

From Secret Clan to the Divine Dynasty

#Chapter 51: 49 Mr. Humor_2 - Read From Secret Clan to the Divine Dynasty Chapter 51: 49 Mr. Humor_2

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Viscount Bast sighed and crouched beside Mr. Gold, reaching out to close his eyes, then looked up at the middle-aged woman who followed.

“This is Madam Spirit Aura, an independent Extraordinary Exponent I have known for many years, a Level 2 necromancer-type Spellcaster. She can help us find the truth.”

Byrne looked at the so-called “Madam Spirit Aura,” aware that she was using a fake name.

“Madam Spirit Aura, hello, I am Byrne Fischer.”

“Hello.”

She responded indifferently, her eyes conveying a reclusive sense of social rejection.

Independent Extraordinary Exponents refer to those who do not belong to any organizations or have any family affiliations.

They act with less scruples, often only a thin line away from illegal extraordinaries and evil cultists.

“Madam Spirit Aura” was dressed in a dark purple robe, her hair still black and thick, with only the occasional grey strand surfacing, and moon-shaped earrings that glittered continuously on her ears.

Her face had a unique charm that had settled over the years, her skin slightly loose but still smooth and delicate.

Prophecy-type Spellcasters were rather rare, and using necromantic magic to investigate someone’s death was common, but the grand churches all believed that defiling a body without care was a bad thing.

In Claud World, research on Soul Power was almost nonexistent, yet the spellcasting talent of the necromancer type still existed, belonging to one of the eight major types that were the most difficult to find a tradition to practice.

Madam Spirit Aura did not make a sound, but silently closed her eyes to manipulate the Magic Power in the air around her.

A faint green light began to emerge from the body,

Viscount Bast quickly got up and approached his brother, Sheriff Renzo, and said rapidly:

“So what exactly happened, Renzo, huh, are you suggesting my beloved brother-in-law, fed up with his own corpulent figure after eating too much, shot himself? Bang! Just like that!”

Sheriff Renzo looked at his smiling elder brother, Viscount Bast, with an unreasonable gaze and said discontentedly:

“How can you still crack jokes under these circumstances? Have you completely lost your mind?”

Deep down, Byrne also felt that Viscount Bast, whether in public or private, was a man “too humorous and lacking in dignity,” even derisively referred to by members of the Eagle clan as “the clown viscount who feeds the lions in the circus.”

If it weren't for the fact that the enemies of the Lion clan often ended up dead in ditches, or that on occasion some people would suddenly cry and apologize to Viscount Bast in public, people might truly treat this middle-aged lord of Fein City as a real “clown.”

“Ow!”

Suddenly, Mr. Gold's eyes and mouth emitted a profound green light, and his hefty body started to float off the ground, making strange noises.

The body shouted hoarsely: “Help! Help! Byrne, save me!”

The voice was ice-cold and horrifying, and even Byrne could feel the dead man's will eroding his own spirit, causing intense discomfort deep inside.

After the body spoke, Viscount Bast and Sheriff Renzo both turned to Byrne, who looked horror-struck.

Viscount Bast shrugged and said with a smile: “Byrne, actually, that sentence is good news for you; it directly clears half of your suspicion.”

“If he had screamed, ‘Ah, ah, ah, ah, Byrne, give me back my money!’, that would be bad because Mr. Gold's money is my money!”

The viscount remained lighthearted, while Sheriff Renzo frowned and disapproved more than ever of his brother, but Byrne was far from able to laugh.

Madam Spirit Aura took a deep breath, controlling the necromantic magic wandering around, the mystical force that could awaken the deceased making Mr. Gold's body speak.

She asked calmly: "Who killed you?"

"It was, it was... oh..."

The green energy on the body churned and boiled; it seemed full of hatred and fear, its raspy voice made Byrne feel a deep, eerie sensation from within, witnessing a dead man speak for the first time.

"It's not a person, it's me!"

Mr. Gold's answer made everyone present pause and feel confused.

"Not human, it's me?"

Byrne fell into deep thought. What did the corpse's answer truly signify? He felt that the two phrases weren't coherent, and that the corpse's answer surely had a deeper implication.

The pale green energy gradually dissipated, and the body fell to the ground, returning to stillness. The oppressive atmosphere in the air finally vanished, and everyone instantly felt much more relaxed.

Viscount Bast hummed and scoffed:

"It seems my hugely built brother-in-law has thoroughly returned to the embrace of the Lord of Salvation. So, about the so-called killer's words 'not human, it's me,' Madam Spirit Aura, what is your opinion?"

Sheriff Renzo couldn't help but roll his eyes, not finding his brother's constant mockery of the deceased amusing in the least.

Madam Spirit Aura, not one to manipulate a corpse into speaking for the first time with the "Deceased Inquiry Spell," could be considered well-experienced and nodded in explanation:

"The meaning of the two phrases can be understood like this. First, the one who killed him isn't a human but a sub-human, a foreign race, or even a mysterious creature or being."

The trio including Byrne all nodded in agreement; they had also just come to this point.

Madam Spirit Aura paused, then continued, "As for the latter part 'it's me,' I find that a bit confusing. It's possible that he was manipulated into suicide, and perhaps that could explain his response during the inquiry."

Byrne, pondering the mysterious knowledge he had read about in certain books, suddenly said:

"I think there's another possibility, that the non-human killer could actually take on the appearance of Mr. Gold, which is why he felt extremely confused in the moment before his death."

He remembered that indeed some mysterious creatures and beings could take on the form of their target before beginning their slaughter.

Bast nodded, giving Byrne a serious lookover from head to toe for the first time and smiling:

"That makes sense, a very logical deduction. I've been told by the steward that you were the first to find the body. Why don't you tell me more about the situation, about your 'date for two' with Gold."

Byrne recounted the events he witnessed from beginning to end, with clear logic and articulation, responding calmly.

Viscount Bast showed an appreciative smile.

"I've heard about you from Gold before; you are indeed an outstanding individual."

After speaking, he walked over and patted Byrne's shoulder, speaking up close:

"I possess an innate ability to see through a person's true character in a short time, and you, you are a man of loyalty and integrity."

"I believe Gold's death has nothing to do with you. You're off the hook for the moment, Byrne, but be sure to let your family be cautious on your way back."

Byrne's heart sank, and he took a deep breath, asking respectfully, "Lord Viscount, what exactly is going on?"

Bast continued, "I've of course experienced such matters in my decades of life. It's an act of assassination against enemy forces. Someone has us in their sights."

“The assassination against us might not just happen once, but may become a terrible maelstrom, incessantly dragging those on the brink into its depths, and at the end, only a multitude of corpses will remain.”

He leaned in, speaking quietly in Byrne’s ear with calmness:

“There’s no doubt Gold was my cash cow, and the Fischer family is my ‘money branch.’ Anyway, be careful; I don’t want to see my business partners dying one after the other.”

Indeed, it was an assassination against the Lion clan!

Byrne felt extremely tense and to some extent, he found those hidden unseen enemies to be even more dangerous and terrifying than the attack by the Rhea people several years ago.

“Alright, I understand. Thank you for the warning, Lord Viscount.”

Viscount Bast’s expression suddenly turned serious and he gripped Byrne’s hand for a few seconds.

“Don’t talk recklessly about this, Byrne. You are a man with great potential, take care.”

Chapter 52: Chapter 50 Her Beautiful Wish

Byrne still braved his intense unease to visit his wife’s family at the Hoffman residence.

Several days later, they took a carriage back to Nasir, still on high alert.

The news of Mr. Gold’s death wasn’t made public in their circles until after Byrne had left; the cause was announced as a sudden illness due to excessive obesity, with almost no one aware of the murder case.

Byrne contemplated on the journey and soon understood why Viscount Bast wanted to conceal the cause of Mr. Gold’s death—it was to prevent the allies who supported the Lion clan from becoming overly anxious.

He once again felt the consequences of being weak in a cruel world.

“Mr. Gold’s status, vision, and wisdom were all above his own, yet he was so easily killed by mysterious forces because, after all, he was an ordinary person.”

“In this world filled with extraordinary terror, all ordinary people are but grass, and no matter how well they perform, they are merely nutrients!”

Without sufficient extraordinary power, all status and authority are but smoke that could scatter at any moment.

The strength of the family and oneself is the foundation of everything.

The Ten Great Pillar families, with their ability to dominate over all forces, hold the majority of resources, heritage, land, and wealth of the continent's east, rely on the formidable power cultivated by their families!

Deep within, Byrne suddenly realized that the Fischer family had never emerged from the dark jungle.

All the fleeting beauty they possessed could vanish at any moment, disappearing without a trace.

But one day, they would become “monsters” in the dark jungle.

For the Fischer family possesses an immense advantage that no other power or organization in the world can compare with.

One day, they would be able to create a powerful army of Extraordinary Exponents!

It started to rain.

The sound of rain hitting the ground echoed through the air, bringing a desolate and merciless beauty. The carriage heavily crossed puddles, causing water droplets to splatter.

The carriage returned to Nasir through the torrential rain. Seeing the Fischer estate, he thought of checking on Margaret and Darren first.

Yet, upon arriving home, Byrne couldn't find any trace of Margaret or his son Darren.

He heard from a servant that the two had just left, and a powerful unease surged within him instantly!

Byrne quickly asked the servants about Margaret and Darren's whereabouts. After much difficulty, he learned that they had gone to the Isaac knight family's house in town.

It seemed they were attending a tea party hosted by one of the female members of that family.

“A tea party?”

Something felt very wrong, and his unease intensified. Byrne couldn't understand why any tea party would be called for on such a rain-soaked day!

Although he felt rationally that there was little chance of his wife and child being targeted for assassination or kidnapping by the Eagle clan, under the protection of the mighty Lord of the Lost, he still left the house in panic.

Byrne braved the heavy rain and arrived near the Isaac knight family estate, his glasses and clothes completely soaked through.

The pouring rain blurred the vision, the cascading water enshrouding the estate, uniting heaven and earth.

Before the drenched Byrne could step inside, he saw some women and children coming out under umbrellas, all laughing and chatting joyously, among them clearly were Margaret and his son Darren.

Standing in the rain, Byrne finally took a breath of relief. They were alright!

As Margaret hastened over with her son in hand, her smile turned to surprise. She quickly pulled Byrne under the umbrella as well, saying:

“Byrne, what are you doing here? You’ve come back two days earlier than you said you would.”

Darren also looked up at his father, opening his curious wide eyes.

Byrne wanted to embrace his wife but didn’t want to wet her clothes, so he forcefully held back.

He took a deep breath and explained, “It’s nothing, just encountered some matters, so I came back early.”

Margaret quietly looked at her husband for a long time, then gave a slight nod.

“Hmm, as long as you’re okay, I won’t pry into your affairs.”

Yet, Byrne really wanted to ask why she would attend a tea party on a rainy day.

Once the three of them were back home, he finally couldn’t suppress the deepest doubt in his heart any longer while changing clothes and gently inquired:

“Margaret, why would you go to a tea party in this kind of weather, what exactly were you doing?”

Margaret answered offhandedly:

“Oh, during the days you were away, Lady Isaac talked to me a lot about the faith of the Moon Lady, all about how people with power should aid the weak, women, and children, and I found it quite reasonable.”

“The Moon Lady is indeed one of the kindest and most considerate deities towards the vulnerable, it makes one unable to resist wanting to worship and give thanks.”

“What did you just say?”

Byrne immediately froze, his eyes filled with immense shock and disbelief.

He swallowed instinctively and glanced at his son’s hand, which originally had a red brand but had long since been concealed with medicinal solution by himself.

Margaret paused for a moment and continued with a smile:

“Isn’t your family a follower of the Lord of Salvation? He and the Moon Lady have a pretty good relationship, plus, Irene loves children so much, she shouldn’t have any objections, right?”

She looked at the silent Byrne and said, puzzled:

“Byrne, what’s wrong with you? I felt that your look just now was a bit scary.”

Byrne lowered his head and stayed silent for a long time, so long that Margaret’s heart gradually began to rise with unease, then she heard him say in an extremely deep voice:

“I will not control you, Margaret, however, Darren cannot go there anymore, as the future head of the Fischer family, he must worship the ‘Lord of Salvation’ together with Irene and me.”

Since marrying Byrne, Margaret had never seen her gentle husband speak with such a firm and unquestionable tone, she frowned for a long time but still nodded.

“Alright, I understand, I’m sorry, I should have discussed this matter with you beforehand.”

“Only, Cyart people’s laws and culture permit the freedom to believe in any deity from the True Gods Church, as long as one’s faith isn’t in a heretical Evil God, I thought there shouldn’t be a need to speak in advance with you, I oversimplified it.”

She paused and then continued:

"I'm sorry, but I can promise you with my life, I would never let Darren come into contact with those wicked heretics, he will grow up free and happy under the embrace of the True Gods, that's my only wish."

Margaret suddenly saw Byrne lower his head to show a bitter smile, struggled to speak, and then with reddened eyes, enveloped her in a deep hug.

"It's okay now, Byrne, what exactly happened to you? Why don't you tell me what happened in Fein City?"

She comforted her frail but strong husband, slowly saying:

"Don't worry, nothing will happen here, the grand True Gods possess supreme power, protecting us from foreign enemies and evil cultists."

The man nodded slowly, saying calmly:

"Yes, I also believe in the power of the gods, Margaret... I love you."

Just that some dark secrets, hidden in the deepest part of my heart, you will never know in this lifetime.

Chapter 53: Chapter 51 Breakthrough!

Over the next three months, Viscount Bast's prediction proved correct: a series of actions were taken against the supporters of the Lion clan.

After Mr. Gold's death, two more murders occurred in Fein City, both happening in broad daylight, and both victims were supporters of the Lion clan.

News of the Lion clan's ruthless targeting by the Eagle clan spread quickly, and everyone expected Bast Leone, the "fox leading the lions," to step forward and do something.

However, he did nothing, living his life as usual as if the successive "accidental" murders had nothing to do with the Lion clan.

As for Mr. Gold's position, it was taken over by the former old butler of the Lion clan who also served as the teacher to both Viscount Bast and Mr. Gold, an extremely wise and respectable gentleman.

Byrne breathed a sigh of relief. The three deceased were all individuals of considerable status, and Nasir's Fischer family was merely a peripheral supporter, probably not yet qualified to be targeted by the Eagle clan.

A piece of good news.

He had finally fully absorbed the Consecution power of the “Pharmacist” at the 2nd Rank.

Next, Byrne could start preparing for the promotion to the 3rd Rank, but from the 3rd Rank onwards, the conditions for advancement on the God Pantheon stairway became more intricate and complex.

To advance to the 3rd Rank, he needed not only Extraordinary materials but also to complete a specific ritual. Irene had long received a divine oracle from the great Lord of the Lost and was clear on what preparations for the ritual Byrne wanted to advance would entail.

The first thing to do was to prepare a batch of Class 3 Extraordinary Material, and then the ritual that needed to be completed must conform to the dual characteristics of “mystery” and “knowledge.”

Once Byrne completed the preparations for the next rank, Karl would also be able to create the Extraordinary law of the next rank.

The subsequent followers of the Path of Knowledge would then have to complete preparations based on the Extraordinary materials and ritual content chosen by Byrne to advance to the 3rd Rank of the Path of Knowledge.

As for Margaret’s matter, it was later discussed in-depth by Byrne and Irene in the basement, and they decided to keep the Lord of the Lost and Dawn completely hidden from her for life, and from now on, Darren’s education would gradually be taken over by Irene.

Margaret was strong-willed and opinionated but not unreasonable, and since both Irene and Byrne promised to train their son as the future head of the Fischer family, it became a necessary compromise for him to receive the traditional education of the Fischer family.

Compared to the blood-fearful child Byrne and the taciturn Chris, Darren was a very normal child, lively and curious, often running and playing, with his only distinct characteristic being a love for sweets.

Margaret originally wanted to stop her son from eating too much because it was bad for his teeth, but Irene said she could treat even dental diseases, so she gradually let him be.

As a result, Darren became a little plump at only four and a half years old, undoubtedly becoming the lowest in appearance in the Fischer family.

Little plump Darren genuinely liked everyone in the family, especially his Aunt Irene, perhaps because Irene, who had started the orphanage, was almost an expert in dealing with children.

On a quiet night, in the potion workshop of the Fischer family, a sweaty Byrne took a deep breath, his feather pen continuously moving as he completed recording his final conjecture.

“Almost there, even though it hasn’t been put into practice yet, but if one wishes to use the blood of the Fischer family to affect an Extraordinary Exponent, this is the only method I can think of,” he mused.

To enter the Spirit Realm during the Time of Ashes, pass through the Gate of Shadow, and consume the special Magic Potion made by mixing the Non-living Flower, Single Membrane Tree bark, and Fischer family blood, cooled to the freezing point—this would complete the entire ritual process.

Even an Extraordinary Exponent, after undergoing the ritual, could be influenced by the blood, but theoretically, it should only be effective on those at the “Beginning” level or 1st or 2nd Rank Extraordinary Exponents.

“All of this is still just theoretical speculation, without any practice, so I can’t be certain,” he thought.

He closed his eyes in contemplation, first needing to take a trustworthy person to the Spirit Realm, then help that person complete the entire ritual, and finally bestow upon them the Magic Potion to gain Consecution power.

The first person to be experimented on had to be someone he could trust. Byrne got up and went to the basement to find Irene, planning to discuss it with her in detail.

In the underground chamber, Irene, who had dyed her hair black again, knelt on the ground with her hands tightly clasped together, silently praying.

“Great Lord of the Lost, please bestow redemption and tranquility upon the Fischer family, for we have always seen You as the most perfect Dawn...”

Each night she would pray in the chamber to the transparent bottles, and for the remainder of her time, she often taught the children at the orphanage, spending almost a week every month at another Daybreak Orphanage in Fein City.

“What’s the matter, Byrne?”

Kneeling before the sacred object, Irene stopped her prayer, slowly opened her eyes, and calmly turned her head to look at the young man.

Byrne took a deep breath, his eyes revealing an undisguised sense of accomplishment, and said with considerable excitement,

“I’m basically certain now, how the blood of the Fischer family can also affect Extraordinary Exponents.”

A sincere smile appeared on Irene’s face as she lightly said, “Congratulations, Byrne, you have finally taken a further step, and thus the radiance of the Lord of the Lost will also be able to shine upon more people.”

She paused, then continued, “Well, this means we can finally take a new step, which is to grant Extraordinary power to those in the Dawn outside of the Fischer family.”

At this point, the members of “Dawn” besides the Fischer family could be counted on one’s fingers, with peripheral members being just the old servant who licked the blood and Grandma Narda.

Out of a principle of caution, they had not taken the risk of controlling more members belonging to Dawn, hence their inability to further develop.

However, the recent events had led to a strong sense of threat, and both of them, deep in their hearts, simultaneously had the desire for more, as the Fischer family was too weak and must gain more power.

Byrne pondered for a moment, then continued to share the ideas and plans in his mind:

“We need someone to test the theory I’ve deduced over the years, someone who will accompany us to the Spirit Realm, undergo the entire ritual, and ultimately receive the Power of Consecution.”

He paused again, his tone growing deeper, his gaze also becoming more solemn.

“And it must be someone we can trust, so that even if the ritual fails and that person, even after becoming an Extraordinary Exponent, is no longer influenced by His power, they will not betray the Fischer family nor the Lord of the Lost.”

“Then the best choice would be Grandma Narda.”

Irene spoke almost without hesitation; the old servant who dared to secretly lick the blood, the gambler with an excessive thirst for power and superstitious thoughts, was precisely the person who could not be fully trusted.

Even though the old servant had behaved himself for years, she had long judged deep down that he must not be let into the innermost circle.

Grandma Narda had always shown great reverence for the Lord of the Lost, even offering dozens of Gold Coins on her own initiative over the years.

At the same time, the most important two points were that Grandma Narda had several beloved sons, who, as leaders of thieves, had unclean identities and, despite not engaging in overly malicious acts, were still subject to imprisonment.

She would not easily dare to report the actions of the Fischer family to the church, partly for fear of the Fischer's revenge and partly because she feared her sons would be arrested by the church.

Irene looked calmly at Byrne and said, "Prepare everything, in a few days we will go to the Spirit Realm with Grandma Narda."

Expanding the influence of the Fischer family and increasing the usable Extraordinary Exponents within "Dawn" was one of their long-decided goals.

Her tone suddenly turned somewhat excited as she spoke,

"Then, once there, the great Lord of the Lost will surely further display His supreme power!"

Chapter 54: Chapter 52: Receiving the Lord's Gift! (Please follow!)

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Grandma Narda was now very old.

She had long felt that her days were numbered, no longer daring to hope for anything from the future, only wishing that her sons could have good lives.

Of Grandma Narda's three sons, only the eldest, Moore, was clever and brave; the other two were hopeless cases, and deep in her heart, she knew this to be true.

She had been contemplating whether to let her children join Dawn.

The Fischer family worshipped the Lord of the Lost, undoubtedly a great deity, but, after all, faith in an otherworldly god was a capital offense, which the Six Great True Gods Churches abhorred.

It was laughable; the Reforging Church was once considered heretical too, but now the God of Reforging is also deemed one of the so-called True Gods; from that moment on, she realized there was no essential difference between True Gods and Evil Gods.

A god is a god, and the so-called good and evil are nothing but concepts forcibly imposed by the mundane.

It was a time when the rainy season was more frequent, and the rain outside kept pouring down. The aged Grandma Narda, led by a servant of the Fischer family, came to the Fischer house calmly amidst the night.

Upon entering the hall, she saw Madam Irene with her back to her, and the servant bowed and left.

Grandma Narda's back could no longer straighten completely, and she asked devoutly,

"Respected Madam Irene, I am Narda. Did you send for me?"

Grandma Narda had originally hoped to refer to Irene as "Great Priest," but Irene had indicated that it would be better to avoid such direct addresses in person, especially as the situation with heretic hunts had grown stricter in recent years across the land, particularly in the Eastern Four Kingdoms.

The members of the Salvation Church, significant followers in particular, often seemed as if they were searching for something, gathering more and more in the Eastern Four Kingdoms.

Irene did not look at Grandma Narda but instead, a clear, calm, and exceedingly enticing voice came forth.

"He said, 'Let there be happiness and calamity in the world,' and thus He created the joys and angers of mortals into existence."

"People always flounder, struggling in pain like beasts within the chaos, enduring the vicissitudes of joy and sorrow, and the despair of life and death."

She paused for a moment, then continued to speak gravely, gazing straight ahead.

"Only those blessed by His grace will have the chance to transcend their suffering."

Grandma Narda's eyes gradually widened, feeling that something momentous was about to happen tonight.

Irene slowly turned around, her delicate face shadowy and indistinct in the dark, invoking awe with its elusive mystique.

She continued, speaking softly, yet her words bore a weight that suffocated.

"Narda, are you willing to accept His gift and become one who has the chance to transcend suffering?"

Grandma Narda understood what was being hinted at; Irene had once suggested that continuously contributing to the great Lord of the Lost would grant one the opportunity to receive extraordinary power.

The desire she had repressed deep inside, which she once harbored and then gradually forgot, to the point that she no longer dared fantasize about in her old age, now surged forth.

She felt as if she had suddenly become decades younger, her wrinkled, aged face breaking into an exceedingly jubilant smile, her frail body shaking slightly.

"I am willing! Great Priest, I am willing to contribute further to the greatness of Him!"

After listening, Irene fell silent for a moment. Grandma Narda immediately grasped what that meant and quickly promised, "If I can receive His gift, I am willing to offer more worldly possessions, Great Priest."

Upon hearing this, she finally showed a smile.

Not long ago, Byrne took most of the family's money to buy various things. Irene kept quiet on the surface, but deep down, she bled profusely.

Since they were now about to grant Grandma Narda the extraordinary power of Consecution, they naturally couldn't let her receive it for nothing, without offering something in return. The more funds the Fischer family had, the better.

Irene really liked money; there was no helping it, as she had truly lacked money in her childhood.

The Time of Ashes was approaching.

That was the moment at midnight every day.

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In the underground chamber filled with lit candles, Byrne had made all the preparations for journeying to the Spirit Realm.

On the ground, a circle representing the dream world had been painted with white chalk, and beyond it lay scattered white fish-scale powder, symbolizing the stability of the path. The outermost ring was drawn with black powder, depicting seven mysterious symbols representing the coordinates in the Spirit Realm, ensuring they would not directly enter any excessively dangerous areas.

On a nearby table, three bottles of a dark blue potion for inducing deep sleep had been mixed and were ready to use.

When he saw Irene descending into the basement, he asked:

“I have never heard of so-called ‘Time of Ashes’ or the ‘Lord of Ashes’; the time is set at midnight, correct?”

“Rest assured, Byrne, the mystical knowledge in my mind is never wrong—it comes from the great Lord of the Lost.”

Irene nodded, never having detailed the knowledge about the otherworldly gods to anyone else. It was definitely not a good thing for mortals to know too much about Them.

They were beings that existed beyond the Claud World, and even the True Gods were exceedingly wary of them. There were a total of twenty-seven such beings, each possessing power beyond any mortal’s imagination or comprehension.

The Lord of Ashes.

He was also one of the otherworldly gods.

The source of infinite disasters, the abhorrence of white fog, the Lord of Ashes who extinguished constellations, embodied the most primitive chaos and distortion in the endless universe.

Whenever the great Lord of the Lost required the Fischer family to sacrifice their lifespans, and when someone was needed to bear those hazardous knowledge, Irene felt deep within that she should be the only one to make the sacrifice.

They only needed to step over her lifeless body to proceed.

“Since everything is ready, I will go call Grandma Narda down, and then we can begin.”

Irene nodded, returning to the hall to call Grandma Narda down.

She trembled slightly, her first time in the most secret basement of the Fischer family, her face filled with curiosity and astonishment.

Kneeling calmly before the sacred object, Irene said, “Kneel and remember not to look directly at His greatness.”

The three of them knelt before the clear bottles, Grandma Narda forcefully controlling herself not to gaze directly at the sacred object, only feeling the surroundings suddenly turn into black and white, as if everything in the world was on the brink of destruction and demise.

Him!

Could He be here!

Before Grandma Narda, whose color had drained from her face and body was trembling with fear could react, she heard Irene calmly pick up the dark blue dream-inducing potion and say:

“Drink it, we will take you to the Spirit Realm to perform the ritual through the Gate of Shadow.”

“Narda, only after the ritual is complete will you be worthy of receiving the blessing from the great Lord of Dawn, who is also the Lord of the Lost.”

Her words were full of seductive power, mysterious and utterly mesmerizing, leading Narda to take the dark blue potion without hesitation and drink it all at once.

“I... I feel so sleepy...”

Irene and Byrne exchanged glances, both fully aware of how important this journey was, the Spirit Realm filled with unpredictable dangers and opportunities.

If the Fischer family wanted to advance further, they must delve into the Spirit Realm at any cost; for example, to activate the latent bloodline in Darren, a ritual had to be held in the Spirit Realm.

Irene and Byrne laid Narda's unconscious body within the array, and both consumed the dream-inducing potion in turn and sat down as well.

Next to Byrne were three sobering potions, one of which was a special potion cooled to freezing point, made by combining Non-living Flower, Single Membrane Tree bark, and blood from the Fischer family.

The potion was dark red in appearance, containing a fatal yet dangerous power that was incredibly tempting.

Midnight had arrived.

The numerous candles went out one after the other, and the three sitting in the circle fell into a deep slumber, entering another world that belonged to dreams, enveloped by darkness.

Chapter 55: Chapter 53 Wandering in the Spirit Realm

As long as one traversed through the woodlands of dreams, they could arrive at the mysterious and unpredictable Spirit Realm.

The Spirit Realm was a wilderness, an ocean, an archipelago, and also the gathering place of the subconscious and emotions of all beings, brimming with endless spirituality.

The consciousnesses of the three individuals appeared together in the same location within the woodland, and the white circles of the Array containing several potions arrived alongside the consciousnesses of the three of them into the woodland of the dream.

Byrne took a deep breath, his mind still very groggy, and he barely squatted down to reach for a nearby sobering potion.

He and Irene each drank a sobering potion, and then they gave the last bottle of sobering potion to the confusedly sleepwalking Grandma Narda.

The three of them awoke in the dream and looked up to survey the scenery of the woodland, deeply shocked in the depths of their hearts.

The ground of the woodland was like white snow, paved with countless ashes burnt to whiteness, and piles of white ashes built up tall trees, each dozens of meters high, obscuring the vast and boundless pure white sky above.

There were no constellations or sun in the sky, nothing at all.

The woodland, a boundary between the dreamworld and the Spirit Realm.

Ordinary people who happened upon the woodland in their dreams often lost their way, but Irene was different; she had a way to obtain guidance from the Lord of the Lost.

She chanted under her breath, murmuring to herself.

“Oh great Lord of the Lost, You who control the pathways of the Spirit Realm, You who are the guiding star in the Dawn, we follow Your guidance on that frost-like path, towards the Spiritual Gateway.”

Byrne and Narda slowly lifted their heads, astonished to see that the previously empty white sky now had His exclusive high-hanging position!

Black cross-shaped radiance flickered in the sky, silently overseeing the entire wall-less woodland.

Karl gazed calmly at the woodland within the dream and further into the Spirit Realm from the sky above.

They had come, the people of the Fischer family had finally arrived in the Spirit Realm for the first time.

Over the years, he hadn't just been idling; he wasn't merely hanging around every day but often wandered freely through the Spirit Realm.

Although those seemingly powerful mystical existences all avoided him from afar, each running faster than rabbits, leaving no chance for interaction or connections, Karl had still managed to figure out many of the patterns of the Spirit Realm and had roughly mapped out the "map" of the Spirit Realm.

Actually, the Spirit Realm had no fixed geography, but through different "Spiritual Gateways," one's consciousness could travel to various distinct areas.

Thus, the black cross-shaped radiance quietly hung high in the sky.

"How magnificent!"

Irene bowed her head, knelt on the ground, unable to suppress the excitement in her normally calm voice, and said to the two behind her, who were stunned:

"Our Lord has already given us guidance! Let's keep moving towards His direction!"

Byrne and Narda also knelt down one after another, expressing their sincere gratitude to the great Lord of the Lost.

The other Extraordinary Exponents who entered the dream encountered far less fortune; without special means or the discovery of certain patterns, they could only rely on pure luck to reach the Spirit Realm from the woodland.

Following His guidance, the three of them walked silently through the "white snow," surrounded by a profound silence, their emotions oscillating between calm and cluelessness.

Until they crossed the woodland and came to the true Spirit Realm.

They looked up in utter shock at the astonishing scene, an ocean above their heads dotted with numerous islands, seeming as though they could fall from the sky at any moment!

Underneath their feet was completely unfamiliar terrain, with many ethereal shadows gradually taking form around them, as if to materialize some city that had never before existed.

The three of them arrived together on an island of Spirituality, just like all the other islands, constructed from the collective subconscious of all beings, a projection of history.

Originally, when it remained unobserved, it would stay in a blur. Once it became the subject of a conscious gaze, it gradually took shape to evolve into a solid entity.

Irene calmly turned to the two behind her and recited the knowledge in her mind, slowly saying:

“The most important concept of the Spirit Realm is ‘gateway’. Almost behind every ‘Spiritual Gateway’, there lies something new and changing—curiosities, knowledge, brand-new islands of Spirituality, or the unfathomable.”

“The Gate of Shadow we seek is one of the many Spiritual Gateways, and it exists on this island.”

The first journey into the Spirit Realm was extremely important!

If they could establish a connection to the Gate of Shadow, they would be able to come here frequently to conduct rituals and continuously control new Extraordinary Beings!

Grandma Narda was the first to undergo the experiment.

Theoretically, as long as the Fischer family’s resources were sufficient, they could even establish a loyal army of Extraordinary Exponents, a thought that Byrne himself found chilling to consider!

The surroundings of the three began to transmute, sprouting tall white structures the likes of which they had never seen before, marked everywhere with the symbol of flames.

Narda had been thoroughly shocked by the developments and the existence of the Spirit Realm, unable to decide what to say and could only mutter prayers where she stood.

Byrne looked at the buildings that were gradually appearing around them, placed his hand under his nose, and after a moment’s contemplation said,

“The architecture around us doesn’t seem to belong to the current era; it somewhat resembles the structures of the Cyart people from the old era two hundred years ago.”

Grandma Narda was taken aback and said,

“Two hundred years ago? At that time, the Cyart people should have been at the center of the Ouden Continent, once so brave and powerful that even the Lorne citizens were beaten back.”

Byrne and Irene had also heard about this piece of history from the elders that the Lorne Empire, now the overlord of the continent, had been no match for the Cyart people two hundred years ago.

It was only by using extremely despicable means a century ago that they managed to expel the most valiant Cyart people from the center of the continent to the east.

Moreover, “Cyart people” meant “people of exile,” so obviously the Cyart people of the past didn’t call themselves that but were known as the Flame Tribe due to their proficient use of gunpowder.

“We need to find the Gate of Shadow immediately; the island of Spirituality is where the most intense emotions of many beings converge, and the projected historical rifts often lead to major disasters. We must complete everything before disaster strikes,”

Irene paused and then solemnly warned both of them,

“Remember not to enter other gateways at will; behind each Spiritual Gateway lies a different possibility. They could be opportunities but also dangers.”

“Once our consciousness in the Spirit Realm collapses, our real world will also suffer from psychological trauma, and even fall into extreme fear and madness, eventually leading to the shattering and destruction of the soul.”

Byrne and Grandma Narda could of course comprehend the danger level of the Spirit Realm and did not dare to take it lightly.

The city on the island of Spirituality, echoing with historical rifts, gradually merged into a city from over two hundred years ago. As the three set foot in this unfamiliar city, real figures began to emerge.

They were once Cyart people, no, Flame Tribe people, now gathering in the streets, shouting continuously, with many in white robes visibly agitated.

It didn’t take long for Byrne and the others to hear what people in white robes were shouting.

“Blood for blood!”

The Flame Tribe people cried out, their expressions mournful as they screamed wildly.

Only after hearing this did the three realize that a city had fallen to an invasion by the Lorne people, with tens of thousands of Cyart people killed or captured as slaves.

They all felt extremely confused, as the Cyart people of two hundred years ago were known to be invincible in battle, supposedly undefeated for a century. How could there be such a tragic past?

Could it be that the projected history was false? It couldn't be that the Cyart people's histories, passed down orally for hundreds of years, were fabricated, could it?

However, none of this mattered to them; all three just wanted to find the Gate of Shadow.

Byrne looked at Irene and asked in a low voice, "Where might the gateway be?"

Irene, recalling the mysterious knowledge within her mind, responded truthfully, "It should be at the 'most significant' place within this island of Spirituality."

The most significant place?

Byrne fell into deep thought; "most significant" could have various meanings – did it refer to the most secret defensive location, the most dangerous place, or did "significant" imply something else altogether?

"Halt your steps, who are you? Why have I never seen you before? Are you undercover agents sent by the Lorne people!"

Suddenly, a knight in white armor stepped around the crowd, stood in front of Irene and the other two, and looked serious as the many Flame Tribe people around also turned their attention to them.

Given that the city wasn't large and everyone was familiar with one another, the sudden appearance of three strangers was indeed conspicuous.

Grandma Narda was terrified, she hadn't expected that those so-called projections would actually take notice of them, mistakenly believing the projections wouldn't engage with them physically.

Byrne stepped forward with a smile, already adept at communicating with the other party,

"We are all Flame Tribe people, reclusive healers living nearby, skilled in using mystical powers to cure diseases."

He paused, and with an indignant expression continued,

"I hope those damned Lorne people go to hell! The situation isn't looking good right now, and we too want to contribute, willing to treat our sick Flame Tribe brethren in the city for free!"

Chapter 56: Chapter 54 The Most Important Place

“

Soon Byrne and his companions learned that the knight was actually the Deputy Sheriff responsible for maintaining public order in the city.

At the same time, they also discovered something: the historical rifts were ultimately not the real world. Except for the Deputy Sheriff, no one else would communicate with them, and all were like phantasmal existences that were sometimes real, sometimes illusory, and as unfixed as ghosts.

After learning that Byrne and others were physicians living in seclusion nearby, the Deputy Sheriff was still filled with caution and defense, even going so far as to say he wanted to bring in a prophecy-type spellcaster to test whether they had any hostility.

The spellcaster appeared out of nowhere and then cast a prophecy-type spell on the three of them.

The answer, of course, was that there was no hostility.

All three saw the prophecy-type spellcaster subsequently dissipate and vanish, as if he had never existed.

The Deputy Sheriff and the people around him were indifferent to this as well.

Ultimately, it was a fictional world, and deep down they were sure of it.

“Very well. Members of the Flame Tribe all need to contribute to their own race.”

It was not until then that the Deputy Sheriff seemed to let down his guard and agreed to let them treat the sick in the city.

“Healer” type spellcasters were not among the eight major types of spellcasters and were even rarer than the prophecy-type.

Only the “Transformation” type among the main eight types of spellcasters might know some healing spells.

The power that Irene wielded instantly made her the darling of the town.

But interacting with those partly solid, partly spectral projections didn’t feel real at all; she didn’t think she was treating actual humans.

The three of them didn’t care about that either; they were merely looking for the Gate of Shadow as best they could.

Most islands of Spirituality were places where emotions congregated and were often historical rifts that had experienced disasters; they were very aware that their time to stay was limited.

“Where exactly is ‘the most important place’?”

The three pondered this question and thus lingered in the entire city, an ancient city with a distinct architectural style, with a mass of white buildings marked with the symbol of flames.

They could see the ghostlike figures singing and dancing, and they could hear them wildly cursing Empire citizens, almost everyone brimming with immense hatred for the Empire.

Despite their efforts, they gained nothing; the last place they could think of was the Deputy Sheriff’s house.

They could only go together to the Deputy Sheriff’s home, a dwelling made of white marble, which looked not lavish but rather simple.

Inside the house were many shadowy servant figures; they did not stop the three from abruptly showing up.

“Let’s search quickly.”

Having said that, Byrne, Irene, and Grandma Narda started searching, yet they nearly turned the entire house upside down without finding any trace of the Spiritual Gateway.

“Where exactly is ‘the most important place’? Could it be that the answer still lies with him?”

Byrne was at a loss for answers, feeling that the last clue had to be with the Deputy Sheriff, for among the many shadowy figures on the island of Spirituality, only he possessed intelligence close to that of a normal person.

Grandma Narda, observing the surrounding spectral projections, couldn’t help but sigh:

“The Spirit Realm really is too wonderful. Everything feels so strange, it’s just like dreaming, no, even more astonishing than dreaming!”

Byrne felt the same deep in his heart; indeed, this place offered a marvel that couldn’t be experienced in the real world.

Just then, Irene suddenly spoke:

“Be careful! I sense malice nearby!”

They immediately became alert, and Byrne's eyes shifted slightly—a residual scent memorized by the “Profound Memory” alerted him to who was approaching!

“Why are you in my house?”

Without any warning, the Deputy Sheriff in white armor suddenly appeared near them.

The Deputy Sheriff watched the three intruders with a wary and fierce expression, his hand on the hilt of his sword at his waist, as if he might attack at any moment.

He was the only almost real existence on the island of Spirituality.

Byrne looked at him, thinking maybe it was better to try asking directly; if he couldn't get the answer, then he'd try other methods. He decided to cut to the chase and asked:

“Could you tell me, where is the most important place in this city?”

“The most important place? You mean, the most important place?”

“`

The Deputy Sheriff suddenly froze, then his face gradually twisted, he grabbed his head and began to tremble uncontrollably, saying in pain and despair:

“It was there! I couldn't find it back then! If only I had found it sooner!”

“Please, I beg you, help me! Help me guard that most important place!”

Byrne, Irene, and Grandma Narda were all somewhat astonished, the Deputy Sheriff's mental state was clearly very wrong, and the regret and despair in his speech were like the wails of the dead, or the unwilling roars of those long gone.

They thought he was going mad, but then they saw the Deputy Sheriff's figure gradually fading away.

At that moment, the surroundings began to change, the multitude of objects in the room seemed to become a tangled mess of chaotic colors, fragmented, then reformed into a new scene.

They suddenly found themselves next to a city wall.

“Why have we come here?”

Then, Byrne realized that the section of the wall before him was gradually cracking and breaking open, revealing a vast dark hole.

Suddenly, the sounds of battle and screams rose all around, spectral visions of Lorne soldiers appeared in the streets, and flames swiftly engulfed many buildings, dyeing the entire skyline a bright red, like a giant beast of raging flames wildly dancing about.

Irene was stunned on the spot, her gaze slightly heavy, as if she had returned to the night Nasir Town was set ablaze by the jungle natives.

“I understand now!”

Byrne suddenly experienced a flash of clarity, realizing that the “most important place” the Deputy Sheriff referred to was the breach in the city wall.

That year, the city must have been broken open from the outside by an Extraordinary Exponent of the enemy, followed by a multitude of Lorne soldiers rushing in overnight, leading to the fall of the entire city.

He took a deep breath and said:

“The city they initially spoke of, fallen into the hands of the Lorne Empire, with tens of thousands dead or captured, seeking blood for blood, is actually this very city beneath our feet!”

Now, the carnage from the rift in history has begun, the emotions of the entire city rapidly intertwining to a crescendo, with the disaster that led to the city’s utter destruction unfolding inexorably.

Suddenly, Irene’s “Listener” alerted her that Lorne soldiers had noticed their location.

She hurriedly shouted, “We must get inside! We can’t stay here any longer! We can’t fight a disaster that destroys the whole city!”

The three rushed into the pitch-black hole, and after emerging on the other side, the scene before them changed completely once again.

To their horror, they saw an endless expanse of white city ruins.

The air was filled with a scent of decay and desolation, most of the buildings’ walls were covered in cracks and damage, and the wind blowing through the doorways made a mournful rustling sound.

Here was the city’s central square, once a gathering place for people, now only a deserted statue and an empty space remained, covered with dust and broken stones, the fountain in the middle completely dried up.

Byrne calmly observed, and it was clear to anyone that this must be a point in time after the city had been plundered.

In the completely ruined city stood the Deputy Sheriff, head bowed in contemplation, holding a rusted blade in his hand, wearing silver-white armor dented all over.

He looked like a defeated hero, his eyes gradually lighting up with a red glow, his tone also becoming deeper.

“Tell me, why couldn’t I find that most important place?”

Grandma Narda asked anxiously, “What do we do now, what do we do? He seems a bit off!”

Irene lowered her head in thought, intending to consider carefully what to respond.

Byrne stroked the blade on his waist and the flintlock, deducing from what he had read in books that the answer to come was extremely important.

The Deputy Sheriff before them could transform into a kind of monster at any moment, the “Tethered Spirit,” a common mysterious existence in the Spirit Realm. They also exist on the Ouden Continent and possess extremely terrifying malice and power.

If their answer was satisfactory, the other party would disperse into the most fundamental spirituality, completely dissipating in the world, and the three would then avoid battle.

Avoiding battle was naturally the best option. Byrne, after a moment of silence and a respectful bow, sincerely said:

“You have lived up to your identity, you are a true knight, a noble, a warrior, who led the people of the Flame Tribe in this city to resist until the last moment of life, so please, rest now.”

They had thought this answer could avoid battle, preventing the subconscious projection before them from mutating into a “Tethered Spirit,” but the words they heard next plunged their hearts straight down.

“No, I’m not a warrior at all, because I surrendered.”

The Deputy Sheriff’s eyes turned completely dark red, his body twisted and swelled, and a black iron mask with a clown’s face emerged on his face, engraved with expressions of mockery and madness!

“The Empire promised me everything! It was I who carved out that big hole!”

Chapter 57: Chapter 55: The Gateway of Knowledge and Shadows

Byrne was utterly astonished and immediately understood why only the Deputy Sheriff on the island of Spirituality was almost a real person.

He was neither the lord of the city nor necessarily the hero who protected the most people, yet he became the emotional nexus of all departed souls.

It was clearly something that defied logic.

The ultimate reason turned out to be that he was the betrayer, something Byrne had never considered, and both Irene and Grandma Narda looked surprised as well.

“Heh, hehehe, hehe.”

The once silvery armor gradually turned into vines of the darkest black, and the smile on the clown mask writhed as if there were insects squirming beneath the dark iron, while a strange, laughter-like sound came from its throat.

Tethered Spirit.

A lower-tier being among the mysterious existences, often transformed from the dead, they retain their former strength and possess some undead-type Extraordinary traits on top of that.

Byrne suddenly realized the cause and effect and couldn't help but reveal a cold smile, saying,

“It must be that the Empire initially promised you something but then failed to deliver, so you finally came to the painful and desperate realization that you were nothing but a profoundly pathetic clown!”

He drew his flintlock from his waist and pointed it coldly at the clown.

“You are the most despicable traitor, the most pitiful clown, who will forever have to atone for the Cyart people from two hundred years ago.”

Byrne had an extreme disdain for betrayers, especially those who betrayed their kin and friends, without a doubt, they were the scum of selfishness.

“Aargh!”

The clown, now turned into a “Tethered Spirit,” roared and lunged at him. Originally just a mid-level Beginning knight, the monster's strength had suddenly risen to a high-level Beginning after its transformation, but it could no longer use its former power of Bloodline.

Grandma Narda had already scrambled to the side, mentally cheering the siblings on.

She muttered to herself, "Praise You, praise the great God, You, You, bless them to surely win!"

The Tethered Spirit clown moved swiftly, and due to the uncertain accuracy of the alchemical flintlock, Byrne could not ensure that his bullet would hit, so he didn't shoot immediately.

He suddenly unsheathed his sword blade and grappled with the Tethered Spirit clown, displaying swordsmanship from his memories that was extremely skilled, managing to hit the Tethered Spirit clown several perilous times, although he also received a few scratches himself.

Its claws were incredibly sharp and carried a woeful green gloom. Byrne quickly felt dizzy and almost couldn't withstand the spiritual assault.

Conscious entities in the Spirit Realm are not the same as real flesh and blood in the physical world; all injuries suffered ultimately manifest on a mental level.

And the stronger the spirituality, the more damage the consciousness can sustain, undoubtedly, Consecution Extraordinary Exponents with the Power of Consecution had an advantage in the Spirit Realm.

Irene, holding another alchemical flintlock, delayed in firing because the struggle between the two was too close, and it was very easy to accidentally hurt someone.

Relying on the effects of "Profound Memory" to strengthen his training, Byrne's swordsmanship was already considered top-notch among mortals.

Even as a Consecution Extraordinary Exponent not specialized in melee combat, his physical condition was still much stronger than an average human's.

However, Byrne had very little actual combat experience, and his fighting experience was still too meager, at least compared to the original Lucius.

The Tethered Spirit clown charged at him time and again like a wild beast that had completely lost its sanity, and Byrne, now cornered, suddenly remembered that he had once fought a similar creature.

It was like a vicious, wounded monkey, attacking in an almost frenzied manner, its claws hugely intimidating.

He recalled how his father had fought and looked at the places on his body where he was wounded, and suddenly it became clear.

As the Tethered Spirit clown suddenly approached, Byrne instinctively wanted to attack but quickly retreated.

Not yet, not now — he couldn't launch an attack yet; the distance wasn't enough, the cuts would not be deep enough.

His father had told him that the real master in a battle was someone who learned to control the distance and timing.

Distance, timing, distance, timing...

"Aargh!"

The Tethered Spirit clown roared, lifting its head and leaping towards Byrne. Once off the ground, its body became difficult to dodge.

Now is the time! Accelerate!

Blue light flickered in Byrne's eyes, and he turned into an afterimage, sprinting forward at an even greater speed in a blink of an eye!

He charged forward, executing a straightforward thrust, just like Lucius used to do!

"Pugh!"

The Tethered Spirit clown, leaping towards him, was immediately pierced through the abdomen by the sword blade. It wailed in pain while Byrne lifted its body with his powerful strength.

Not far away, Irene also silently prayed to the great Lord of the Lost.

"Great Lord of the Lost, please grant me the power to bring destruction to those who have perished!"

Black light, mixed with the aura of destruction, twisted around the bullet. Irene took a deep breath and felt an odd sensation as if guided by a deity.

It must hit its mark, for He had already determined its fate.

"Bang!"

The bullet within the black glow instantly streaked a line of destruction towards the soul that had already passed, landing a Heavy Strike on the head of the Tethered Spirit clown.

How grand You are!

Irene revealed a satisfied smile, feeling as if her deepest faith had been filled.

The wails halted abruptly as Byrne, exhausted, lowered the Tethered Spirit clown. This lowest of mystical beings faded into faint blue spiritual light spots, returning to the enigmatic Spirit Realm.

"It really is an experience outrageous enough, the Spirit Realm is indeed too bizarre."

Byrne sighed, feeling a sense of excitement lurking deep within. He felt his practical combat experience had grown significantly.

The strength of Extraordinary power is decisive in battle.

But practical experience plays a huge role in battles of equal level, quite naturally.

Irene looked towards the dissipating spirituality and silently wished to sacrifice them to the great Lord of the Lost, but nothing happened.

Feeling a bit regretful, she calmly said

"We are now on the very edge of the Spirit Realm, the fourth ring. There are a total of four rings in the Spirit Realm, and the closer we get to the islands of Spirituality towards the center, the truer and more substantial the history rifts they project."

"It's said that if people suddenly enter the core first ring, they might never be able to discern the difference between there and the real world."

Grandma Narda suddenly pointed to the sky and cried out.

"What is that, what is that!"

Irene and Byrne quickly looked up, and two distinctly different massive vortexes materialized midair.

The purple vortex was dense and full, with its color extending outward from the core, gently transitioning to a soft, bright purple, as if it were emitting a faint glow.

As it continued to rotate and twist, it created a marvelous and captivating play of light and shadow, as if an endless amount of secrets were hidden inside.

The other vortex was pitch black.

It seemed to be a converging point of darkness, absorbing all the light nearby, thick and opaque, spinning rapidly and irregularly, ready to spiral out of control at any moment.

The swirls of black were like a painting of darkness, twisting, entangling, and deforming, leading one to think of enigmatic hidden powers.

They were the gateways of spirituality.

Irene took a deep breath, having finally reached their destination, yet her heart was not at peace:

“They are the ‘Gate of Knowledge’ and the ‘Gate of Shadow’. Once you choose one, the other will disappear, so we can only enter one of them.”

She was quite thrilled inside because, having found the Gate of Shadow, the Fischer family could keep generating new, controlled Extraordinary Exponents.

“The Gate of Knowledge?”

A strong curiosity surged within Byrne, as the Gate of Knowledge held a great attraction for him.

The things behind the gate felt as significant as the most precious treasures or the closest family members, and he could hardly resist the urge to make contact sooner.

“Irene, what’s behind the Gate of Knowledge?”

He gazed at the purple vortex, subconsciously taking a half-step forward, almost unable to shift his gaze away.

“Forbidden knowledge, perhaps even certain Extraordinary knowledge that does not exist in our world, may not necessarily be of use, but coming to understand them almost always requires a permanent price.”

Irene, sensing something was wrong with Byrne, immediately stepped forward, resting her hand on his shoulder and warned:

“Don’t be tempted by the knowledge, we’re here to do what we have to. Let’s go through the Gate of Shadow quickly and give Grandma Narda that potion!”

Byrne suddenly snapped back to reality, nodded, and took a deep breath, sweat beading on his forehead.

The Forbidden knowledge behind the vortex seemed alive, just now tempting him!

Chapter 58: Chapter 56 Completion of the Lost Ritual

“

Byrne occasionally heard that in recent years, some Extraordinary Exponents on the Ouden Continent were trying to explore the Spirit Realm.

He found it hard to imagine just how great the risks were for those without the knowledge of the Spirit Realm or guidance from deities, as they continuously attempted to do so in the dangerously terrifying yet tempting Spirit Realm.

“What exactly does the Gate of Shadow mean?” Byrne asked once again.

Irene recalled the mysterious knowledge in her mind and finally summarized an explanation:

“The Gate of Shadow, also known as the Gate of Chaos, signifies the random “Transformation” of states; different Gates of Shadow lead to different changes.”

Random changes?

Byrne was momentarily stunned, a trace of fear arising from deep within him as he said:

“So, after we pass through this Gate of Shadow, the changes that will happen to us are also unknown?”

“Yes, but as long as we leave the Spirit Realm, most of those states will not persist.”

Irene took out a small knife to cut her palm, dabbed the blood, and slowly squatted down to make five symbols of mystic studies amid the ruins.

They respectively symbolize “Limitation,” “Contraction,” “Expansion,” “Exchange,” and “Reception.”

This was to record the coordinates of the Spirit Realm’s location so that the next time they entered the Spirit Realm, they could directly arrive here without needing to search for the Gate of Shadow again.

After completing everything, she stood up, extended her hand, and gazed solemnly at the black vortex.

Faint blue light points, almost indiscernible, emerged from the three of them and drifted slowly toward the Gate of Shadow.

The purple vortex immediately vanished, and the black vortex gradually expanded until it occupied the entire field of vision, and at that instant, they sensed anomalies in the world.

“We have already passed through the Gate of Shadow.”

As soon as Irene finished speaking, she discovered that the entire city’s ruins had turned into shades of black and white, and they too became beings of only black and white, as if they had become life forms from another dimension.

As for what condition they were currently in, Irene felt quite puzzled, yet she did not show it and calmly turned to Grandma Narda, saying:

“My lord is not only the Dawn but also Redemption, and beyond all things in the world, the great Lord of the Lost that will awaken again. You, having undergone this ritual without light or shadow, will thereafter be able to serve Him even more closely.”

Although she was also visiting the Spirit Realm and passing through the Gate of Shadow for the first time, it was crucial to appear as undaunted as possible, otherwise, it might cause Grandma Narda to look down upon her in her heart.

Byrne took out a special elixir from his waist and passed it to Grandma Narda, who had long been anticipating it, and she was nearly overflowing with gratefulness to him and his sister.

The potion was consumed in one gulp.

Cold, viscous, and even dizzying, the terrible taste was nevertheless accompanied by a joyous sentiment, as the consumer understood that they could finally progress further.

She was about to receive the reward for her years of loyalty to the great existence!

Grandma Narda felt that her connection with the Lord of the Lost was strengthening, and a tremendous feeling of fear swiftly enveloped her entire body!

Yet, she did not merely revere the Lord of the Lost with extreme awe, her heart was also fervently longing for the strength He could bestow!

To transcend the mortal coil and ascend to the Extraordinary was a dream many harbored from birth!

However, in the world they once knew, bloodline and innate gifts determined everything.

The craving and desire of mortals for Extraordinary power are unimaginably vast; many would even be willing to pay the price of their lives to seek a power different from ordinary people!

“I feel Him, oh, I praise You, great Lord of the Lost!”

Narda knelt on the ruins, praying with utmost piety to the flickering black cross of light in the sky.

Had it worked?

Irene and Byrne exchanged glances. Grandma Narda's connection with the Lord seemed to have strengthened, and thus, even if she became an Extraordinary being, she could still be controlled.

Their goal was thus achieved.

Should any thought or emotion of betrayal arise, the great Lord of the Lost would sense it, and they would be immediately apprised of the traitor's location and then erase them.

In fact, most people, upon sensing the gaze of the divine, would lose any thoughts of betrayal they might have harbored, dissipated like smoke before fear.

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“Return to reality, you have completed the Lost Ritual in the Spirit Realm.”

After speaking, Priestess Irene reached out and tapped Grandma Narda's forehead before drawing the mysterious symbol of “Transformation” in the shape of the moon, and said,

“Awake.”

Grandma Narda felt as if she had been in a long dream and took a while to gradually awaken from the deep, hallucinatory state.

She opened her eyes and saw Priestess Irene and Mr. Byrne kneeling on the ground and the great sacred object on the altar.

Grandma Narda couldn't help but glance at the black light contained within the sacred object, and she suddenly felt a boundless fear. She felt as if everything around her had lost its luster, and all things were gradually fading into destruction.

It was a state utterly different from the demolished black-and-white city she had reached after passing through the Gate of Shadow, even the sounds seemed to wither.

She immediately knelt down in fear and began to murmur to herself.

Meanwhile, Irene was devoutly praising the Lord of the Lost, celebrating the completion of the Lost Ritual.

“Ah, praise You, great Lord of the Lost! Please grant us new power!”

After completing her prayers, she slowly rose and moved to a corner of the basement to retrieve a prepared bottle of spectral blue elixir.

This spectral blue potion, concocted with Spectral Blue Fish Fin, should give anyone who takes it the extraordinary power of the Path of Divine Sacrifice in theory.

Byrne took a deep breath, watching as Irene handed the magic potion to the excited old woman.

The greatest weapon of the Fischer family's arsenal was their ability to grant others the power of becoming Extraordinary Exponents.

However, the principles of "caution" and "secrecy" made them feel that if a person not of their bloodline could not be controlled, then it was better not to endow them with extraordinary power lightly.

Through years of research and the Lost Ritual, the Fischer family came upon the possibility to control lower-tier Extraordinary Exponents. They had to seize this opportunity.

Grandma Narda drank the potion and soon felt an intense dizziness in her mind, almost collapsing, but she managed to steady herself.

"I feel, I feel a different world..."

Irene subconsciously wanted to help her, but she knew she had to maintain the dignity of a priestess and could not be too casual during the ritual.

So she just watched everything happen with an expressionless face.

At last, Grandma Narda stepped onto the God Pantheon stairway, the Path of Divine Sacrifice.

Like Irene before her, she attained the Power of Consecution of the 1st Rank, "Attendee," and gained the Extraordinary traits of God Worshipping and Malice Perception.

The strengthening of her Spirituality made her mind clearer, and the physical improvement was like regaining a youthful vigor of more than a decade. Grandma Narda became incredibly excited!

"My body feels like it has returned to when I was fifty years old, how miraculous, hahaha! Great Lord of the Lost, I am willing to offer everything! You are my true redemption, my dominion!"

She knelt down fervently, and Irene and Byrne exchanged glances, realizing that even if the Lost Ritual had not controlled Grandma Narda, it likely wouldn't be an issue anymore.

Because the old woman, now endowed with extraordinary power, was devout to the great Lord of the Lost!

A thought suddenly emerged in the depths of Irene's heart.

What if they attempted to control more Extraordinary Exponents with the Lost Ritual?

Not those later given the magic potion, but those who were already Extraordinary Exponents.

However, entering the Spirit Realm and going through the entire process of the Gate of Shadow almost always required the cooperation of the other party; it wasn't as simple as forcing a potion down someone's throat.

She shook her head, thinking that due to the principle of "caution," it still wasn't something they could do.

After all, even if someone completes the Lost Ritual, if they decided to betray, and were not afraid of the gaze of the Lord of the Lost, but instead surmised that the Lord could not easily intervene, then ultimately, it would still be difficult to handle.

"Daybreak" must first draw the individual's heart closer to the Lord of the Lost, foster a certain level of loyalty, and let them make significant contributions. Then, they could be led to the Spirit Realm to undergo the Lost Ritual.

She remembered the children in the Daybreak Orphanage and a smile slowly appeared on her face.

"I think, the grand light of the Lord of the Lost will eventually cover the entire East Coast."

Chapter 59: Chapter 57 Second Child

"What exactly is It? Is It some god with extremely formidable power, or perhaps an even higher existence?"

The curator of the Sapphire Library was situated on a spiritual island within the third ring of the Spirit Realm.

The elder's blue robe shimmered with specks of stardust; he flew in mid-air with hands clasped behind his back, navigating through the many figures, while the feather pen and black leather book floating beside him silently recorded everything that occurred.

For several years, he had been immersed in the Spirit Realm, continually exploring and experimenting, even going as far as "dying" several mental incarnations.

Each layer was like an immense labyrinth, only by finding and passing through the corresponding Spiritual Gateways could one's consciousness enter the next layer.

The curator had attempted to draw maps, only to find that the spiritual islands and Spiritual Gateways often changed without apparent pattern, or perhaps the pattern had yet to be discovered.

During his travels in the Spirit Realm, he occasionally made some discoveries, obtaining peculiar knowledge and items, becoming increasingly aware of how terrifying the existence of the Spirit Realm was, which undoubtedly would bring unimaginable colossal changes to the Ouden Continent and even the Claud World.

The curator would often see black crosses of light appear in the sky, and that atmosphere, as if it could lead the world toward its end, was always chilling to the bone, making it feel as if the entire Spirit Realm might collapse at any moment.

"Fortunately, although It frequently hangs high in the sky, It has never truly done anything."

Over time, the curator started to regard the entity as the Spirit Realm's equivalent of a "sun" or "moon," completely disregarding it.

He knew that over the past decade, many ancient secret cults, ancient libraries, mysterious academies, churches, and the Extraordinary nobility – even "True Names" hidden in history and Untouchable – had been attempting and exploring the Spirit Realm, with many paying a heavy price for it.

Yet people were still incredibly greedy, unwilling to forsake the opportunity to enter the Spirit Realm because of the allure of unprecedented power.

The curator calmly extended his right hand, upon which a blue creature resembling a miniature baby crawled across his aged hand's back, its tiny features were quite unsettling. It was a mysterious existence unique to the Spirit Realm and was the old man's most important find during his ten years of roaming the Spirit Realm.

"This little thing can devour and store the souls of the deceased, which is truly fascinating. Besides imprisoning the souls of enemies, it clearly has many other uses."

—

Nasir Town.

Although the Fischer family had not been established for a long time, it was already considered the "nobility that was not nobility" and "the most prestigious family in Nasir Town."

Even the town chief sent by the Hovern family was quite amiable with the Fischer family, maintaining an almost harmonious and balanced relationship.

Irene hired a group of skilled individuals to collectively teach the children at the orphanage.

In an era where apprenticeship was still the norm, collective teaching was not popular in towns, but motivated by money, the teachers had no objections.

Byrne often observed the children's learning process and suddenly had an idea.

He knew there was an academy in Fein City that taught various knowledge to noble students, and many people in the towns didn't even understand the concept of an academy.

The thought of possibly establishing an academy in Fein City to teach more people knowledge felt like a fantastic idea, even if he just thought about it.

Moreover, those orphans who wanted to learn more advanced knowledge couldn't merely rely on the townsfolk.

It wasn't just for the family; he truly wanted more people to learn and become curious about the world.

However, the idea of starting an academy in Nasir was still too grand, and for now, Byrne could only think about it since neither his finances nor other resources allowed it.

Recently, Byrne hadn't been continuously burrowing into the workshop but instead spent more time with Darren and Margaret, lest they grew increasingly "distant" from him.

Darren was completely a happy little chub, always running around looking for food, the most carefree darling of the family. Byrne even doubted whether he would be able to support the Fischer family when he grew up.

During this time, he had been studying how to advance to the 3rd Rank of Consecution power.

According to the hints given by the Lord of the Lost, one must complete a ritual that aligned with the characteristics of "mystery" and "knowledge" to ascend to the 3rd Rank, but exactly how to accomplish that was utterly unknown.

The successors could simply follow the trajectory set by their predecessors, but Byrne, as a pioneer, had to overcome a tremendously difficult barrier.

“It is not that you can do anything to complete the ritual, you must be able to fully mobilize the spirituality within your body until it boils over.”

Spirituality, Byrne thought, was like invisible water.

In the Spirit Realm, it appears as light blue light spots. Although invisible and intangible in the real world, there was no doubt that it was a material that truly existed.

And to get spirituality to boil, one must use specific actions and methods, constantly guiding it. As a pioneer, Byrne had no other choice but to try out things related to “mystery” and “knowledge” one by one.

When Byrne browsed through books at home, he would ponder deeply in his heart.

“Although I can only find the way to the next level by a process of trial and error, if I can find it, it will be much easier for those who come after to walk this path.”

“I just don’t know who else will set foot on the God Pantheon stairway on the ‘Path of Knowledge’ in the future.”

After completing the Lost Ritual, Grandma Narda obtained mysterious powers through the Magic Potion. Her zeal was so overwhelming that even Byrne and Irene were astonished.

Without hesitation, she took out fifty Gold Coins and contributed them to the Fischer family, almost all of the old lady’s savings.

Afterward, Grandma Narda also forced her sons to learn about religious knowledge, but she wasn’t making them worship the Gods. Instead, she was always questioning the actions of the Six Great True Gods Churches in history.

She did not dare reveal anything about the Lord of the Lost to her sons without Irene’s permission.

Understanding the rules and doctrines was a great quality, and Irene was very pleased with it.

Byrne and Irene both understood something, Grandma Narda was paving the way for her sons, hoping they too could join Dawn and under the great glory of the Lord of the Lost, become Extraordinary Exponents.

She had not thought of pulling her sons into Dawn before, but after genuinely obtaining extraordinary power, the old woman’s thoughts were completely transformed.

Such a great opportunity, even if accompanied by great risks, was still a coveted thing!

Whether to allow new followers to join Dawn was a decision that required the agreement of Irene, Byrne, and Chris, with the most important authority lying in Irene's hands.

She decided to take the opportunity to “test” some people in Nasir Town, and those who passed the “test” would face further “trials.”

The people Irene needed to “test” were not just Grandma Narda’s sons but also other certain individuals in town, such as sea merchant John whom she had worked with for many years, even Old Ramon’s son Hugh.

After many years of interaction, she could vaguely sense who harbored no faith in the True Gods deep inside.

That night, lying in bed, Margaret suddenly pushed away her husband who was getting close.

Byrne was immediately confused, and thinking about certain physiological timings, he felt tonight should be alright.

“Byrne, I want to tell you something,” Margaret hesitated to speak.

“What is it?”

Byrne was puzzled, suddenly feeling his wife’s expression became somewhat subtle.

After a moment of contemplation, Margaret finally smiled and said:

“I think I’m pregnant again.”

Byrne was taken aback for a moment, then was elated. The fertility of any Extraordinary was a significant concern, and after many years, they finally had a second success!

Ordinary people could have many children if they sowed widely, but the group of Extraordinaries was very special.

Not only was childbirth extremely difficult for Extraordinaries, but there was also a limit to the number of children they could bear. Once a certain number was exceeded, it was no longer possible to bring forth new offspring.

“That’s fantastic! Margaret, really, you’ve worked so hard!”

He held his laughing wife tightly in his arms, both of them very happy, and they hardly slept that night, talking for a long time in a rarity for the couple.

Chapter 60: Chapter 58: The Balance of Belief

Soon the news that Margaret was pregnant again spread throughout the town.

Times had changed, and various families of Nasir Town were sending gifts.

Of the four knight clans that once existed, one had moved away, another had been slaughtered by the Rhea, leaving only two knight families in Nasir Town, both on good terms with the Fischer family.

Sea merchant John gifted the Fischer family a piece of Class 1 Extraordinary Material, "Blue Flames Demon Fish".

He too had aged over the past decade, his hair turning grey, but this shrewd old fellow never stopped dealing with the Fischer family.

The new town chief sent by the Hovern family, Andes Hovern, also quickly sent a gift, although it wasn't very heavy, just a piece of craftsmanship.

What surprised the members of the Fischer family the most was that the silver descendants in town had sent gifts as well, considering their relationship with them was not very good.

The Fischer family soon figured out one thing: in fact, only a portion of the silver descendants had sent gifts, not all of them, and the leading man among those who came was named Aaron.

Aaron was a middle-aged man with short hair, with an authoritative face, holding a gift and accompanied by a few silver descendants. He entered the courtyard and spoke to the people of the Fischer family:

"There are some matters I would like to discuss with the patriarch of the Fischer family."

His gaze towards Byrne was eager, as if there was something he absolutely had to obtain.

Byrne pondered for a moment and said, "You and I will talk, and as for the matters you want to discuss, Irene will listen too. We will make decisions for the Fischer family together."

Aaron glanced at Irene and said seriously, "I thought in a family, there would only be one person in charge."

Irene smiled, completely ignoring the other party's attempt to drive a wedge between them, because she and Byrne fundamentally had little desire for power.

They would take on responsibilities, solely because they felt the need to put forth effort for their family and loved ones.

However, it seemed that some people could not understand this at all.

The three gathered in the living room, Aaron sitting on the sofa, got straight to the point and said, "Madam Irene is well aware that the elder of the silver descendants clan is about to pass away, his health has deteriorated tremendously of late."

"Hmm, I am aware of this."

Irene nodded calmly, as she knew this all too well.

The people of the silver descendants clan, though not very friendly to outsiders, still pleaded with her desperately for their elder.

She genuinely found it amusing to see the expressions of those who clearly didn't like her much but still had to lower their heads.

However, even the healing power that Irene possessed could not cure the silver descendant elder, for a very simple and unsolvable reason.

Life was ebbing away, beyond recovery.

When she announced the conclusion that his life was running out, the expressions of the silver descendants changed, and some even cursed her in an unintelligible language. Irene, although she did not understand, could tell from their expressions and tones.

Still, she took her reward and left, paying no attention to the silver descendants who were about to erupt in anger. Aaron should have been there at the time, but Irene had not taken notice of him.

"I wish to become the new elder," Aaron quickly made his ambition crystal clear.

"Among the silver descendants of Nasir, all Extraordinary Exponents below the age of fifty are eligible to run for the position, and I am a mid-level Beginning Bloodline Knight."

Irene and Byrne exchanged looks; this middle-aged silver descendant with resolute features was indeed forthright, and thinking carefully, it seemed quite unlikely.

Byrne pondered for a moment, crossing his arms and said:

"I know who the two leading candidates are to be the new elder of the silver descendants, and it seems at best you could only be third. And why come to us?"

Aaron did not hesitate, continuing to speak frankly: "Because I need money, and your Fischer family has made quite a bit in the past few years, just enough to lend me."

Irene had already understood his intention, but still pretended to be ignorant:

“Isn’t the selection of your elder done through revered elders who collectively listen to the voices of the ancestors to reach a conclusion?”

“Do you believe that?”

Aaron chuckled coldly and said:

“Those old devils are all greedy for money. As long as I offer enough, the voices they hear will be mine!”

Byrne slowly stood up, paced, and questioned: “What does you becoming the elder of the silver descendants clan have to do with us? Or to put it another way, what can you promise us in return?”

Aaron stood up, outlining his innermost thoughts with utmost seriousness.

“The status of the silver descendants clan is inherently derived from our talent, being able to provide high-quality spellcasters to the nation. The court mage for Cyart King now is a silver descendant.”

“However, the old folks from various silver descendants clans on the East Coast have always been too conservative, even refusing to trade with outsiders, leading us to be gradually left behind by the times! If this continues, we will inevitably fall into decline and eventually perish like jungle natives!”

The middle-aged silver descendant clenched his fists, clearly very agitated!

“I will become the silver descendant elder in Nasir, and in ten years I will be the Great Elder of the entire East Coast. I will bring about a transformation in the plight of the silver descendants, and you will become the creditors of the Great Elder of the silver descendants.”

He spoke at length about how to change the silver descendants, while Irene and Byrne just listened silently, completely without any thoughts, until the next sentence from the other party made their expressions slightly change.

“The silver descendants on the East Coast have hereditary mines, which are the treasures given to us by the Cyart King a hundred years ago in recognition of our contributions in the battles against the Rhea people!”

Aaron paused for a moment, then continued saying:

“And if I become the elder, I can hand over part of the mining rights to you as repayment for the debts.”

After a moment of contemplation, Byrne spoke with a bit of confusion:

“I think I understand what you mean, do you mean that we give you a personal loan, and if you become the elder, you will repay it with the collective wealth of the silver descendants?”

Aaron lifted his head, proud and still forthright in saying:

“Yes, but as long as the silver descendants choose me to be the elder, all of the silver descendants will embark on a completely different development path, and they won’t fall behind in this brand-new era. A small payment is something they ought to make!”

He looked sincerely earnest, as if he was speaking of something both righteous and incontrovertibly correct!

Irene and Byrne were completely stunned; they had never encountered someone like this before.

Although it was clear that he wanted to rig the election, and later use the community’s assets to repay the debt, he genuinely believed himself to be the savior of the silver descendants.

The two of them didn’t know whether to call him egotistical, arrogantly delusional, or something else entirely.

The mines were indeed tempting, but the entire investment seemed a bit unreliable. After musing for a long time, Byrne finally asked:

“What if you fail and do not become the new elder of the silver descendants clan; how will you compensate us then?”

He quickly got to experience Aaron’s straightforwardness even further.

Aaron spoke calmly and honestly, as if he were stating an inevitable outcome:

“There will be no compensation. If I fail, I won’t repay a single cent of your money, and you will get nothing, while I will become an outlaw, forever evading your pursuit.”

“To avoid such an outcome, it would be better for you to provide me with sufficiently large loans.”

With the conversation reaching such a point, there was nothing more to be said. Siblings Byrne and Irene exchanged glances.

They then temporarily moved away from Aaron, heading into the family basement to discuss.

Byrne, seeing Irene deep in thought and not speaking, couldn't help but ask directly:

"Are we really going to support him? There is still a little more than four hundred Gold Coins in the family. If we are to support him, how much should we offer?"

He suddenly remembered Robert's face and immediately added, "If we decide to invest, we must get some form of assurance or leverage over this guy beforehand."

Irene pondered for a long while, clearly also a bit indecisive.

"Since we can't make up our minds verbally, let's write down our thoughts and vote. The minority will yield to the majority."

Byrne found two pieces of paper, two pens, and an ancient bronze balance scale. He calmly set the scale on a nearby table and said:

"Whenever the Fischer family faces a difficult decision in the future, we can make the final judgment using this method. Regardless of the voting outcome, all family members must comply."

Irene thought for a moment and then added.

"Alright, but if our sovereign issues any divine edict, naturally, its priority would supersede the outcome generated by the vote."

Byrne also nodded, knowing that Lord of the Lost was Irene's bottom line and he had no objections.

After that, the two of them silently wrote down their thoughts and placed them on the scale.

In the end, the results they arrived at were strikingly similar.

"First of all, we must investigate the situation with the silver descendants and Aaron. We can't make an immediate judgment."