

Sorcerer's Handbook

- Chapter 19

Chapter 19

Every era has its own dominant theme. In the enigmatic years before the gods scattered their glory, the theme was violence, plundering, and destruction. All creatures fought over resources, risking their lives to survive and proliferate.

But in this age of the gods, Igor believes the current main theme is domination.

Dominating others, organizations, cultures, thoughts...

Large-scale wars have become rare, and people no longer seek to expand their territories. Everyone vies for the resources that already exist. The class system has solidified, and the establishment has become supreme. Plunder has been replaced by a more sophisticated form of exploitation, and all actions must adhere to the game rules set a millennium ago.

Uncouth brute force is out of fashion; only the romantic domination of the mind can truly thrive in this world.

When it comes to domination, the Mind Sorcerer is undoubtedly the best choice.

Although Igor is merely a Two Wings Mind Sorcerer, in a world where class is innately fixed, where one's life path is determined at birth, and where the vast majority have no chance of reaching the Virtual Realm of the Blood Moon Kingdom, he is akin to an apex predator at the top of the food chain.

The most perilous knowledge is monopolized by the sacred bloodline and the Moonshadow, with ordinary Sorcerers not even aware of the Mind Faction, let alone prepared to defend against it.

Even Igor's mental knowledge came about because of the awakening of Bewitcher bloodline within him, and his subsequent discoveries of the vital spirits 'Resonance' and 'Fulfillment' in the Virtual Realm, which completely transformed him into a Mind Sorcerer.

Additionally, he is a Contractor in the insurance industry, possessing the basic spirit 'Contract', which allowed him to create a miracle specifically designed for Intelligent Creatures: 'Speak and Execute'!

Whether it's a joke or a lie, once someone reaches an agreement with Igor, he can use 'Resonance' to establish a connection, 'Contract' to set the promise, and 'Fulfillment' to compel them to act on their words!

In civilized society, his set of miracles is virtually unbeatable. If it weren't for hitting a snag, he would now be lying on a sunny beach villa enjoying fine wine, instead of fighting in the basement level of a prison surrounded by lake water.

But as long as there are rules, he is still a dominator, even in prison.

Even though the use of spirits is prohibited here, spirits are the manifestation of knowledge, and Igor can still indirectly achieve his goals.

Spirits are like the fire used for cooking meat. Even if the fire is out, with some effort, one can start it again and use it for cooking.

'Resonance', 'Contract', and 'Fulfillment' are all spirits closely related to the art of speech. With the power of language alone, Igor can bypass the chip's Restrictions and stir the spirits' resonance.

His past 45 Deathmatches were won using the miracle 'Speak and Execute', forcibly making his opponents agree to the deathmatch. Even after losing, they would agree to a second, third, fourth match, continuing until Igor drained all their Contribution points.

'He will attack my left cheek.'

"Weak, too weak, far too weak!"

Igor easily dodged Ashe's attack and taunted him with disdain: "Your punches still have the smell of milk on them. Who do you think you're going to hit with that?"

'He will lift his foot to attack my left calf.'

'He wants to grapple with me.'

'He's going for a right hook.'

A strong current of thoughts incessantly flowed from his opponent into Igor's consciousness. Igor looked at this man, who seemed like a trapped beast, with a pitying gaze and a smirk of contempt on his face—once the livestock is chained, it has already lost the ability to harm its master!

This was a little trick Igor invented after being incarcerated, not quite a Miracle but merely a technique that utilizes the 'Contract' to maintain a continuous 'resonance' between Igor and his opponent, aided by linguistic suggestion, thus gaining insight into his opponent's offensive intentions!

If he could leave Shattered Lake Prison, perhaps Igor could develop a Miracle akin to 'preempting the enemy'.

But even an unrefined technique is enough for Igor to achieve 45 consecutive victories!

However, the winning streak would soon increase by another ten—In Igor's eyes, Ashe Heath was already like a lamb seasoned with cumin, ready to be roasted! This Deathmatch was just the beginning; next, Igor intended to win ten consecutive battles against him, stripping away his initial 50 Contribution points completely!

This is the essence of a Deathmatch: to weed out the weak and discern the livestock!

Crawl at my feet and let me trample you, livestock!

'He's going to throw a straight punch at my chest.'

Igor dodged his punch and countered, teasingly saying, "Keep it up, you almost got me—huh?"

Even though the punch missed, Ashe quickly ducked to avoid Igor's counterattack and even managed to get close enough to throw an elbow.

Igor naturally retreated swiftly to dodge, but his mind was filled with doubt—this was the first time Ashe had avoided his attack.

Even if it was just once, it wasn't a good sign.

No more playing around, it's time to knock him out.

With this thought, Igor shook off the blood from his fist and charged forward with a loud shout, focusing all his mind on capturing Ashe's intentions and aiming for his vital points!

"Beautiful Beast, stop wasting time and finish it!"

"It's rare to see a newcomer; don't break him so quickly!"

"Beautiful Beast, with so many Contribution points, why not let me have a turn!"

"Beautiful Beast, use a knife for your next fight; I want to taste some tough thigh meat! Langna, don't you dare fight me for it!"

The Prisoners in the stands laughed and joked, while Langna, who was drawing circles on her boyfriend's chest, suddenly said, "Even if I don't fight you for it, you won't get a chance."

“Huh?”

The Prisoners were momentarily stunned, then fixed their gaze and their expressions changed: “This kid... Is he a Follower of the Four Pillars?”

They saw that Ashe’s movements, though clumsy, were visibly becoming more efficient in defense. Previously, every one of Igor’s punches landed, but now if one out of four of Igor’s punches hit, it was considered good, and even that one punch might be blocked by Ashe’s arms.

It wasn’t so much a leap in physical ability, but more like he was developing a battle instinct.

Ashe’s movements hadn’t gotten faster, in fact, due to fatigue and pain, they had slowed down, but they had become more crisp, as if he had completely adapted to Igor’s style. Whenever Igor lifted his hand, Ashe seemed to know instinctively how to respond.

Honestly, within the Deathmatch Society, Igor wasn’t considered strong, not even ranking in the second tier. His strength lay in his ability to flay the weak, exploiting the Prison rules to drain the losers of their Contribution points completely. But everyone had to admit that Igor had a good eye for spotting those he could bully; his previous 45 consecutive Deathmatch victories spoke for themselves.

When Ashe stepped into the Arena with Igor, everyone thought that Ashe would lose all his Contribution points and become a regular guest of the Blood Moon Tribunal. After all, Ashe hadn’t shown any real battle talent and looked like a pretty boy, making people deeply skeptical whether this so-called Cult of the Four Pillars was just a fancy name for a social club for rich women.

However, in just a few minutes of battle, Ashe had undergone a transformation, from a greenhouse flower who didn’t even know how to hold a defensive stance, to a seasoned, predatory plant of the jungle, even beginning to gain the upper hand!

“Taig, sir, it seems we have someone of your type here,” someone laughed: “Who would have thought that Igor could actually be outfoxed?”

“No.”

Taig, the old man with white hair who usually played the coward, now looked very serious: “He’s not pretending to be a pig to eat tigers, he was genuinely a pig before.”

“The body doesn’t lie.” Langna sat up straight on her boyfriend’s lap and added: “His body hasn’t been honed by battle at all; you can tell he’s been pampered like a scholar. I was the one who brought him in, and I could see clearly that all his physical reactions were not like someone trained for combat, not even a child’s.”

“From his initial defensive stance at the start of the fight, this battle might even be one of the few close-combat engagements he’s had in recent years.”

Someone murmured in disbelief: “How is that possible... that would mean...”

“That’s right.” In the darkness, Langna said with a hint of regret: “The wrong person, in the wrong place, has awakened the wrong talent. It’s really... such a pity.”

Snap!

Igor blocked Ashe’s punch with both hands, the first time he had gone on the defensive during the fight. Compared to the spectators in the stands, Igor had a deeper sense of Ashe’s rapid improvement—it was like watching a silent beast waiting for slaughter turning into... a beast that roars fiercely while still awaiting slaughter.

“What a cute punch, softer than a baby’s,” Igor sneered: “Tired, aren’t you?”

Ashe remained silent, pacing and confronting Igor, looking for gaps in his defense.

“I have to admit, I did underestimate you. Your learning speed is far beyond my expectations, is it a gift from the Four Pillars? Or is it a talent you just discovered? I acknowledge that you have the potential to break free from being livestock, but your physical fitness is just too poor. It’s so bad that all I need to do is drag out the time to exhaust you!”

“Consider the one point of Contribution points you wagered as the ransom for your transformation from livestock to human. Be grateful, Ashe Heath, you’re the only animal that could break free from the chains, and that’s all there is to it. After this Deathmatch is over, I’ll have nothing more to do with you, nor will I accept any of your challenges. Under the rules of the Prison, you can’t retaliate against me.”

“Understanding the rules, using the rules, and dominating the rules, that’s what true strength is. And your bit of battle Talent is just enough to transform you from one kind of livestock into a... beast!”

“When you’re overwhelmed by power and struggling in the Blood Moon Tribunal, I’ll be sitting somewhere safe, sipping red wine and enjoying the spectacle of your disgrace. That’s the difference between you and me; that’s the distance between the dominated and the dominator!”

Just then, Ashe suddenly said, “Don’t cover your face.”

Igor smirked dismissively. Only a fool would listen to you—

“You’re pretty good-looking; I want to take a better look.”

‘You’re pretty good-looking; I want to take a better look.’

Ashe’s words and his true intentions reached Igor simultaneously, causing Igor to pause. It was the first time he had heard such praise in the Arena, and driven by an instinct to show off, he subconsciously dropped his hands—

Wham!

The punch, long in the making, smashed hard into Igor’s face, knocking him unconscious.

Ding ding ding!

“The battle is decided; the victor is Ashe Heath!”

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Chapter 20: The Crow Doctor

“Ashe Heath, once you wake up, you better start walking or you’ll miss dinner time. We don’t serve patient meals here.”

Ashe, whose eyelids had already been scorching under the bright incandescent lights, sat up briskly, touching his face and abdomen. There was no swelling or pain, as if the brutal beating he had received from Igor was just a dream.

This wasn't his first encounter with the healing technology of this world, but it never ceased to amaze him—back in his previous life, the wound that the Blood Mad Hunter had stabbed through would have meant a stay in the Intensive Care Unit for over a week, fraught with danger. Yet here, he had been healed before even the Interrogation could take place.

Ashe had even thought they might want to heal him first before serving up a full set of Interrogation specials.

He looked around. The treatment room wasn't as he had imagined it. There was no smell of disinfectant, and although the environment was clean, without any debris or bloodstains, its color scheme was dominated by shades of gray, black, and brown, giving off an impression of 'Dirty Chaos.'

And then there was the Medic: clad in a full-covering Black Robe, donning a fearsome Crow Mask, and holding a gleaming Dagger in hand.

Far from looking like a doctor, he resembled more a Cultist preparing Ashe as a sacrifice.

The Medic who spoke to Ashe was slightly shorter in stature, with a voice that did not betray their gender, possibly due to the mask distorting their voice, adding to the fear it invoked.

Noticing Ashe's gaze, the Medic asked, "Is there a problem?"

Ashe replied offhandedly, "I think there's still an issue with my face."

"Hmm? I've already healed all of your wounds," the Medic said, puzzled. "Could it be that a blood vessel inside is broken?"

"I feel like I'm not as handsome as I used to be. Didn't you heal me properly? By the way, do you offer cosmetic services here?"

Ashe was only making small talk, hoping to build some goodwill for future treatments and maybe score some fruit to eat, but the Crow Medic became excited, leaning in to say, "Of course we offer that! Eye corner lifts, nasal bridge adjustments, bone shaving, chin fillers—we can do all sorts of Procedures, and you can choose any style you want, even if you want to look like another Race! I highly recommend the Carzilan Dai Procedure, it can effectively broaden your eyes..."

With a look of distaste, Ashe pushed the Medic away, "Your crow's beak is poking me!"

“Oh, I apologize. If you’re considering mouth cosmetic surgery, we also have the latest White Rabbit Candy Procedure, which can give your lips a natural sweet taste...”

As Ashe watched the Medic’s fervent pitch, as if they were selling insurance, he became a bit frightened, “I don’t have money!”

“I don’t want your money; I want your person!”

Ashe shuddered, “That was quick? We hardly know each other. Wait, are you male or female? Wait, what Race are you...”

The Medic, realizing their slip of the tongue, waved their hands and said, “I mean, as long as you’re willing to let me perform the surgery, that’s enough. You don’t have to pay me; it’s completely free!”

“Hmm...” Ashe asked, “What if I want you to pay me?”

“Uh... how much do you want?”

Watching the Medic actually pull out a wallet, Ashe quickly stopped her: “Hold on, I was just asking. I don’t really want to go under the knife on my face. But are all you Medics this kind, performing surgeries without seeking anything in return? Seeing you dressed like that, I thought maybe you were the type to hike up the price during the procedure.”

The Medic replied, “Ah, isn’t that kind of thing pretty normal?”

“Ah?”

Ashe couldn’t tell if she was referring to ‘free’ or ‘price hikes during surgery’.

“So, you really don’t plan on getting any medical aesthetics?” the Medic urged. “I’m a Silver Medic with three spirits, you won’t find another Medic like me who’s free and skilled out there! You’re winning just by meeting me!”

“What if you start charging halfway through the surgery?”

“Do you have money?”

“No.”

“Then what are you worried about!?”

That seemed to make sense. As long as I’m broke, you can’t swindle money from me... Still, Ashe shook his head: “In my line of work, there’s a saying: ‘The most expensive things are free.’ If I take advantage of this little benefit, I’m bound to pay the price elsewhere.”

Seeing that Ashe wasn't biting, the Medic had to be honest: "Alright, if you let me perform the surgery on you, there will be a little bit of risk."

"A little bit?"

"Yes, just a little," the Medic gestured with their fingers. "After all, I'm not very proficient with the Procedure, so I need to do more surgeries to improve. But with my three spirits, I can ensure that there's no danger to your life..."

Through the Medic's explanation, Ashe finally understood why they were willing to let patients freeload: because the results of a Silver Medic's treatment were not guaranteed.

Unlike the empirical medicine of his previous life, the medicine in this world was developed from spirits, and the most commonly used spirit among Medics was the 'Hydrotherapy' from the Water Art Faction.

As long as the patient has water in their body, this spirit can be activated to rapidly regenerate wounds.

The most common treatment method is to bleed and scrape flesh and then activate the spirit to quickly regenerate the body.

It's easy to imagine that this treatment method has many flaws, but all spirits have the characteristic of evolving, and this is particularly evident in the 'Hydrotherapy' spirit: every disease treated with 'Hydrotherapy' is remembered and optimized by the spirit, making the treatment more efficient the next time the same disease is encountered.

Not only that, but if a Medic treats enough diseases, they can even evolve their 'Hydrotherapy' spirit into a Two Wings spirit!

Therefore, Silver Medics are eager to treat patients but are often unable to do so, while patients would rather spend more money to find a better Golden Medic than go to a Silver—the weaker the Medic, the worse the 'Hydrotherapy' effects, and the greater the probability of patients encountering problems.

Shattered Lake Prison, in the eyes of the Medics, was a coveted place—every day, there were prisoners beaten to near death for them to treat. They enjoyed leveling up their experience here, and the doctor-patient relationship was very stable. Even if a patient was accidentally killed during treatment, there would be no trouble at all!

The Medic talking to Ashe wouldn't have a chance to come here to farm experience if they didn't have connections!

Ashe thought to himself, wow, the Deathmatch Society isn't just an open conspiracy that incites internal competition among prisoners; it also turns prisoners into a renewable

resource for Medics to use as Experience Babies. This prison is too good at business, practically winning all around.

However, the treatment is surprisingly free, not even requiring the use of contribution points from death row inmates. This shows that the prison still thinks small, at least compared to Ashe's company—they not only sold Ashe accidental death insurance but also deducted the cost of electricity for malicious overtime directly from his salary, effectively killing Ashe's plan to get rich by mining and trading cryptocurrency during those long work hours.

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