrne’s son was actually very clever, quick to learn anything and with a flexible mind capable of drawing inferences, it’s just that his personality was somewhat unpleasant.

“I just wanted, I mean, I wanted to...”

Darren stammered, his face turning red without being able to finish his sentence.

Irene calmly continued, "Did you want to see if you could touch the chandelier on the ceiling?"

"Mm-hmm," Darren nodded after she finished speaking.

Irene said sternly, "You can't do this again in the future; you will be punished by copying that mineral book your father has been reading recently. Vanessa, if he exhibits any more improper behavior, tell me immediately!"

"I understand."

Darren deflated like a punctured ball but also breathed a sigh of relief; thankfully, he wasn't physically punished this time.

Once, he had accidentally set the curtains on fire and was severely beaten by Aunt Irene.

Vanessa stood silently at the side with her hands behind her back, not saying anything, just accepting the arrangement.

Irene shook her head. If anything else happened, she would have Vanessa let her know immediately.

In fact, she still did not want to give Vanessa the authority to directly control Darren.

Because the Verne family in Nasir Town was an example, the young knight's personal old servant had become increasingly arrogant.

Since the old knight's death, he had taken a strong stance in managing the family business, indulging relatives and embezzling the family's property.

And Verne, who had been raised by him since childhood, didn't mind at all. On the contrary, he felt that the other party was being kind to him, even saying that the old servant was his only remaining elder and these matters were not an issue at all.

The Irene of the past could never understand why nearly all noble families always emphasized the class difference between master and servant.

Now she had gradually come to understand, because some pampered servants would certainly try to take advantage of any opportunity to steal and take possession of the family's belongings.

As she left the banquet hall, she pondered that perhaps it was time to emulate those true noble families and establish a set of complete family rules.

"When Byrne returns, I'll discuss it with him in detail," she said.

At night, Vanessa returned to her room on the second floor of the manor.

Among the many family servants and guards, only Vanessa, Erik, Archibald, and Theo had their own rooms on the second floor of the residence.

She sat on the chair, absent-mindedly picked up the booklet written by Hospital Director Irene, which contained doctrines praising the Lord of the Lost. The content was not much but concise.

Suddenly, the young girl seemed to see Chris's figure in front of her.

"What's happening?"

Vanessa blushed slightly, touching her neck, as she had been thinking about Chris in her mind, even after coming back she couldn't help but think of him.

It was strange, she had never felt this way before.

She had pleaded with the young man in the pouring rain to find the killer who murdered the innocent.

The young man nodded silently, a shallow smile spreading across his face.

Vanessa seldom saw Chris smile, and most of his smiles were usually malicious. That kind of joyful smile was the first she had seen.

It was attractive.

"What on earth is happening to me? Strange, it's really too strange."

She felt as if Chris was just standing in the room, calmly looking at her, with a gentle, shallow smile.

If a handsome young man often smiles, then his smile, though charming, might not be unforgettable.

However, a silent and expressionless handsome young man like Chris, his heartfelt smile truly made Vanessa unable to forget it.

"Sigh, I can't think about this anymore."

Vanessa harshly twisted her unharmed leg to snap out of it, then silently looked at her deformed right leg.

After taking off her pants, what was revealed was a leg that looked like rotten wood, disgusting and with several parts even having dense black spots.

Anyone who saw it for the first time would probably be unable to stop themselves from wanting to vomit.

“ ... ”

What am I daydreaming about? With a leg like this, how could I possibly be worthy of him?

Moreover, Chris's marriage partner would inevitably be someone from a noble family, even possibly a graceful young lady from a viscount family.

Many nobles have commoner lovers, even more than one, but the partner they marry is always another noble family member who is a match in social status.

Her heart, that was once overflowing with joy and anticipation, suddenly fell back into a trough, filled with misery.

For years, Vanessa had no thoughts about her deformed leg, she did not care about other's gazes and prejudices, but now she felt an unprecedented sense of grievance and inferiority, eventually crying with clenched teeth, her body trembling slightly and continuously.

Suddenly, running footsteps sounded from outside the room.

The door was pushed open, and Madam Irene stood outside, her expression calm.

“Do you know where Chris and Archibald are?”

Vanessa's eyes were red as she wiped her eyes, pulled up her pants, and shook her head:

“They seem to be at the port.”

“Are you sure?” A moment of contemplation filled Madam Irene's eyes.

Vanessa thought carefully and recalled what Chris and Archibald had mentioned.

They were going to the port to deal with a problematic male merchant, who was a commoner, but who could very well be a spy planted by the Kesse family.

Chris and Archibald, the two young men, had been handling such problems ever since they killed the original town chief.

She nodded in affirmation: “It's at the port.”

Irene noticed that Vanessa seemed to have been crying, but there was no time to discuss it. She immediately said:

“Get ready for battle right away, Vanessa. Powerful enemies have arrived at Nasir Town!”

Vanessa, still immersed in emotion, was instantly shocked and snapped out of it, promptly pulling out flintlock guns and several daggers from inside the room.

Then, she and Irene left the room together to notify the rest of the family of the incoming danger.

Irene took a deep breath, the enemy’s location was at the port.

Great Lord of the Lost, You must have also given the information to Chris. He should return at the first opportunity, avoiding the enemy...

I humbly request again, do not let him die.

She suddenly realized she did not have that sense of fear, the fear of losing Chris.

A strong premonition surged within the depths of Irene’s heart, that if she were to make one more sacrifice, it would likely be her last.

She would ultimately die because of it.

Chapter 102: Chapter 98 Pre-War

“

A few days ago, Irene had already discerned through Listening for Malice that a merchant frequently visited the port was problematic.

When he respectfully greeted Lady Irene as he passed by her, his inner voice had already exposed the fact that he had been bought.

Such incidents were not uncommon; Nasir Town had always been probed by various family clans, and their most common tactic was to bribe some Nasir citizens to gather intelligence, create chaos, and spread rumors.

Naturally, the Fischer family had their countermeasures.

Dealing with the former town chief was an important test, and from then on, Chris and Archibald were responsible for eliminating those who needed to disappear.

And this merchant who frequented the port was their next target.

Under the pitch-black night, Chris and Archibald dragged the desperate man out after binding him, bringing him to the water's edge at the port.

Chris swiftly slit his throat with a knife blade, and then Archibald forcefully threw the merchant into the sea.

"Phew, it's done, hahaha! Good riddance! To think he was a Nasir citizen, and yet was bought by outsiders!"

Archibald was elated; he had a quick temper, and naturally applauded the death of an enemy.

Every time they killed someone, Archibald would get very emotional, maybe being prone to emotion was a common trait of those apt for the 'Path of Calamity.'

Chris, on the other hand, remained completely silent, simply feeling as if he had done something very ordinary.

"Let's go."

He shook his head and turned to leave, Archibald nodded and followed.

"I don't know how long we'll rest this time, but actually I quite like these missions. Normally, there's always pent-up anger in my heart that I can't release."

"Only at times like this do I feel truly excited!"

Archibald's face turned slightly red as he continued speaking, not minding that Chris didn't respond at all.

"We must not let off anyone who intends to harm us!"

Suddenly, Chris felt a sense of vigilance, a strong sense of crisis emerging deep within his heart.

He realized in a flash what it was!

It was a reminder from the Lord of the Lost!

"Be careful!"

Chris immediately warned Archibald, and the normally chatty young man paused, then nodded repeatedly.

"Yeah, I understand."

Having followed Chris for several years, he knew very well what a change in his tone represented.

Now, the two of them were in some kind of extreme danger!

“Back home.”

Chris made a quick judgment, the most correct decision now was to go back to Fischer Manor first.

There were many guards in the Fischer family, and there were several Extraordinary Exponents who commanded the Powers of Consecution. Even if the enemy was a Transmutation-level powerful expert, they could find a way to fight back.

But they had no clue where the enemy was or who it was, and from the port area to their home was a long distance to cover.

Chris was very aware that if the two of them had already been targeted by the enemy, this road would be fraught with danger.

[On the ship.]

Suddenly, the voice of the Lord of the Lost emerged very rarely deep within Chris's heart.

He turned his gaze sharply towards the large ships not far away, where in the pitch-black night, it seemed as if each ship had a pair of eyes staring at him.

They were indeed being watched!

Chris and Archibald began to run, desperately heading towards the location of Fischer Manor, without hearing the sound of the enemy giving chase behind them.

Standing on the ship was an elderly man in a black robe, silently watching the two figures disappearing into the distance.

He was a follower of the Sea God Cult, come to Nasir Town to avenge the Isaac family, who were also followers of the Sea God.

This was just the beginning!

“The East Coast will sooner or later be in the palm of the Sea God Cult!”

The false god, who proclaimed himself the Tempest Overlord, was gone without a trace, and the Tempest Church had fallen into complete chaos. On the other hand, the Sea God had granted even more powerful strength to His devoted cult!

Although the East Coast Province was the smallest and most remote province of Cyart, much smaller than the provinces of Elphinia, Glenborough, Ahornblatt, and Emerald Lake,

it was of extreme importance to the Sea God Cult.

To occupy the East Coast was the longstanding wish of hundreds of thousands in the Sea God Cult, generation after generation. Countless individuals dreamt of returning to this land, no longer to dwell upon the vast seas.

“Fischer family, you will not be the first of our avenged, nor the last.”

In fact, there were many extraordinary operatives from the Sea God Cult involved in the large-scale disruption of the East Coast this time, and the old man was just one of those participating in this destructive mission.

The old man had obtained important intelligence through the secret organization ‘Black Eyes’ that dealt in information. The patriarch of the Fischer family was not in Nasir Town, and these few days presented a good opportunity for vengeance.

“

He was a formidable spellcaster who had reached the low-level Transmutation rank and, theoretically, as long as he ambushed from the shadows, he could kill all the members of the Fischer family in one fell swoop!

In fact, the elderly spellcaster had no intention of showing himself for the battle.

“Have they discovered me?”

Although not entirely certain of this, the old man decided to be even more cautious and aimed to resolve all problems from a distance.

Under the Sea God Cult, the myriad of islands had populations in the hundreds of thousands, managed by twelve Deep Sea Priests, and the elder was the deputy of one of them, Deep Sea Priest “Azure.”

The siblings of the Isaac family, in fact, were all subordinates of Deep Sea Priest “Azure.”

The elder was a summoner type spellcaster who had memorized five different summoning spells.

The spellcasting technique he mastered was “Strengthen,” which allowed him to consume a large amount of spiritual power to enhance the final effect of his spells.

And as a spellcaster at the Transmutation rank, his output efficiency of spiritual power was increased several times.

Casting the same spell, even without using the “Strengthen” spellcasting technique, the final effect is stronger than that of a spellcaster at the Beginning Level.

Summoner type spellcasters often summoned their creatures ahead of the battle.

Therefore, the elder, who had not yet prepared, was not in a hurry to pursue those two, lest he fall into a trap.

Even as a Level 2 Transmutation class spellcaster, he had to remain cautious when facing enemies at the Beginning Level.

However, passing through the entire town with summoned creatures would definitely attract a lot of attention, so the elder first approached Fischer Manor nearby before performing the summoning.

Staring into the darkness at Fischer Manor, he silently chanted a spell, summoning a bull’s head demon over five meters tall.

The monster with a bull’s head and human body kept panting heavily, with four robust arms, and its blood-red skin was covered with obscure curses; the madness in its blood-red eyes could hardly be suppressed.

The old man chanted another spell, summoning another, smaller two-meter-long worm-type magic beast.

The newly summoned creature was a huge earthy-yellow worm with a fierce mouthpart that made a rustling sound and quickly burrowed into the ground, disappearing from sight.

The elder skillfully commanded the smaller worm-type magic beast to tunnel underground and attack from beneath, while ordering the massive bull’s head demon to launch a frontal assault.

He was proficient in this tactic; the creature with the bull’s head and human body had tremendous magic power and astonishing life force, making it ideal for attracting frontline firepower and attention.

And the worm, capable of burrowing underground, could deal a fatal blow to the enemy at a critical moment!

The elder muttered to himself, “Hmm, I have two-thirds of my spiritual power left, now let’s see how you respond.”

As a spellcaster, he couldn't approach rashly but instead, controlled his summoned creatures from the outside.

For a summoner who had reached the Transmutation rank, the maximum distance of control over summoned creatures was five hundred meters, which was also his safe distance.

Compared to Bloodline Knights of the same rank, spellcasters not only had a limited number of spells but also had extremely weak physical constitution; they often sought various ways to protect themselves.

The elder carried with him one Treasure class and one Collectible class mysterious rare artifact.

The former would automatically activate to attack while defending if anyone got close, and the latter could also be used in close to mid-range combat.

Chris and Archibald were very familiar with the roads of Nasir Town, and the two had returned to Fischer Manor several dozen minutes earlier.

The many guards living in the neighboring annex had already poured out, each with a flintlock in hand and carrying alchemical explosives. With Guards Captain Theo not present, the deputy captain was commanding the scene.

Meanwhile, the extraordinary exponents of the Fischer family and other important family members were all gathered in the hall.

"It's good that you have returned," Madam Irene said calmly with a nod as she saw Chris and Archibald return safely from outside.

Her face showed no sign of nervousness, untouched by fear over the potential loss of her brother.

Chris sensitively noticed this and felt vaguely uncomfortable in his heart.

Vanessa breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing Chris unharmed, truly glad that he was okay.

Irene knew that in the absence of Byrne at home, she was the only pillar for everyone.

She looked around at everyone and slowly said, "I've already sent people out to request assistance from the various powers in Nasir Town."

"The enemy won't expect our response to be so quick because they won't understand why they were discovered immediately."

Continuing, Irene paused and then said, “We’ll respond as we have rehearsed for the second scenario.”

The tense people nodded and each went about their tasks according to the drill, while the two youngest children were taken by Vanessa to a secret room in the cellar.

Having studied at the military academy in Fein City for a whole year, Byrne insisted, upon his return, that the Fischer family perform drills to teach everyone how to deal with various dangers.

Initially everyone thought it was nonsensical, finding the training boring, and faced punishment for poor performance.

After Byrne’s strong insistence, however, everyone had to persist with the training.

He also gave a series of military training to the guards, improving the overall combat ability of the family’s guards.

Byrne sincerely believed that the previous battle at the port with the Transmutation powerful expert was full of errors and chaos, compounded by bad weather, otherwise the outcome might have been a bit better.

“A Level 2 Transmutation powerful expert can also be injured and killed, if our numbers are sufficient, our tactics appropriate, and our coordination seamless, theoretically even without a casualty, we could defeat him!”

Chapter 103: Chapter 99 Collaborative Combat

Byrne had left behind several tactics for combating Extraordinary Exponents of the Transmutation Level, of course, referring to low-level enemies; if the enemy was mid-level Transmutation, then running away was the only option.

Because from the Transmutation Level onward, the gaps between each small stage of an Extraordinary Exponent were huge changes.

The guards of the Fischer family stood at various positions in the manor, lighting the torches at every key location to dispel the darkness, ready to report the situation at any moment by blowing their whistles.

They could report all sorts of entirely different situations through the combination of long and short whistle signals.

Of course, if faced with an extremely urgent situation, the guards could also directly use gunfire to “report.”

They had all been extensively trained and, although everyone's expression was extremely tense, Byrne and Guards Captain Theo had repeatedly instilled in them one concept.

As long as they coordinated and unified, the Fischer family could defeat any enemy.

Of course, this was not possible.

However, they must make their subordinates believe this; otherwise, morale could easily collapse completely.

Papers ringed with the Secret Ear Technique were pasted all over the Fischer Manor; to prevent any issues with the papers, they were replaced with new ones every few days.

Irene closed her eyes, quietly listening to the situation outside.

After hiding the two children and returning to the manor, Vanessa also dispatched fireflies one by one, responsible for assisting in repelling the enemy's attack with aerial firepower.

She had two different types of summoning spells, namely Summoning Birds and Summoning Fireflies.

Compared to Summoning Birds, Summoning Fireflies required less spiritual power and could summon a larger number of summoned creatures.

The birds and fireflies summoned by Vanessa were not without lethal abilities, but they could internally detonate to create "bombs" that caused injury; the former's power was even comparable to alchemical explosives, while the latter's was similar to the bullet shot from a flintlock.

As a mid-level Beginning Summoner, the maximum range she could control them was a hundred meters; any further, even just by a meter or two, and they would completely escape Vanessa's control.

Erik took out many alchemical potions he had purchased and produced over the years, divided into two types: auxiliary healing and damaging, and quickly distributed all of them to everyone present.

"The great Lord of the Lost has told me that there is a summoning type spellcaster, his location is behind the trees in the 7 o'clock direction, 500 meters away."

Irene calmly assigned the most important task to her brother and Archibald.

“He will surely send summoned creatures to attack the manor, and when that happens, we’ll resist at the front to buy time; Chris, you and Archibald go kill the spellcaster himself.”

“The great Lord of the Lost will tell you the exact location of that vile invader.”

“Archibald, you must protect Chris well.”

Archibald nodded continuously, shaking with excitement, his eyes wide as he said, “Yes, Hospital Director Irene, I will definitely protect him, you can count on it!”

The key to assassination lay in Chris, who possessed the Power of Consecution of a “killer.”

He could silently approach the spellcaster and end the battle completely.

However, the most important problem was that spellcasters generally all had methods of self-defense.

Whether Chris could break through the spellcaster’s defenses was the key to carrying out the assassination on the battlefield.

Only, they had no idea what the enemy’s self-defense methods were.

As Byrne had summed up, “intelligence” was the most important thing in Extraordinary battles.

If they could have known the spellcaster’s methods of self-defense beforehand, they could have been better prepared.

But the enemies were also unaware of their various abilities; both sides faced a “Fog” of uncertainty, and the ability to successfully exploit the “Fog” to defeat the enemy was key to victory or defeat.

Time passed by little by little, with everyone feeling very tense, and some even thought it better if the enemy came quickly, as waiting was when people felt most tormented and anxious.

Chris silently lowered his head, pondering the task he and Archibald had to undertake, which was to completely eliminate the enemy.

At the same time, he was calculating when the silver descendant elder Aaron, the old priest of the Tempest Order, the sheriff, and others would arrive.

Without a doubt, the addition of every Extraordinary Exponent could potentially influence the battle.

Suddenly, Irene spoke up.

“They’re here!”

Soon, loud and intense whistle signals sounded from outside! A long whistle!

“Whooosh!!!!”

A monstrous creature with the body of a man and the head of a bull, towering over five meters tall, suddenly appeared outside the manor, swinging its muscular arms to smash through the wall, with no intention whatsoever to hide its massive form.

Even from a distance, the guards immediately saw it!

“Fire!”

Faced with the terrifying five-meter-tall monster, all the guards were extremely nervous; as soon as it entered their firing range, they didn’t hesitate to shoot.

However, to their despair, the bull-headed monster turned out to be incredibly tough-skinned; it could actually withstand bullets from flintlocks, and despite being injured all over, it still charged furiously towards them!

At the same time, a few of the monster’s huge arms had grabbed onto some fragments of the broken wall.

Its running speed was close to that of a normal person, but its strength and life force were enough to match a low-level Bloodline Knight. The distance was still not close enough to throw an alchemical explosive, so the guards could only keep firing relentlessly.

In most battles, ordinary guards would have turned to flee at this stage.

“Don’t retreat! To retreat is to die!”

However, the Deputy Guards Captain roared loudly from behind; the guards responsible for that side’s defense, although pale, stood their ground without retreating or running away.

It’s getting closer!

The minotaur-like monster had come within thirty meters; its several giant arms threw stones, instantly smashing two of the closer guards to death on the spot.

Everyone at this moment was incredibly horrified. A new guard screamed and yelled, turning to run in terror, only to be accurately shot down by the assistant guards captain with a single bullet.

“Bang!”

The muzzle was still smoking when the assistant guards captain spoke in an extremely cold voice.

“No one is allowed to run! Prepare to throw! Those who have shot, reload your bullets quickly!”

Finally, the minotaur-like monster came within the throwing range of the alchemical explosives, and the family guards desperately threw the explosives one after another.

For years, the Fischer family guards trained daily in shooting and throwing, the replenishment of various ammunitions and the extra bonuses greatly spent the family’s money, and the guards always complained.

However, only at this moment, did their training finally show its effects.

Most of the alchemical explosives were thrown with precision, landing at the feet of the monster, and then exploded with a deafening roar!

The minotaur monster was instantly blown up, covered in wounds, and knelt on one knee, its already red skin torn and bloodied.

It couldn’t help but howl continuously, and even the speed of its charge came to a complete halt.

“It’s working! It’s working!”

“We did it!”

“Fuck yeah! Kill the damn thing!”

Seeing the remarkable effectiveness of the explosives, the family guards were suddenly bolstered in spirit.

The old man in the distance, observing the battle through the perspective of the minotaur-like Demon Baal, slightly furrowed his brows.

“How strange, the Fischer family guards actually have the quality of professional soldiers?”

The psychological resilience of ordinary people is very poor; facing a monster the size of a house running up close, with comrades falling, they would typically become panicked or even scatter and flee.

Yet the Fischer family guards were completely beyond his expectations.

However, the old man had a next move. Worms suddenly emerged from behind cover underground; they bit to death several guards hiding behind cover, their mouthparts filled with teeth tearing their flesh apart in an instant!

“Ahhhh! Monster!”

The guards screamed frantically before death, immediately drawing the attention of the others.

“Ahhhh, save me, save me!”

“Damn it!”

Seeing this scene, the other guards felt a chill run through them, and the morale that was just starting to rise froze instantly; they quickly fired their guns at the worm creatures!

However, the worms were fast, and in a flash, they had already burrowed back deep into the ground.

The accuracy of the flintlock guns was terrible, and amid the haste, not a single bullet hit its target.

“Wrong.”

The old man watching the battle from afar beside a tree frowned, instinctively feeling that something was amiss. How could it be that none of the opposing Extraordinary Exponents had appeared so far?

Thus, he cast another summoning spell, consuming some spiritual power, and calling forth insects the size of fists from the ground.

They all had a fiery red line on their heads, and upon appearing, they began scattering in all directions.

Various forms of enemy seeking spells are basically a must for every Spellcaster of Transmutation Level.

Spellcasters can memorize a limited number of spell models. At the Beginning Level, it's only one, two, or three, while at the Transmutation Level, it's five, seven, or nine.

Spellcasters at the Beginning Level often have no choice, but in battles at the Transmutation Level, only the most stupid Spellcasters would only memorize attack and defense spells.

They all understand the importance of functional spells like “enemy seeking.”

Dozens of black ants scurried off in all directions, climbing straight up when encountering walls and trees, perceiving all the surroundings.

Soon, they discovered Archibald, who was quietly advancing towards them.

The two closest black ants suddenly charged at him frantically, the fiery lines on their heads glowing and heating up!

Just as Archibald was about to be touched by the black ants, he suddenly leaped several meters high, and then the two black ants on the ground explosively burst on the spot!

“Boom!”

The ground was blasted apart, with debris flying everywhere, the explosive power was comparable to an alchemical explosive; had Archibald not leaped suddenly, he would have been severely injured if not killed on the spot.

“Hey, you actually found me! How was I exposed? Is he Chris from the Fischer family?”

The old man didn’t understand at all, his own residual scents, sounds, and even the airflow from his movements had all been locked onto by the other party.

He quickly moved to another location, though he didn’t understand how he was found, knowing he had been discovered meant he needed to quickly leave the area, or he might be vulnerable to a sudden strike from the other party.

At the same time, the old man also adeptly switched between different summoned creatures’ perspectives, multi-thread controlling them to continue scouting and killing enemies.

“The advantage of a Spellcaster is that we can create battlefields with vastly different situations!”

The worms had already killed seven guards in succession, and the remaining guards’ morale was on the verge of collapse, even the assistant guards captain looked very grim.

Just then, an extraordinarily special bullet struck the worm in the head by an almost impossible chance!

Chapter 104: Chapter 100: The Killing Move!

“Was that the application of a spell on the flintlock? Why is the power so immense that it killed the worm in one shot?”

The worm’s view had completely vanished from his mind, and the old man was extremely puzzled, aware that ordinary flintlock bullets could not kill a worm in one strike.

There was some mystery to that shot just now.

In the darkness, the old man standing behind the tree furrowed his brows, filled with apprehension.

If the opponent could freely shoot bullets with that kind of power, he could even consider retreating because aside from multiple types of summoned creatures, basically none would survive one or two blows.

“Perhaps it’s neither firearms nor spells, but the effect of a mysterious rare artifact?” The old man pondered for a long time without an answer and could only become more vigilant in his heart.

“Wuu!”

The bull-headed human-bodied demon Baal howled in anger, its huge body taking a heavy toll from the Fischer family guards’ alchemical explosive attacks, its constantly regenerating flesh revealing white bone beneath.

It was on its last breath and full of rage when it suddenly turned and retreated swiftly, the old man controlling it to pull back to a safe distance, its shattered flesh regrowing at a visible rate.

The opponent had already escaped the throw range of the alchemical explosives, and the flintlocks weren’t very effective; the Fischer family guards also didn’t rashly attack.

Without the cooperation of the worm, the threat from the bull’s head demon Baal alone wasn’t significant, so the old man obviously wouldn’t send it to its death without meaning, opting instead to let it recover.

“I still have half of my mental power remaining, what should be my next move to have the correct choice?”

“Hmm...”

He thought rapidly about what tactics to use and how to allocate the remaining mental power.

It was either to “Strengthen” and summon a giant bull’s head demon Baal that could ignore the power of the alchemical explosives, withstand all attacks, and directly destroy the building.

Or to summon three different types of summoned creatures for a collective attack, or maybe use “Strengthen” on other summoned creatures? Try completely different tactical effects?

The choice of tactics had a significant impact on the outcome of the battle, and he had to think carefully.

Although the effect of “Strengthen” was powerful, it would consume three times the mental power and instantly deplete his remaining mental power; it was certainly not the best choice.

The old man even clearly realized one thing, assaulting Fischer Manor tonight might not have been a good idea.

Although the only member of the Fischer family who had reached Level 2, the man named Byrne Fischer, wasn’t here, the remaining Extraordinary Exponents and even the guards all had decent combat skills.

He suddenly noticed in the view of a few black ants that the tall figure suspected to be “Chris” continued to approach their position.

According to the intelligence he had purchased, the old man knew that there were currently three Extraordinary Exponents in the Fischer Manor; they were Irene Fischer, Chris Fischer, and a girl named Vanessa.

“What exactly is going on? How do they keep knowing my position?”

Upon realizing this, the old man was astounded and decided to kill this person who was approaching first, then retreat and wait for a better opportunity!

Yes, he chose to retreat.

Tonight, he who was supposed to be lurking had suddenly been exposed, the Fischer family had an absurdly tight defense prepared in advance, and they always managed to detect his exact location!

He felt that continuing the fight would hardly allow him to easily take down the people in the manor, and once other Extraordinary Exponents from the town came to support, he would be in danger of being surrounded.

The best choice was to retreat, but his heart was filled with reluctance; he decided to still kill one Bloodline Knight of the Fischer family first.

The streets outside Fischer Manor were clean and lined with trees. The old man's black ants detected a new situation: a female spellcaster appeared behind a tree a hundred meters away.

She wore hunting attire and riding boots, with emerald-like short hair, exuding a valiant and heroic temperament as she stood there.

She summoned a flock of white birds that quickly flew towards the old man's position!

A hundred meters?

The old man was not panicked but quickly analyzed and hypothesized in his mind.

Since the enemy knew his exact location and stood at precisely a hundred meters away, it was likely she was a summoner spellcaster of mid-level Beginning, meaning her maximum operational range was one hundred meters.

He was well aware that those birds were meant to self-destruct, and so he quickly chanted a spell, summoning a creature that resembled a terrapin with two heads, a massive shell, and the size of a grinding stone.

The two-headed terrapin moved extremely slowly, only able to huddle next to the old man and spit out heavy, iron-like water pellets that shot down the birds one by one in midair.

"Eh, not good!"

The old man saw the birds being shot down one after another and initially thought there was no issue, but then he discovered something terrifying!

The birds were just a diversion; behind them were hidden fireflies!

Numerous fireflies scattered and flew in, and the terrapin's water pellets only managed to shoot down half. The remaining fireflies looked like they were about to reach the old man.

"Zi!"

Suddenly, white flashes of lightning surged from the old man's black robe, like white torches in the dark night!

Bolts of lightning, branching like tree limbs, pierced the air, automatically tracking down the hostile fireflies, completely burning them to a crisp, prematurely detonating them and creating roaring explosions in the darkness.

The automatic counterattack of the Treasure class mysterious rare artifact successfully defended against the aerial assault, and the two-headed terrapin magic beast, very close to the old man, was not affected in the slightest. Those unnatural bolts of lightning automatically distinguished friend from foe.

But deep inside, the old man was overcome with a strong premonition of doom.

“This is bad!”

The old man’s face completely changed. His most important means of defense, the Treasure class rare artifact, had been tricked by mere fireflies!

It couldn’t be used continuously, and for the next several dozen seconds, he would be in a “vacuum period.”

Meanwhile, several black ants had located the female spellcaster.

Contrary to the old man’s expectations, even though she was a spellcaster, she was surprisingly agile, managing to evade while limping. Then, through the fireflies, she prematurely detonated the black ants that were about to explode.

What’s going on?

Wasn’t she a spellcaster? And even a disabled person? Why was her physical condition obviously stronger than that of an ordinary person?

“It makes no sense. What exactly is going on...”

The old man’s mind was somewhat confused, feeling that many of the things he encountered upon coming to the Fischer family today were contrary to the common knowledge of battles between Extraordinary Exponents of the past.

He was slightly horrified. The Extraordinary Exponents of the Fischer family were all very strange. What exactly were those abnormal powers they possessed?

Despite the fear rising in his heart, the old man did not stop. He cast another spell, intending to summon new creatures to cover his retreat.

At the same time, he recalled his body that had almost fully recovered, like a bull’s head demon Baal reborn.

“Bang!”

Just as the treasure-class artifact’s gap in protection was about to end, a bullet came unexpectedly, causing the old man’s neck to throb in pain—his spell was interrupted!

He clutched his neck in shock, unable to speak a word!

“Ugh!”

Why would someone suddenly shoot nearby when the enemy-seeking spell “Summoning Fiery Red Ants” had confirmed that there was no one around!

The old man, unable to believe it, turned his head while clutching his bleeding neck, staring fiercely at a tree not far away.

The silver-haired youth had stealthily approached in the dark, crouched on the tree, holding a flintlock aimed at him.

Who was he?

The old man didn’t understand who the attacker was at all!

If the youth from before wasn’t Chris, and he was Chris, then who was the previous youth?

Having completed one shot and secured his victory, Chris, with indifferent coldness, quickly reloaded a second bullet.

Agile as a cat, he leaped from the tree, giving no chance for retaliation.

Sure enough, as expected, just as he jumped down, the two-headed terrapin spat out a heavy water ball that completely shattered the large tree!

“Ugh, ah!”

The old man didn’t die immediately, trembling as he took a crimson vial from his pocket and ingested the sticky liquid within that resembled blood.

I still have a chance!

He bemoaned within his heart that as soon as he recovered, he would immediately use “Strengthen” to summon some summoned creature.

To his utter astonishment, the old man discovered that the wound on his neck did not heal; the reason was utterly unknown, but the precious life-preserving potion had no effect!

There were too many incomprehensible events tonight; trembling, the old man lay on the ground, feeling life slowly ebbing away, and his body’s intense pain, leaving only immense fear and confusion deep within his heart.

“Cough cough cough!”

He continued to cough out blood, his eyes filled with disbelief.

The members of the Fischer family who were Extraordinary Exponents,
were simply not normal!

What was really going on with them!

Members of the Fischer family suddenly realized that all the summoned creatures from the enemy began to behave abnormally; the control spells on them seemed to fail all at once.

“Aow!”

The bull’s head demon Baal, no longer controlled, charged towards the manor driven by its instincts until Erik hit it with poison mist spray. It covered its eyes in pain, wailing in place for a long time until it was completely killed by the alchemical explosive.

Those explosive black ants scattered and frantically fled, and it wasn’t easy for Vanessa and Archibald to detonate them before they could explode upon encountering anyone.

The magic beast with two heads was, in fact, a mysterious creature called Celagram from the western regions of the Ouden Continent.

Once the control spell ceased, its heads completely withdrew into its shell, no longer participating in any external matters.

Archibald exhaled in relief, shouting excitedly, “The control on the summoned creatures has failed, that guy must be dead!”

Indeed, all of them had heard about this from Vanessa.

Most of the summoned creatures of a summoning spellcaster are mysterious beings forcibly summoned from this world or other worlds.

And as soon as the summoner dies, all control over the summoned creatures is released, and they all act according to their own instincts and will.

Overwhelmed with excitement, Archibald wanted to rush to the old man’s side but very rarely heard Chris’s loud shout.

“Don’t go over there!”

Chris, who had reloaded his bullet, reappeared, standing in the darkness a hundred meters away with an orichalcum alchemical flintlock, accurately shooting the old man's corpse with another bullet.

“Bang!”

“Aaaaaahhhh!”

The old man, who had been lying there for a long time, suddenly let out a howl of pain and anger!

As a spellcaster, his physical condition wasn't as robust as that of a Bloodline Knight, but it was still a bit stronger than an average person's; he hadn't completely died yet but also couldn't focus enough to muster his spiritual power.

Fischer family!

I curse you; you'll all go to hell sooner or later!

It won't be long, just a little while longer, and the Sea God will prepare the final funeral for you and the Cyart people of the East Coast!

Archibald froze, realizing the enemy had intentionally released the control over the summoned creatures and then pretended to be dead on the ground.

If he had approached carelessly, he might have been killed in a surprise attack by the dying enemy.

“So that was it...”

He trembled in fear, recalling the teachings of Hospital Director Irene.

Cautious! Secretive!

He often faced punishment from the director for his carelessness and almost died tonight due to his lack of caution.

The recent scene made everyone more vigilant. They waited a while longer until Chris completed his third follow-up shot, confirming that the old man was completely dead, and members of the Fischer family finally breathed a sigh of relief.

“We won!”

Cheers erupted, the shouting of dozens of people was loud, and only at that moment did the neighbors around the streets dare to open their windows and doors, peeking quietly in this direction.

When Chris walked over to the corpse of the old man, Archibald, with a sweaty face, also approached, somewhat at a loss, muttering:

“Thank you, thank you, Chris. Thank you.”

Chris stopped in his tracks, turning back to look at him with calmness.

“Survive.”

Chapter 105: Chapter 101 Harvest and Sacrifice

After the Tempest Priest arrived, his aged, murky eyes were filled with disbelief.

“You only lost seven guards, and then you killed this Extraordinary Exponent who had reached Level 2? Moreover, you said that Baron Byrne is currently not in Nasir?”

The supporters who had come to assist gathered outside Fischer Manor, exchanging perplexed glances over the body of the old man.

Irene nodded, responding with utmost calm, “That is indeed the case. He might have been one of those who lack combat experience, and his luck was not very good, either.”

How did they do it?

The old priest was extremely astonished inside. He was not very surprised that the Fischer family could deal with a Spellcaster who had undergone Transmutation.

But the fact that they had easily eliminated a Spellcaster of the Transmutation rank who launched a night attack was astounding.

Oh, Transmutation, he must accustom himself to the new terminologies of the reformists in the future.

Aaron and Knight Verne exchanged glances, equally surprised by the Fischer family’s strength being greater than it seemed.

They were well aware of one thing: the difference in preparedness greatly affected battles between Extraordinary Exponents, with the advantage of striking first being significant.

A Transmutation rank Extraordinary Exponent launching a surprise attack could theoretically annihilate the Fischer family, yet it was the formidable evil cultists who were easily killed by Fischer.

“Mr. Byrne really isn’t in Nasir?” the old priest couldn’t help but confirm this fact again and again; if Baron Byrne also had been present, everything would make sense.

“He’s not.” Irene shook her head, as there was no longer any need to hide the truth.

“Ah, alright, I understand, Madam Irene. I express my condolences for the victims in this incident. The power of the Tempest Overlord will seek vengeance for them sooner or later,” said the old priest, repeating the official platitudes, yet he grew even more wary of the Fischer family deep down, before he continued:

“Then, I will report the entire sequence of events at the earliest opportunity. The Assistant Priest may come to Nasir again.”

After pondering for a moment, Irene nodded, “Hmm, that should be around the time when Byrne is due back. They have a closer relationship.”

The Assistant Priest to the Tempest Bishop, that Priest Zayne, always interacted with Byrne rather than Irene when he visited Nasir Town.

Thus, if the Fischer family were to host him again, it would be best for Byrne to take responsibility.

Successfully killing an evil cultist of the Sea God Cult who had reached the rank of Transmutation brought great gains to the Fischer family.

They obtained a Treasure class Mysterious rare artifact, a Collectible class Mysterious rare artifact, and a magic beast that had two heads similar to a terrapin.

Since the Summoner had died, the summoned creature did not return to its habitat as usual but lingered on the East Coast instead.

This was a beast whose mobility was almost nonexistent, but its attack and defense capabilities far outstripped those of a high-level Beginning Bloodline Knight.

Although it fell short of a Bloodline Knight who had undergone Transmutation, what mattered most was that the beast’s temperament was very docile; if fed meat, it was willing to obey and could be kept in the family’s pond.

While nobody knew exactly what species the “two-headed terrapin” belonged to, it was presumed that Byrne would be able to name it upon his return.

Among the two harvested Mysterious rare artifacts, the first was a silver-looking brooch with silver lightning runes on its backside.

“Banishing Lightning,” it could automatically detect targets within a ten-meter radius that harbored lethal intent and threat, and then unleash lightning to obliterate them.

However, there would be a thirty-second interval before its Extraordinary effect could be activated again after each use.

This was a Treasure class Mysterious rare artifact, highly valuable indeed.

Irene decided to offer it to the revered Lord of the Lost, who had decreed that they no longer needed Collectible class Mysterious rare artifacts, whereas those of the Treasure class were still suitable offerings.

As for the second artifact, “evil wood,” it appeared as a black short staff, with Spiritual Power only at the Collectible level.

It was a weapon suitable for close to mid-range combat, capable of releasing a Lethality-inducing cloud of black poison upon a targeted enemy, while the bearer of the staff would be immune to the poison within the mist.

If Archibald had rashly approached the old man pretending to be dead, he would have been attacked by it!

Since there was no longer a need to offer Collectible class Mysterious rare artifacts, after contemplating, Irene ultimately decided to allocate this artifact to Vanessa.

She calmly spoke to the jubilant Vanessa:

“Vanessa, you’ve performed very well, not just staying inside the manor but collaborating with Chris and Archibald to decapitate the enemy.”

“Without your assistance, Chris wouldn’t have been able to interrupt him before another Summoning, and the subsequent situation might not have been so smooth.”

Vanessa was delighted, secretly coming to a realization.

Power and status stemmed from strength. Previously, she had not dared to harbour such thoughts, but now, if she could receive more blessings from the Lord of the Lost,

Perhaps, I too could possess power on par with the Transmutation rank.

It dawned on her, yes, both the head of the Fischer family and Lord Byrne had started as ordinary people!

They had achieved what they had from ordinary beginnings, and she was even luckier having the natural gift of a Spellcaster; it was not impossible to grasp even greater power!

If she really could reach that level, even with a cursed body that had its disabilities and without her own family, she would fully qualify to stand by his side.

Vanessa stole a glance at Chris who stood silently in the corner.

To her surprise, she found that Chris was also staring at her with a blank expression. In an instant, her face turned crimson, and she dared not look in that direction anymore.

Irene quietly observed the subtle exchanges between the youth and the young girl but said nothing.

Although both thought they had hidden their feelings well, as their elder, she had long known the thoughts of Chris and Vanessa.

Vanessa was right in her thinking; as long as she possessed enough power, the Fischer family was willing to accept her as Chris's wife.

If Vanessa never reached that level, Irene would prefer for Chris to marry a daughter from a viscount family, bringing more resources and better bloodlines to the family.

Once Chris broke through to the 3rd Rank, he would have the qualification to marry into a viscount family.

Byrne was the head of one branch of the Fischer family, while Irene was the Dawn Church's sole priest, technically holding a status even above Byrne's.

She led several core members to the basement, where everyone knelt before the sacred object, and then, with due reverence, Irene presented the "Banishing Lightning" to start the new ritual.

Karl calmly looked at the new food.

It was a Treasure class mysterious rare artifact, possessing even more Spiritual Power than the other Treasure class artifacts he had absorbed before, and was considered quite good even among its counterparts.

By now, he was certain that the transparent bottle had originally been at least Forbidden class.

"Indeed, Treasure class mysterious artifacts have a flavor. This time it tastes like beef broth, not only fully replenishing the Spirituality I spent due to mental communication but also granting me even more."

The signs of the third Seal loosening became even more apparent!

After the "Banishing Lightning" was completely devoured, it transformed into a silver-white rune shaped like a lightning bolt.

Karl fell into deep thought, pondering a crucial decision.

Should he deconstruct it into rune essence for the nourishment of other runes, or should he grant the activation right to Darren who still had no runes?

Even if he turned it into rune essence, he wouldn't be able to evolve any current runes directly.

Because both "transcend" and "Iron Wall" were already spirit runes, their evolution to the next stage required a great deal, and "Healing," with its strong foundation, also had a significant demand simply for the evolution to a spirit rune.

Yet granting it to Darren, a child of merely seven, would also be pointless for now.

In the end, Karl decided to deconstruct the Lightning rune into pieces of rune essence and poured all the rune essence he had extracted from Collectible class items gathered over the years into the "Healing" rune.

Its evolution into a spirit rune rapidly advanced significantly.

Whereas the "Healing" rune originally required thirty ordinary rune's essences to evolve into a spirit rune, now it needed only fifteen.

"At least a visible pie in the sky is the most likely result to be obtained in the coming years, but it's uncertain what kind of power the 'Healing' will transform into after its evolution."

Karl soon witnessed the Fischer family members begin their regular post-battle review, summarizing the mistakes and experiences from the fight, and Irene even had Vanessa take down the notes.

The good practice brought by Byrne's personality was instilling in the whole Fischer family the importance of experience and review. After each training drill and actual combat, they would collectively brainstorm on how to perform better next time.

Even though they achieved great success in the latest battle, the Fischer family did not become arrogant or complacent.

The Fischer family was making modest progress now. Although still very weak and treading carefully, they had at least formed a rudimentary framework of a family that could grow much stronger.

What surprised Karl a bit was that Erik, who usually didn't talk much and was somewhat antisocial, could not stop contributing during the review phase.

"I think the greatest advantage of the Fischer family lies in that we can grasp the enemy's intelligence in advance. This time we knew the enemy was a Summoner type Spellcaster, so we decided to employ decapitation tactics immediately," he said.

“Another point is that we can constantly lock onto the enemy’s position with Secret Ear and Tracking Senses, whereas our opponents have no way to grasp or even be aware of Young Master Chris’s presence,” he added.

“Although individually we are nowhere as strong as that Minotaur, we could use ordinary people to delay it while we combine our forces to strike at the enemy’s critical weaknesses,” he continued.

Everyone agreed with Erik’s insights, as the results of this battle were nearly perfect, in stark contrast to the ordeal with the Spawn of the Abyss, where the enemy’s Extraordinary Exponent completely controlled the pace of the fight.

The most crucial point was that they had been sufficiently prepared in advance, having already secured half the victory before the battle even started.

If it wasn’t a defensive battle on their ground, but an ambush in unfamiliar territory, the members of the Fischer family could have been annihilated by the enemy.

Archibald suddenly looked down and said:

“These past years, I’ve actually been complaining in my heart that Mr. Byrne was too strict during our training and that the post-fight reviews were almost maddening. Now I understand that I was the one who was wrong.”

A few days later, Byrne and Theo returned.

After hearing the whole account of the events, his expression changed dramatically.

“So who exactly leaked my whereabouts?”

Chapter 106: Chapter 102 Negligence

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Amid the distribution of consolation money and the holding of the funeral, a quiet internal investigation within the Fischer family also began.

Irene called each person into the room individually to have a detailed conversation with her.

She deftly guided their malicious words and, through the ability “Listening for Malice,” sensed the deepest thoughts within everyone in the Fischer family.

To make everyone willing to accept the command, even Byrne himself was no exception to her scrutiny.

Although there were a few servants and guards who were found to have some malice or who had stolen from the family, the entire round of investigation did not turn up the so-called traitor.

A few days later, around noon, Byrne paced back and forth in the great hall. After much thought, he suddenly said to the Guards Captain standing not far away:

“Theo, call your wife over.”

Theo was stunned for a moment, immense fear rising in his heart at the possibility, but he still followed Byrne’s orders.

“Alright, understood. I’ll go right away.”

He lived on the estate and seldom went home, visiting at most for a day or two in a month. In reality, his relationship with his wife had not been very good lately.

Although the work was exceedingly hard, Theo’s monthly salary was five times that of ordinary guards, and his annual bonus was ten times as much.

So he had always been hard-working and compliant, harboring no dissatisfaction towards the Fischer family in his heart.

Theo’s wife was also brought into the family estate. It was her first time inside the grand estate, and she was extremely astonished, staring at the crystal chandelier on the ceiling for a long time.

“How beautiful. How much does this cost?”

A few servants saw her impoverished demeanor and snickered privately.

Irene communicated with her in the room alone, skillfully using words to probe for any deep-seated malice in her heart.

She indeed harbored malice, but it was only dissatisfaction with the Fischer family for always keeping Theo tied down, and she had no other thoughts beyond that.

It seemed that Theo’s wife was not the informant, and both Theo and Byrne were relieved after getting the response from Irene.

Byrne truly did not wish for the problem to lie with Theo’s wife.

Theo, that man nearing fifty, was not only his swordsmanship teacher, Guards Captain, and coachman.

He was also a warrior who had accompanied the Fischer family for many years, and, like Vanessa and the other young men and women, he could be considered as half a family member, a trusted figure within the Fischer household.

If the traitor turned out to be his wife, according to the Fischer family's rules, they would definitely have to execute her secretly.

Even if Theo agreed with the Fischer family's punishment, he would still harbor negative emotions afterwards, and Byrne could no longer trust him with important tasks, but it was also impossible to let him leave the family.

The worst-case scenario would be a marginalized Theo eventually overwhelmed by negative emotions, impulsively choosing to betray the family.

Although all these were speculative possibilities, just thinking about them made Byrne's head tingle with dread—it was practically the development he feared the most in his personality.

Theo was also truly relieved; after his wife left, he pondered for a long time before taking leave from Mr. Lucius, saying he was truly a bit exhausted recently and wanted to go home.

In fact, the reason he gave was true.

Tired.

This small-scale nighttime defense battle had cost the lives of only seven family guards—a loss that appeared negligible in the eyes of Extraordinary Exponents.

It was instead considered worthy of great fanfare; they had casually dealt with a Level 2 Extraordinary Exponent who had attempted a night raid!

But Theo's mood was completely different.

He had eaten daily with those guards, and he remembered one young guard who, when he had first arrived at the Fischer estate, was always lively and humorous, often able to make everyone laugh heartily after training.

But Theo had heard that at the start of the battle, the young man had been eaten alive by a worm, losing half his body while wailing in front of everyone, only to be put out of his misery by a mercy shot from a friend.

The guard who had delivered the mercy shot had also told him the previous night that he had decided to quit and was planning to work in a factory in Fein City.

Not just him.

Theo remembered every detail about each of the deceased guards—their names, faces, personalities, and hobbies.

They were all once living beings.

Therefore, he had to attend seven funerals, seeing the relatives and friends of those people crying bitterly seven times.

Theo had once been a boatswain on a merchant ship that hustled across the sea, most of the time engaged in trade, occasionally turning to piracy.

The feeling of killing and robbing was not pleasant, but Theo knew he was the captain's man and had to remain loyal to the ship.

Because it was difficult for his wife to take care of their son by herself, and after a severe injury in a naval battle, Theo decided to spend the rest of his days in Nasir Town and to cease sailing the seas.

But, living off the sea, Theo could only earn a living as a carpenter, and the household income plummeted starkly.

After the birth of their second child, no longer able to stomach the hardships of poverty, Theo discussed with his wife that he had to find a way to earn more money.

Later, through an introduction by sea merchant John, Mr. Lucius met him immediately.

"Lucius, Theo is a very capable battle commander. I even wanted him to be my boatswain, what a pity," said John.

At that moment, Theo immediately said, "Sorry, I really don't want to go back to sea anymore."

He remembered how that lazy-looking man had sized him up for a long time before nodding and saying:

"Theo, heh, you have a remarkable gaze, one that only comes from a man who has seen many battles."

"If you can withstand three strikes from me, you can join the Fischer family as the Guards Captain. But you must use real weapons, not wood. Do you have the courage?"

"Fine," Theo nodded.

He not only blocked Lucius's three consecutive strikes but also swiftly dodged away from a surprise fourth strike aimed at his arm.

“You’re quite good. You understand that once weapons are drawn, there are no rules in battle. Our Fischer shield needs to be not only tough but also nimble!”

“`

“You’ve passed!”

Mr. Lucius was indeed a cunning fellow, Theo had judged at the time.

Over the years, Theo had killed some people for the Fischer family, knowing that as the Guards Captain, he had to be loyal to them.

No matter what the Fischers asked him to do, he couldn’t refuse as he had been taking their money for many years.

Theo believed loyalty and responsibility were the most important qualities.

Training the family guards came naturally to him, after all, few people could be worse than the band of nearly pirates on board the ship.

However, Byrne, who had returned from the military academy two years earlier, shook his head, saying his method of taming those brats was pointless.

“I need to turn them into soldiers who can fight low-level Extraordinary Exponents face to face.”

“Not a bunch of fools who know how to wave weapons around.”

Mr. Byrne and Mr. Lucius were two completely different people.

He was originally a kind and timid smart kid, fond of learning and good at observing and summarizing.

In recent years, Mr. Byrne had grown rapidly, becoming increasingly composed and finally being able to do things for the family that he was reluctant to do before.

In the past two years, Byrne had taught him many things from the military academy, enlightening Theo who had never undergone systematic training.

His previously chaotic experiences unfolded in his mind, and many questions found answers and explanations.

Yet, his many years as the Guards Captain forced Theo to neglect his own family.

His home was in South City, Nasir Town, a house that was not very large.

When he got home, Theo saw his wife struggling with moving things and immediately took them from her hands.

His wife asked in surprise, "Theo, why have you come home today? Isn't it not yet your day off?"

Theo managed a smile and nodded as he replied, "Mr. Byrne gave me a day off today, so I came back now to rest for a day."

"Truly, traveling a long distance is draining. I want to take a bath right now."

"Mm."

His wife nodded and headed back to the room without saying much, silently preparing the bath for him.

After putting down the things, Theo suddenly felt that she was reluctant to deal with him; his daughter was at home preparing food and was also surprised to see him back.

"..."

He sat in the chair, and for a long while heard not even a single word from his wife; he knew she was really angry.

Theo didn't think he had done anything wrong; although he could not come home often, he brought back most of the money.

It was normal for him not to be able to communicate with his family when his daily life revolved around life and death to support them.

If he hadn't devoted himself wholeheartedly to serving the Fischer family, they would never have let him become a confidant!

Thinking this, he suddenly felt annoyed. He risked his life for his family, didn't keep mistresses, and didn't squander money; why was she still angry!

After all, when I first said I wanted to find a more lucrative job, you agreed!

"Where is my son?"

Theo asked loudly; where had his eldest son gone without being at home?

His wife took a deep breath and responded coldly,

"Do you even remember you have a son? A few days ago, he left Nasir with some friends, saying he wanted to find a job in Fein City rather than be idle at home."

“What?”

Theo was dumbfounded, disbelieving his son could sneak away like that, and asked incredulously,

“You’re saying he went to Fein City? When did this happen, and how come I know nothing about it?”

“Of course, you don’t know; you don’t know anything. You were out with Master Byrne then, and by the time you came back, it was too late, and I couldn’t persuade him!”

His wife’s speech was urgent, and as she spoke, she began to cry, tears falling one after another.

“If he gets bullied out there, or something happens to him, I’ll hate you for the rest of my life!”

Theo had no reply and only after a while did he ask puzzled, “He wouldn’t do such a thing before, why would he be so bold all of a sudden... Could it be those friends led him astray? Who are his friends?”

Finally unable to hold back, his wife screamed,

“The number of times you’ve seen him in the past few years is less than the times you’ve seen those brothers. Do you really know what his character is like, what kind of person he is now?”

“And now you ask, don’t you think it’s too late?”

Theo was entirely at a loss for words and could not bring himself to apologize or offer comfort. After his wife cried in silence and said no more, the family spent the entire evening in silence.

He understood one thing very clearly. He already knew too much, and even if he wanted to leave the Fischer family, it was impossible.

The Fischer family could make a person who previously had no extraordinary power suddenly possess extraordinary power.

Theo lay in bed and took a deep breath.

The terrifying truth of the greatest secret had yet to be fully revealed to him, but Mr. Byrne and Madam Irene both suggested to him covertly the existence of some unimaginable great power.

It, indeed, existed.

Until the next morning, Theo, who hadn't slept all night, learned from a message delivered by a guard from the Fischer family.

The person who had leaked his and Mr. Byrne's whereabouts had been found.

Chapter 107: Chapter 103: Fischer Fears Making Enemies

Theo got up and without speaking to his wife or eating, he went straight to Fischer Manor and soon saw the man who had informed the evil cultists.

He was a cousin of the former village chief of Ourde Village.

The man was now bound with rope and kneeling on the lawn outside the mansion, his eyes wide with fear, his whole body trembling.

Byrne and Irene stood silently beside him, gazing at the man. Then Byrne raised his head to recount the whole situation to Theo.

"The matter is actually like this," he said.

Theo finally understood that because the Fischer family's carriage had left Nasir for Fein City, and had made a stop at Ourde Village along the way.

The administrators of Ourde Village used to be people from the Kesse family, but as soon as the Fischer family gained ruling powers over the village, they replaced the administrators with their own family members.

Then, they exiled those who harbored dissatisfaction.

But even with such measures, there were still relatives and friends of the original beneficiaries in Ourde Village who were dissatisfied, an omission in how the Fischer family dealt with matters.

There's nothing they could do—they couldn't control the thoughts of each person on the land. Besides, there were too many people in the village related by blood or marriage, and exiling them all would have been too extensive.

Irene, in fact, still remembered that the village chief's cousin had no ill intentions toward the Fischer family.

He was even happy when his cousin was exiled, for with the backing of the Kesse family, the cousin was extremely arrogant and didn't regard others at all.

It could be said that at the time, this man welcomed the Fischer family's move to drive away the Kesse family.

However, the human heart is always prone to change.

In recent weeks, because of his previous arrogance and tyranny, he was retaliated against by those in the village supported by the Fischers, and he began to harbor resentment.

One day, the man, who was short of money, happened to see the Fischer family's carriage and ran to the Kesse family to exchange the news for money.

He received a reward of one Gold Coin.

And certainly, the man couldn't have imagined that he would die because of this.

"How exactly was he found out?" Theo was surprised. Ourde Village is some distance from Nasir Town; he couldn't believe the man had been caught so quickly.

Byrne responded calmly, "I've long since told those in Ourde who support the Fischers that they'd be rewarded for reporting suspicious people. He was spotted and reported when he came back drinking with the gold coin."

He shook his head, his eyes filled with intense murderous intent. In a low voice, he said, "The whole thing was a plot by the Kesse family. Thinking about it is really laughable; the Fischer family nearly perished because of a single Gold Coin."

"It's just a pity we don't have enough evidence to report them to the Tempest Church, and the words of this man alone are insignificant."

He turned calmly, came up beside Theo, and whispered,

"Since we can't take the path of accusation, there's no need to keep him alive."

Theo quickly heard the man, his face red and trembling uncontrollably, shouting loudly,

"Don't kill me! I know I was wrong! I'm willing to compensate with money; let me do anything for you, just don't kill me ahhh!"

Byrne shook his head and walked away, then stopped and said very seriously,

"Theo, when you take care of it, be sure to ensure that the children don't see."

"Hmm."

Theo nodded calmly, then grabbed the man's shoulder, pulled him up, and forcefully dragged him from the lawn.

"I beg you, ahh! Don't kill me, ahhh! I'm begging you!"

Theo felt the man's struggle and suddenly swung his fist down on the back of his head, yelling out:

"Get over here, you bastard!"

The man fell to the ground after the Heavy Strike but still moaned and tried to get up, his pleas becoming incoherent.

"You scum, when you betrayed the Fischers, you should have foreseen this day!"

Theo dragged the man to a corner, found another piece of rope, and tightly strangled his neck, pulling hard until the struggling body stopped shivering before suddenly letting go.

The body instantly fell motionless to the ground.

"Damn it, what a hassle!"

He felt a sense of rage inside and lifted the body towards a cart nearby, first placing the corpse on the cart, then covering it with a white cloth.

Then Theo left Nasir Town, heading all the way to the East Coast, where he threw the body from the cliffs into the sea.

"Such a heavy fat pig, you wore me out," he muttered.

Theo did not return immediately but sat on the cliff by the sea, staring at the turbulent waves and the splashing surf for a long time.

"Aaahhh!"

He suddenly let out a few loud shouts, his voice carrying far.

Theo suddenly felt much better inside.

His wife did not understand him, which was quite normal, considering he had never truly communicated with her.

Moreover, he really could not tell her about the real things he did every day; he had always suppressed the killing and the darkness inside his heart.

He had thought about confiding in his family but knew that he absolutely couldn't do that.

She fulfilled her responsibilities, and I must fulfill mine.

Theo realized this.

He thought about asking Mr. Byrne for a long vacation, then going to Fein City to get his foolish son back, and after that, the entire family needed to take a good rest for a while.

He also wanted to have a serious talk about the future with his wife and children.

Mr. Byrne would agree to this request, because he had always been kind to his relatives and friends; Theo was clear about this.

When he returned to the Fischer family, Theo suddenly saw his wife's frail figure in the hall again.

"Why have you come?"

Seeing his wife's tear-reddened eyes and Byrne's hesitant look, he suddenly had a strong premonition of something very ominous.

"What on earth happened?"

"Theo, it's bad news."

Byrne silently shook his head, then took a letter that had been opened from his bosom and handed it over to Theo.

The middle-aged man, his temples graying, accepted the letter, looked down at the contents, and his puzzled eyes gradually widened with fear and anger rising!

His son had been kidnapped by the Kesse family.

Though the letter claimed that the Kesse family had invited his son to be a guest, even the dumbest person could understand the true implication behind the words.

"It seems that the Kesse family wants to keep the pressure on us, because they can't abduct anyone from the Fischer family, and since Vanessa and the others are all orphans, therefore..."

Byrne began to analyze and stopped mid-sentence, took a deep breath, and patted Theo's shoulder with a serious and solemn gesture.

"Calm down, Theo, don't panic, we won't let anything happen to him."

"I understand..."

Theo took a deep breath, it was alright, his son should still be safe.

After all, the kidnappers' motive was to threaten the Fischer family; they certainly wouldn't kill him, as then he would be of no value to them.

Though his reason told him this, Theo still felt tightness in his chest, and even found it hard to breathe, unable to utter another word.

"Go save him! What are you still doing here!"

His wife suddenly rushed up and pounded on Theo's chest, and he could only respond in silence.

Byrne immediately waved his hand, and several servants came forward to pull Theo's wife away, earnestly trying to console her.

"What are you going to do? What's your plan?"

Theo looked at Byrne with an unprecedented plea in his eyes, Byrne breathed deeply, fully sensing the earnest desire of this man who was both a mentor and a friend.

What exactly was the Fischer family going to do?

Byrne had also been pondering the whole situation, even with Viscount Bast's support, how could the Fischer family confront the Kesse family?

Normally, viscount families wouldn't directly intervene in lower-level conflicts.

If Byrne asked Viscount Bast to act, the Garcia family behind the Kesse family would also intervene, and eventually even the eight great noble families of Cyart might get involved, escalating the situation to an even more uncontrollable level.

Moreover, he could feel that there was an indiscernible reason behind Viscount Bast's kindness, and he preferred not to owe him a significant favor.

What would happen if the Fischer family went directly to war with the Kesse family?

He internally assessed the strength of both parties.

The Kesse family had two low-level Transmutation Bloodline Knights, and the total number of Beginning Extraordinary Exponents within and under their control was more than ten.

Though numbers weren't everything, at least on the surface, the Fischer family had no advantage to speak of.

Even if they could turn the tide with tactics to some extent, the members of the Fischer family would still inevitably suffer heavy casualties.

Suddenly, Byrne realized that Chris had quietly arrived at a position not far away.

He was taken aback, then filled with astonishment and alertness!

Although he was within his own family's manor, if Chris had wanted, he could have taken advantage of the moment to kill him.

In the battles between low-level Extraordinary Exponents, the advantage of a surprise attack and taking the initiative was immense, and even a weaker Exponent could potentially kill a stronger being.

Chris walked up quietly, coming to stand beside Byrne, and finally whispered something into his ear.

"Really?"

Byrne looked at Chris with immense surprise, and the quiet young man nodded slightly.

"Yes."

Byrne was so overjoyed he could barely contain himself; the words Chris had just spoken were so unexpectedly pleasant. It turned out he had already digested the Magic Potion more than a year ago and had successfully found the path to ascend to the 3rd Rank!

And with just a few more months, Chris would be confident in succeeding, much faster than Byrne!

"That's great, Theo, I need to step out for a moment."

After speaking, Byrne saw Theo was stunned for a second, as if returning to his senses, and looked down to say, "Yes, I understand, Family Head."

Thereafter, Byrne, along with Chris and Irene, gathered in the underground chamber of the Fischer family.

The events of just the past few days had been extremely grave; the Fischer family must devise a countermeasure, or they could collapse at any moment!

Byrne quickly laid out his specific plan.

"We should learn from the Leander family, show our own weaknesses and make concessions, making the Kesse family believe we have completely submitted to them."

Irene pondered for a moment and then asked, "Then what? When do you plan to turn the tables?"

Byrne immediately replied, "Of course, after Chris successfully steps onto the 3rd Rank."

"What?"

Byrne repeated the news about Chris being just a few months away from ascending, and even asked Chris to write down the path of advancement later to record in his notes.

Irene looked at Chris with a face full of surprise.

This major development, and Chris had told no one, only revealing it now.

However, given that it was him, it did make sense.

Byrne took a deep breath and said, "I think out of caution, the Fischer family should not easily make mortal enemies."

"I fear making enemies deeply because I harbor deep hatred for the Meyer family that killed my father."

He paused for a moment, then continued.

"After the Leander family members died, they submitted to the Kesse family on the surface out of fear but secretly they were always looking for an opportunity to kill them."

"We have to be even more careful; we cannot emulate the Kesse family, we must not forge long-term enmity... Once the war begins, we must ensure the Kesse family disappears completely, to eradicate the seeds of hatred early!"

Chapter 108: Chapter 104 Feigned Surrender

The Fischer family had already sent someone with a large number of gifts, preparing for negotiations with the Kesse family. The most suitable negotiator would have been Byrne, but he always felt that if he went, he might not return, so in the end, he had no choice but to let Baron Leander speak for him in the peace talks.

Byrne also wrote a letter, filling it with as many obsequious words as possible, which could be described as the extreme in fawning.

He claimed that the Fischer family truly lacked the capacity to manage Ourde Village and could only trouble the Kesse family to take over its administration.

They voluntarily offered all the resources within the range of Ourde Village to Baron Kesse for safekeeping.

With the covert support of Viscount Garcia, the Kesse family had always been arrogant in the land of the four towns, and they were also unaware that the Fischer family had found the Lion clan to serve as a deeply entrenched backer.

They would naturally assume that the Fischer family had been thoroughly overwhelmed by fear and terror.

Next, the Kesse family would certainly greedily find a way to encroach upon Nasir Town.

But that would not be something accomplished immediately; the Fischer family could use every means possible to delay for a few months, exchanging various monetary gifts and flattering words in return for precious time.

As long as a few months passed and Chris successfully stepped onto the 3rd Rank of the Path of Tranquility, then the plan to annihilate the Kesse family would be immediately put into motion.

The only request they made was the hope that the Kesse family would release Theo's son back to them.

Unexpectedly, after receiving all the gifts, the Kesse family rejected the Fischer's only request.

They were willing to accept the subservience of the Fischer family and then immediately sent their people to Ourde Village, where those individuals became the new managers of the village.

The Fischer family did more than just send a batch of gifts to the Kesse family; they immediately began preparing a second batch of expensive gifts.

After all, those extraordinary materials, Gold Coins, and alchemical tools were just for the Kesse family to store for a few months, and the likes of Byrne and the others didn't much mind the interim loss.

Only Irene, seeing the funds on the account diminish, was confused and her heart constantly bled, often sighing and lamenting.

In the precious time they had bought, the Fischer family entered into a phase of preparation for war.

Byrne began to use his "Deconstructive Perspective" ability to focus on analyzing the specific material compositions of the two types of masks from the Alchemy Council.

He discovered that the material for the white mask was very complex and each of the alchemy materials was highly valuable, while the components of the lower-quality dark gold mask were much cheaper.

Byrne started to attempt to create alchemical tools that could act as a “shielding” effect.

In fact, he had been trying for several years to create an alchemical potion capable of altering one’s facial features, but without success.

Now, with the capability of “Deconstructive Perspective”, Byrne could instantly reverse-engineer all the materials inside the mask, which could be considered a stroke of divine inspiration.

Karl quietly observed all the movements of the Fischer family, hoping things would go smoothly.

If they didn’t proceed well enough, he knew Irene was prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice.

At that point, Karl would not refuse to offer a prayer, fulfilling Irene’s wish to destroy the Kesse family and accompany her through the final leg of her short life.

He had recently discovered that the dismantled Mysterious rare artifact hadn’t completely disappeared but remained as a faint shadow in the depths of his soul.

Simply put, all the runes within the Mysterious rare artifacts could be broken down into rune essence, and in fact, that rune essence could also be reassembled into the original runes.

However, runes are like extremely intricate building blocks.

Dismantling them is easy, but trying to piece them back together perfectly is excruciatingly difficult.

“Although it will be very tedious and complex to reassemble, it is ultimately a pleasant discovery.”

Karl was still happy, since in the future he could recklessly dismantle the essence of runes without feeling the loss and waste of the original runes disappearing.

If a rune’s evolved new effects and the matching Fischer family member didn’t get along, he could dismantle that rune and reassemble it into a previously dismantled rune to replace it.

For example, the Consecution ability of “Iron Wall” was currently not very compatible with Chris.

He pondered that one day, he might dismantle “Iron Wall” and give Chris a different rune.

The replacement rune might be one that had been obtained but dismantled, or perhaps a new rune acquired in the future.

“In short, the various combinations of runes will be very flexible, and one need not be afraid of mismatches or dissatisfaction with newly evolved effects.”

The only issue is that while dismantling runes is easy, reassembling them is incredibly difficult.

Reconstructing runes would take a very long time; otherwise, he would have considered immediately replacing Chris’s “Iron Wall” with “Lightning Expulsion” or “Tainted Blood”.

But Karl, being extremely bored, also felt that it would be rather amusing.

“Chris, have you finished writing?”

In the alchemy workshop of the Fischer family manor, Chris silently wrote down his discoveries about the specific route to the 3rd Rank advancement, as Byrne had requested.

“You’ve actually discovered two routes?” Byrne was a bit surprised after reading what he had written.

Having finished writing, Chris set down the feather pen, nodded, and said nothing.

In actuality, he had accidentally discovered that in two different circumstances, Spirituality begun to stir suddenly, showing signs of boiling.

The first instance was assassination.

As long as he killed someone without being detected, he could initiate the autonomous stirring of his Spirituality.

As for the second situation, Chris had once, while disguising himself as a random passerby, found that his spirituality could likewise autonomously adjust itself.

Furthermore, he quickly discovered that the efficiency of adjustment in the second situation was higher than the first one and made it easier to approach a boiling state.

Byrne pondered for a moment, then confirmed with a nod and said,

“It seems that the second route would be easier after all. Your 3rd Rank abilities should be closer to ‘disguise’ rather than ‘assassination’.”

Chris also felt this made sense, predicting that he would be able to advance in a few months.

“Then, we’ll wait for your return.”

After listening to Byrne’s entrustment, Chris went to say goodbye to his sister, Irene, and then left the Fischer family manor.

He thought about it and decided not to go see Vanessa.

Afterward, Chris left Nasir Town alone by carriage.

He arrived at Fein City, which was seeing an increase in population every day due to the establishment of various factories.

It was said that several families in the city, at the suggestion of the Lion clan, had made a significant decision.

They wanted to expand the urban area of Fein City and establish several towns surrounding it to alleviate the various issues caused by the surging population within the city.

Chris was well aware that establishing new towns required a large sum of money and would involve many construction projects, which would inevitably lead to many intricate conflicts.

But none of that concerned the Fischer family; he had only one task to focus on now.

The route for the advancement ceremony was “disguise.”

Based on Byrne’s experience in advancing to a ‘Mysterious Scholar’, it seemed the more complex the ceremony steps were, the more significant the impact was, and the more apparent the boiling of spirituality.

For over a year, Chris had been pondering how to completely disguise himself as another person.

Time was pressing, and he had to step onto the 3rd Rank as soon as possible.

The young man took a deep breath. Although he hadn’t interacted much with others, it didn’t mean he didn’t value family and friends.

He recalled the worry in Theo’s eyes, the moment Archibald was nearly killed, and the dismembered bodies outside the factory, as well as Vanessa’s sorrowful and angry plea in the rain.

Chris knew very clearly that there was no more time.

If the Kesse family were not removed, Nasir Town would sooner or later be completely devoured, and Byrne, Irene, Vanessa, Archibald, and everyone in the Fischer family would lose their foothold.

His sister, would never tolerate the true arrival of that scene.

He had to completely abandon himself, change his appearance, and become a completely different person.

The young man shaved his silver-white hair, endured the pain of using a dagger to carve messy wounds on his face, and finally put on a set of tattered clothes.

He approached the foul-smelling muddy water; the youth in the water lost his originally beautiful appearance and turned into an extremely ugly “dwarf.” Chris jumped into the mud and took a long time to crawl out.

By now, Chris was dirty all over and reeked with a strong foul smell.

It was very uncomfortable.

Chris suppressed the discomfort in his body and closed his eyes.

He then headed to a mining area outside Fein City, intentionally hunching over, and found a man in charge of recruiting workers.

A few toughs surrounded the man in charge of recruitment, constantly patrolling around, and they all scowled at the smell of Chris.

“What kind of pig swill is this, a dwarf that stinks enough to make you vomit!”

Chris didn’t care; he acted as if he had been starving for a long time, slowly approaching, and suddenly burst out with a string of imploring words:

“I need a job, I’m willing to do anything! I need money!”

As he spoke these words, he could clearly feel his spirituality showing signs of boiling.

Although it didn’t last, that moment of boiling was very clear.

The man in charge of recruitment stared at the short, filthy, and ugly fellow for a while before he chuckled and said,

“Alright, stinky dwarf, but looking at your condition, you probably can’t work for long, so we can’t pay you money, only food. How about that?”

“No money, I, I...” Chris pretended to hesitate.

The man suddenly shouted in anger, “Getting food and still not satisfied, huh? If you don’t work, there are plenty of others who will. If you don’t agree, then scram!”

He was telling the truth; the influx of newcomers to Fein City had recently been so great that the mining area was not lacking workers, prompting mine owners to decide to reduce human costs as much as possible.

“I’ll do it! I’m dying, I’ll do anything!”

Chris shouted excitedly, his eyes bulging, his body trembling, and he even sprayed a few drops of saliva!

Killing was easy, but speaking...

Was so hard.

Chapter 109: Chapter 105 You’re Late

Chris hated speaking.

He could remember memories dating back to his infancy, although not as clear as Byrne’s “Profound Memory,” he still remembered how vicious the idle chatter of those around a baby could be.

They all thought their malice and hypocrisy were unseen.

Language, most of the time, can’t accurately express the human heart; more often, it’s used for lies.

Of course, he also remembered the night when the Lord of the Lost saved him and his sister Irene.

That moment, Chris too heard Its voice.

It was not a human language but something much greater, an untouchable supreme voice.

After transforming into the filthy and foul-smelling “Liam,” he began to work in the mines under the watch of the guards, endlessly busy with work.

In the pitch-dark mine, there were many who descended to mine, and the miners were all extremely exhausted; it was a very dangerous area where death could occur at any moment.

The Lorne citizens had invented steam-powered mining machines that had not yet spread to Cyart; everything in the mining area had to be excavated by manpower, which was very inefficient, laborious, and full of danger.

Most of them were not citizens of Fein but farmers from villages around the East Coast, desperately earning meager wages with deep-seated dissatisfaction.

Chris, whose physical condition was far stronger than ordinary people, felt somewhat tired after a few days of work.

Although it was not too big of a deal, he felt that without the Power of Consecution, he might have been too exhausted to move.

Chris had never understood certain things and now pondered silently, why those miners were willing to work desperately in such a place rather than returning to their villages.

He originally didn't want to understand things that were not important, but the "Liam" he was pretending to be was supposed to be someone completely opposite to the real Chris.

After careful thought, Chris took the initiative to ask the miners about their reasons for leaving the countryside, learning that the reasons varied but mostly related to land, and an old man's experience was the most peculiar.

It was a brief rest time within a day's work of digging, and Chris and the old man were both sitting on the ground.

"The Sommer family forced us to use our land to breed a magic beast, causing me to lose the land I farmed and my family. With no other options left, I could only become a vagrant."

The Sommer family was actually breeding magic beasts on a large scale, openly defying the church's regulations?

Chris was surprised to hear this, for nobles breeding a small number of magic beasts was allowed, but mass breeding was an action strictly prohibited by the major churches.

Ouden Continent had always had an ancient legend that seemed to suggest that when the number of mysterious creatures reproduced to a certain extent, a demon god from an ancient era would be resurrected along with them.

The old man's body was still strong, but his hands, worn from years of hard work, were covered in scars, and his eyes were extremely cloudy and vacant.

He sighed and continued, "Those filthy nobles, fighting incessantly for power and land, yet power lies within their bloodline, and the gods stand with them. Where, then, is the way for common people?"

"We are like weeds, trampled at will, ultimately with no way out. I'm afraid it won't be long before I die in a mining tunnel."

Chris knew what he said was very true; even if the man had a good physical foundation, he was becoming more and more aged.

His death in the mines was only a matter of time.

However, such matters had nothing to do with Chris; he had no intention of saving any stranger.

He would be kind only to those who were kind to him.

Chris just forced himself to speak with great reluctance, affecting the demeanor of an ordinary person.

"Absolutely not, you are still so strong, you won't die!"

As he spoke, he always felt as though he was being watched from not far away, no, actually, it was "Liam" being watched.

An interesting experience.

Suddenly, Chris found a bit of enjoyment in the sensation brought by disguising himself as a new identity.

He felt a hint of spirituality begin to stir within him.

The old man shook his head, opened his mouth as if to say something, but in the end, decided not to continue.

"What did you want to say?" Chris asked immediately in order to maintain his persona.

"I wanted to tell you a truth; in fact, the fate of us ordinary people is predestined. From birth we are forever, forever unable to save ourselves..."

The old man spoke in a tone of great despair and dejection, yet the confusion in his eyes gradually vanished, replaced with a contradictory smile and longing.

He went on to say, "I believe that the hope of ordinary people lies in the world after death."

Chris fell silent, shook his head, and asked, "I don't understand, maybe because I've never been to school."

"Liam, do you believe that constellations can bring hope?"

The old man suddenly smiled, looking at Chris with a voice carrying a seductive quality.

"When we have all passed on, many people's souls have no destination, while some souls will reach a beautiful constellation. In that constellation, they will experience all the splendors that this world never offered, believing that constellation to be the true hope after death!"

Because of the Fischer family's "little hobby," Chris acutely noticed that what the old man was saying was strange.

It sounded like the way his sister would start her narratives in the orphanage.

He made a puzzled face and asked, "I still don't understand, what exactly are you trying to say?"

"Hehe, take this."

The old man chuckled and took out a black stone heptagram, placing it in Chris's palm.

"Remember, only the constellations can bring true hope, child, one day you will see it; that is your destined fate."

Chris looked down at the black stone heptagram and noticed that at its center was a huge eye that seemed to be watching him all the time, and no matter how he turned the heptagram, he couldn't escape its gaze.

Strange.

He instinctively felt a strong sense of caution, yet he continued to ask,

"Thank you for your gift, but what exactly is this? Why do I find it a bit odd..."

The old man chuckled and continued, "It's a mark, you'll understand in time."

Chris revealed a puzzled expression, nodded slightly, but a strong feeling of unease surged from the depths of his heart.

When work resumed, he secretly disposed of the stone heptagram, as caution was a principle of the Fischer family.

Yet, when it was time to sleep at night, something extremely astonishing happened to Chris—he discovered that the black stone heptagram was once again in his possession!

How could this be?

Chris's mind completely lost the desire to sleep. He calmly got up, intending to carefully examine that black heptagram.

It was at that moment the black heptagram emitted light.

Suddenly, a dark aura emerged from the red brand on the back of his hand, instantly enveloping the black heptagram and turning it into pale ashes.

“ ... ”

Chris watched the scene, completely unable to comprehend it.

The Lord of the Lost protected me?

Chris's curiosity about the unknown wasn't strong enough to pursue further investigation; whenever something baffled him, he would promptly choose sleep.

After waking, he heard a piece of news.

The old man was dead.

And according to what people said, the old man had died at night, laughing, causing everyone who saw the corpse to be very afraid, finding the old man's smile extremely bizarre.

Many workers who had seen the body even began protesting in fear, stating they wouldn't continue working in the mine if the church didn't come to resolve the issue.

A bizarre smile?

Chris didn't understand what was so frightening about the corpse's smile and wanted to take a look for himself, only to find the body had already been hidden by the mine owner, forbidding any worker from seeing it.

However, he could smell the old man's scent, accurately locating it amidst a mixture of numerous others.

“Over there.” Chris stared at a concealed house outside the mining area, his expression cold.

In the dead of night, he silently made his way to where the body was kept, taking advantage of the lack of people around to slowly uncover the cloth over the corpse.

It was by no means the body of someone who had died with a smile.

The old man's face was contorted in a frightful grin, as if resembling a terrifying demon excited to the extreme by tearing human flesh!

All the wrinkles on the aged face were deeply compressed together, the corners of the mouth exaggeratedly stretched almost to the ears, and the never-closed eyes full of crimson bloodshot lines, the murky eyes still retaining the madness of his dying moments!

Chris remained expressionless after seeing the old man's "smile."

Hmm, indeed not scary at all.

He indifferently pulled at the "smiling face" a few times, finding it could not be easily altered, as if some extraordinary effect had fixed the old man's face into an extremely bizarre state.

Interesting.

Chris's interest grew strong; he removed all the clothes from the body and began a meticulous inspection, quickly finding an odd feature on the old man's back.

There were several black words, as if formed from the blood of a mysterious creature.

"Embrace the constellations."

What exactly did those words describing "constellations" mean? The black heptagram, embracing the constellations, the pursuit of hope among the stars after death...

Chris could no longer contain himself, feeling as if lured by a strong temptation, his body trembling slightly as he raised his head to gaze into the vast night sky.

He suddenly had a revelation.

So this was it, all led by His guidance, just so that at this moment I couldn't resist lifting my head to lock eyes with the great Him!

It was a black star of such immense size that it was almost indescribable with human cognition!

Most of its area was a gigantic, terrifying eyeball, always watching over every corner of the universe, observing the past, present, and future of all things, constantly emitting

infinite and endless chaotic power, enough to make everything in the world insane and chaotic!

Chris screamed, his heart racing uncontrollably, his mind flooded with a plethora of ineffable, indescribable information, on the verge of altering his self.

“Ah!”

A black heptagram full of chaotic aura appeared on his chest.

But just as the black heptagram started to emerge, the red brand on Chris’s hand glowed brightly, and the half-formed black heptagram began to fade away.

It completely vanished.

When Chris came back to his senses, he found the terrifying giant star in the night sky was gone, and all the vast information in his mind had dissipated into nothingness.

Ultimately it was as if nothing had happened.

“...”

Chris stood there in silence for a long time, shook his head, and calmly began to restore the body to its previous state, filled with an air of calm and boredom.

He turned and left the spot where the body was kept, disappearing noiselessly into the dark of night.

Chapter 110: Chapter 106 “Alice

Several days later, Assistant Priest Zayne from the Tempest Church finally arrived at the mining area, with a solemn expression, methodically conducting careful inspections and purification rituals.

The mine owners, who were usually out of sight to the laborers, as well as their attendants were extremely subservient in front of Zayne, like bugs that could be squashed at any moment, even speaking incoherently.

Many people even knelt before Priest Zayne, believing the priest to be the spokesperson of the gods, and that they ought to bow to the great Tempest Priest.

Assistant Priest Zayne paid no mind to the thoughts of the common folk.

“Hmm, the matter is basically resolved,” he said solemnly, claiming that the malevolent spirits that had once resided in the mining area had been completely expelled by him.

Chris didn't know whether his claim was true or false, but at least it succeeded in soothing people's hearts, and no one dared voice any objections.

As more time passed, Chris continued his arduous disguise, disregarding the bullying and insults from those around him.

It wasn't until one day that Chris gradually realized that continuing to disguise himself as "Liam" was no longer beneficial for him.

Perhaps the contrast wasn't striking enough; Chris conjectured that the greater the difference between his disguised identity and his usual self, the better the effect.

In the mine, Chris silently pondered his next false identity.

In the early hours of the morning, he quietly left the mining area and went to his safe house in Fein City, a place not even Byrne and his sister were aware of.

When he had left Nasir, Chris had felt the need for such a secret location, unknown to anyone, suitable for hiding and storing various necessities.

In fact, he also had such a safe house in the West City District of Nasir Town, which Chris had secretly purchased under a false identity, known only to himself.

Perhaps, the Lord of the Lost knew as well?

"The Lord doesn't care."

The safe house in Fein City was located in a newly built, chaotic apartment area on the outskirts of the city, inconspicuous among the many disordered buildings.

Yet the inside of the room was equipped with several traps by the "Trap Master," traps that had already killed two thieves who attempted entrance, dealing with the bodies had taken considerable effort.

Chris did not enter through the locked front door but instead climbed through the window, as silently as a cat, carefully avoiding the locations of the floor traps.

The walls, ceiling, and floor were shrouded in darkness, the air heavy with an oppressive stillness, nearly impossible to discern any specific outlines of objects.

Even sightless, Chris could still navigate around the traps, finding the items he needed.

Silently recalling the layout of the room, he fetched a newly improved red potion from the cabinet at the edge of the safe house, containing many white floating particles.

Beside the potion, there were also stashed Class 2 Extraordinary Material “red emerald liquid” and some gold coins smeared with snake venom.

The red potion was the miraculous healing draught “Blood Heal,” exceptionally effective in improving old tissue wounds at the flesh layer.

Unfortunately, due to its high cost of production materials and Irene’s presence, the family had not been focusing on “Blood Heal” for the time being.

Byrne felt that “Blood Heal” had huge economic potential and decided to try mass-producing it once the pharmaceutical factory was fully built.

After ingesting the “Blood Heal,” Chris stood still and calmly waited for the effects of the potion to kick in, which would take at least a few hours to show.

Time passed bit by bit.

Noises gradually drifted in from outside the room: the calls of merchants selling their wares, the teasing laughter of prostitutes, the conversations of passersby, and the arguing of the gang members.

The young man’s gaze was indifferent as he stood silently in a dark corner of the room, the scars on his face miraculously fading away.

“Bang!”

It seemed a gang member had fired a gun, as frantic screams and commotion followed outside, then the sound of running footsteps, and a succession of gunshots and curses.

Feeling his facial scars completely restored, Chris took out a bright golden wig made from collected hair and put it on his head, then cautiously opened the window a crack to look outside.

The warm light from the two suns shone through the gap into the dark room, causing him to frown.

It was very glaring.

Indeed, the Grimm Gang was engaged in a shootout, and a gang member had been killed, with the rest of the gang members divided into two groups, facing off on either side of the street.

It wouldn’t be long before the patrol arrived, but by then the gang members would have scattered.

An insignificant matter, Chris shook his head, unconcerned with the chaos outside that had nothing to do with him.

Amidst the continuing gunshots, he calmly took out the props he had prepared, lit a candle, and began applying makeup meticulously in front of the mirror, altering his appearance completely once again.

After careful makeup, Chris donned a low-cut, low-waisted white bell-shaped dress and a large hat to cover his golden hair.

He stared at his reflection in the mirror for a moment and nodded.

Hmm, it's done.

"Uncles, I can't find my family, and I'm so hungry," said a pitiful golden-haired "girl" in front of the Fein City Patrol Bureau in the afternoon.

She had sand-gold hair, lovely eyes, an expression of delicate vulnerability, exquisite features, and the elegant attire that clearly belonged to a noble family.

The patrolling guards, upon seeing the "young lady," all immediately felt a pang of pity, wishing they could find her family right away.

Moreover, everyone thought of the same thing. Since she came from a noble family, there would definitely be a generous reward for helping her find her family.

"Miss, what is your name? Which clan do you belong to, and what is your surname?"

An elderly patrol guard lowered his head and asked Chris kindly.

"I... My name is Alice."

Chris pretended to be shy, lowering her head and continuing to answer in a voice as close as possible to the one Vanessa had used years before.

"My daddy said I mustn't tell my surname to strangers no matter what..."

The elderly guard immediately shook his head and said, "No, no, no, Miss Alice, don't worry, we're all good people; you can tell us."

Chris remained silent for a long time, still pretending to be scared and shaking her head, saying nothing.

The guards standing at the entrance of the patrol station looked at each other in dismay, unsure of what to do.

If “she” were just a child from an ordinary family, the guards might have let her be, as there are more than one or two street urchins in Fein City.

They weren’t from Daybreak Orphanage, so how could they possibly manage so many?

But “her” clothes were costly, and if the “young lady” were to leave here and come to harm, when the noble family’s parents came to question them, the trouble would be substantial.

“Wuu...”

Chris cried, with tears falling one by one, occasionally sobbing, all while feeling a growing boiling sensation of spirituality.

Interesting.

He hated boredom and had always enjoyed interesting things, but in actuality, most people were dull, and he had to learn to entertain himself.

The guards invited Chris into the patrol station, some inquiring about her situation kindly, while many others went out to ask various noble clans if they had lost a child.

He watched people bustling about, as though he were brought back to that time long ago.

Back then, at the orphanage, Chris had suddenly pushed a chubby child from behind, causing him to fall flat on the ground.

He knew that the force and angle wouldn’t hurt the other, but it would make the chubby child furious and thereby sufficiently relieve his own boredom.

However, Chris never expected Vanessa to come running out, limping and daring to grab at his clothes.

Vanessa...

That fellow was still as stupid as before, getting angry and sad for people she barely knew and bound by too many ridiculous moral beliefs.

While sitting in the patrol station waiting, Chris thought while stealthily listening to the conversations of the guards around him.

“I heard that the Lorne citizens have already done away with their patrol stations and guards,” one guard said loudly.

“Ah? Then what do they rely on to maintain public order?” asked another guard in surprise.

That guard replied, “It’s still those guards, just with a new name called police. Do you think we the Cyart people, because we copy Lorne in everything, will also be turned into police?”

“What does police mean?”

“It seems to mean ‘order.’ It’s said changing the name was suggested by World Order Church; some of their members demanded this kind of reform.”

Guards or police, Chris thought they would probably be much the same since the people inside had not changed.

Most were hyenas that preyed upon common people, claiming to maintain public order but often oppressing the civilians.

If Nasir would have that something called a police station in the future, maybe someone like Vanessa would need to become a manager to truly maintain public order.

Would Nasir have a police station in the future? Chris thought it very likely.

Because Byrne once told him something when deciding to build a factory. It was a vision and dream for the future.

“Chris, you might not believe it now, but I can foresee the future from books. The population of Nasir will undoubtedly grow more and more, eventually evolving from a town into a thriving city!”

“As long as we can solve the issues with pirates and the Sea God Cult, Nasir’s geographical location and development prospects will become very good, definitely comparable to Fein City!”

“We will have a city, Nasir City. It will be a city built by our own hands, the Fischer family!”

Chris wasn’t well-read and didn’t fully understand some of Byrne’s terminology, but he was completely willing to believe in Byrne’s dreams.

Suddenly, he noticed the various looks the guards gave him, full of concern, worry, greed, impatience.

Chris felt spirituality violently boiling!

At that moment, it had been a full three months since he left Fischer.

When Sheriff Renzo of the Lion clan personally arrived at the patrol station to see the lost girl, the guards were shocked to find that “she” had vanished!

No one knew why the “young lady” could disappear into thin air under the watchful eyes of all.