

# Sorcerer's Handbook

## Chapter 341: Well Done, Observer

The figure of the White Queen gradually faded away, leaving the Black Witch alone on the bed.

She spread her arms and lay down, closing her swollen eyes, swallowing the cries in her throat, replacing them with another kind of tremor.

“Heh heh...”

“Heh heh heh ha ha ha...”

“Ha ha ha ha ha!”

“She agreed, she agreed! But what good does it do? She can’t protect anything, we can’t protect anything! Nothing will change, the princess in the tower is bound to fall, tonight is the turning point... tonight...”

Towards the end, the Black Witch couldn’t suppress the laughter from the depths of her soul. She laughed so hard that her whole body shook and even pounded the mattress, her tightly closed eyes streaming with tears of laughter, saliva dripping from the corners of her mouth in mockery. She laughed until she was out of breath but continued laughing, until her body finally gave out, collapsing into a heap of exhaustion.

She looked like a madwoman.

“It’s rare to see you this happy. Do you have something amusing to share?”

The palace quietly faded away. She opened her eyes and found herself back in the initial Dream.

The witch stood beside her head, looking down at her with great interest.

“...Nothing amusing.”

“I see. Well, it’s time for you to go back,” the witch said. “The brief and pleasant game is over.”

Snap.

A hand grabbed the witch's ankle.

The witch turned her head and saw the girl in the black dress still lying on the ground, but she had reached out and grabbed her ankle.

When the girl in the black dress lifted her head, the witch saw a familiar yet strange look in her eyes.

Dark, clear, bright.

No bloodstains spreading, no crazed murkiness.

"...Black Witch?" The witch's voice carried a trace of disbelief. "You're awake?"

The Black Witch didn't speak. She just stared at the witch. This was what the sisters hated most about each other – even without any words, eye contact alone was enough to convey everything.

Her only way of expressing her stance was by holding the witch's ankle, humble yet firm.

However, the witch didn't look at her but turned her gaze elsewhere.

It was rush hour now, and the White Witch was also off work.

She wore a pure white ceremonial dress she hadn't worn in a long time, lying weakly on the ground, light as a lost snowflake.

"Do you all play until you're completely exhausted?" the witch said. "In that case, I guess I'm the restrained one?"

Hearing the witch's voice, the pure white girl opened her eyes and struggled to crawl to the witch's side, grabbing her other ankle. She didn't say anything, just looked up at the witch, her pure eyes welling with pleading tears.

"The Black Witch is awake, and the White Witch has returned?"

The witch squatted down, looking at them both with a puzzled expression, like a child discovering a long-lost toy suddenly reappearing on the desk.

Soon, she clapped her hands in sudden realization.

"So that's it!"

"No wonder the Observer was so generous this time, allowing us to interfere deeply with reality!"

“He couldn’t have failed to foresee the chaos our actions would cause. Given his cautious style, we shouldn’t have been assigned this task at all. I used to think he wanted to leverage our numbers and now that Ashe has recently gained the Secret Incarnation, he could shape Ashe into an unbeatable supervillain.”

“But now it seems his target wasn’t Gospel at all, it was us!”

“Or rather, it was you two!”

“He predicted the Dream’s impact on you, so he deliberately let us out. You two are his achievement, an eighteen-to-two chance, and he won that bet.”

The witch marveled at the Observer’s cunning, looking down at the sisters lying on the ground. “But he also lost the bet.”

“Even if you’re willing to sacrifice yourselves,” the witch said deliberately, “I may not allow it.”

“I’m not like the Sword Princess. She can watch Sonya live a better life, but when I see Lise Deya gaining the happiness I never had, I feel nothing but disgust and sour envy.”

“I actually want to like her, after all, she is my past self. But when I see Ashe treating her so well, see her comfortably overcoming every challenge, see her smiling every moment... all I feel is anger and jealousy.”

“There are countless voices in my mind questioning me—”

“Why her? Why not me?”

“Why can she avoid suffering? Why do I have to endure everything?”

“What did she do right to have everything? How bad am I to get nothing?”

The witch tilted her head, staring at the two of them. “Speaking of which, are those voices my own thoughts or your whispers?”

“I wish she could suffer twice the fate I once endured, be ravaged, tormented, twisted into a monster uglier and more pitiful than I am,” the witch’s beautiful face was full of cruel malice. “Only then would I feel a bit of comfort.”

“I can’t even harm her fast enough, how could I possibly help her?”

The boiling malice transmitted through their skin to the Black and White Witches’ hearts, but they knew they were only touching the bubbles born from the boiling surface. Below was an abyssal sea of darkness, filled with immense, murky, and un-evaporating despair.

And this was already after it had been shared among seventeen sisters.

Because the witch bore the most despair, she also wielded the greatest power—though it was not by choice.

“Yes...”

“I’m sorry.”

Both the witch and the Black Witch were stunned. They looked at the White Witch, as if trying to find traces of a joke.

“Though it’s a bit late... it might be very late, but I’m sorry.” The White Witch tried to suppress the sobs in her voice but completely failed, her choking repeatedly interrupting her words. “So, I hope, at least I can...”

“Do you think after all this time, I would care about a late apology from you?”

The witch stood up. “Yes, I care.”

Smack!

The witch kicked the White Witch in the abdomen, sending her flying several meters away. The surrounding white mist scattered, making way for her tumbling path.

Then the witch bent down and grabbed the Black Witch, pulling her up. “What about you? Do you have anything to say to me?”

“No,” the Black Witch said calmly. “I have never wronged you.”

“You sure have some nerve...” The witch sneered. “But why? The White Witch is one thing, but you, Black Witch, you’re not the self-sacrificing type. I thought you were like me, someone who can’t stand seeing others do well.”

She glanced at the White Witch struggling to get up in the distance. “No matter how much you sacrifice, you’re not protecting your queen. Your past won’t change in the slightest, your suffering won’t be reduced by a fraction.”

“In the end, ‘making up for regrets’ is no different from ‘self-consolation.’ It’s all just self-deception. The idea that making up for past regrets can erase past suffering... that sort of thing never exists!”

“Black Witch, be good, go back to sleep.” The witch gazed into her dark pupils, her voice melodious and captivating. “You’ve already escaped from reality, don’t come back.”

The Black Witch shook her head.

“But I’m dreaming right now.”

She smiled sincerely, her lips curling up. “So, this time, don’t let me wake up. Just let me drown in the Dream, okay?”

The witch was slightly taken aback, releasing her grip and allowing the Black Witch to sit on the ground.

The black Butler embraced the witch’s waist, clinging to her like a baby koala to its mother, or a little sister seeking affection from her older sister.

“Well played, Observer.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 342: The White Mist Has Vanished**

In the Deep Sea Dragon Palace, the invincible Extreme Cutting Carp Overlord Lord let out its final roar. Seven fissures began to form on the ground, each one on the verge of breaking open. If these fissures weren’t sealed, the water from outside would flood in, drowning the eight sorcerers fighting valiantly!

Thus, players had to sacrifice their lives to seal the fissures. But if all seven fissures were sealed without killing the Extreme Cutting Carp, it would still unleash its Miraculous Fury, overturning the Dragon Palace and resulting in a total party wipe!

Carp Sacrifice—this is the Epic’s berserk check mechanism present in every Ultimate Mode and Phantom Mode instance. It’s the ultimate test for player groups! If they fail, all their efforts would be in vain!

Ashe never expected that the random team he joined would reach the berserk phase so smoothly, with near-flawless performance from everyone. It was so seamless it was almost touching!

As the healing sorcerer with the lowest damage output, Ashe naturally had to be the first sacrificial offering. When his character was fixed at the fissure, bearing the pressure of ten thousand tons of water, his instance mission was complete. The remaining task of dealing damage was left to his teammates.

With the Extreme Cutting Carp's health down to 12%, as long as Ashe didn't leave the instance prematurely, which would trigger a berserk wipe, they were guaranteed to clear it.

"Finally, we've cleared this instance... With this achievement, I can challenge a Phantom Mode next..."

As Ashe was contemplating which Phantom Mode to tackle next, he suddenly felt his heart skip a violent beat.

Thump!

The heavy pulse echoed through his skull, reverberating in his brain. The peak of his heartbeat erupted, shattering his consciousness into fragments, slowly coalescing into a piercing ring in his ears.

The game pod detected Ashe's abnormal condition and ejected him immediately. However, the light and air outside couldn't soothe his convulsing nerves. Ashe felt as if his spine had been ripped out, his life, vitality, and will drained away, leaving behind an empty, agonized shell.

Thump!

Thump!

The heart loyally pumped vitality into his veins, attempting to reboot the poisoned central system. The right hemisphere of his brain joyfully deciphered the chaotic notes emitted by the low-energy performer, while the left hemisphere mobilized its entire gray matter to suppress the insurgent neural information flow. The frontal and temporal lobes cheered on as a supportive audience, all working to force his consciousness back into his shell—

Sigh.

With a long exhalation of turbid air, Ashe's metaphysical self forcefully took command of all his underlying organs. The neurons that had been going berserk trembled in fear, the loosened screws tightened once more, and his body stabilized and rebooted.

Ashe sat upright, glancing at the game pod's screen.

"Well, leaving the instance early and causing a berserk wipe... I'm definitely going to get flamed on the forums by my teammates," he calmly narrated what was going to happen next, as if it were someone else's experience.

It was Ashe's first time entering "A Flash of Insight" in reality.

In the Virtual Realm, he would enter “A Flash of Insight” state whenever he faced a major crisis. For instance, during the car chase with Commander Demilo, he was in “A Flash of Insight” almost the entire time. Every action was as precise as a scalpel, allowing him to narrowly defeat Demilo.

In this state, Ashe seemed to pull his ‘self’ consciousness out of his body, observing everything from a third-person perspective with calm detachment.

And because ‘I’ and ‘myself’ were untethered, ‘I’ could completely disregard ‘myself’s’ pain, anger, sadness, joy, fear, and other physiological reactions and psychological emotions. It was like playing chess, making ‘myself’ a piece to be used to its fullest potential.

In fact, this state matched well with his operator codename. From now on, he would call this state “Observer Mode.”

Honestly, Observer Mode was quite good, and Ashe wished he could maintain it all the time. If he could voluntarily enter Observer Mode during instances, he could handle mechanics with zero mistakes even without a wheelchair. Forget Phantom Mode, even Ultimate Mode would be a breeze.

Unfortunately, he could only enter Observer Mode passively during critical and dangerous moments, and its duration was uncontrollable.

Once Ashe was out of danger, the ‘Observer thread’ in his mind would relax, and his overclocked brain would quickly downshift into power-saving mode—

Just like now.

“Ugh!”

Ashe groaned. The moment he exited Observer Mode, a strong sense of emptiness pressed down on him like a lead weight, making it hard to breathe. He felt as if he were submerged in the depths of the ocean, each cell and organ being crushed by the pressure of ten thousand tons of water, making him wish he could just pass out.

Struggling out of the gaming pod, Ashe could barely maintain his cerebellar balance. The world around him seemed like a still-wet oil painting, with every color leaving a heavy trail. The disruption in his visual cortex pushed his stomach pressure past the threshold, causing him to vomit his entire dinner.

The stomach acid burned his throat, but it also slightly stimulated his willpower. Ashe took a few deep breaths, finally rebooting his operating system, reconnecting all peripherals, and barely restoring basic motor functions. However, the virus still severely slowed his processing speed, making Ashe doubt his efficiency was better than that of 1% of his peers in the Gospel.

There weren't many people on the gaming floor; most were in their gaming pods. The night sky outside the window was clear, and tonight's Vamora was peaceful. Ashe looked around but couldn't find any suspicious individuals who might have cursed him.

He struggled to the front desk to seek help, only to find the receptionist slumped in her chair.

Her eyes were vacant, her face expressionless. The lips that once greeted Ashe warmly were now a cyanotic blue. If it weren't for her occasionally fluttering eyelashes and the rhythmic rise and fall of her chest, Ashe would have thought she had become one of Harvey's clients.

"Miss Petillo?" Ashe called out tentatively.

The receptionist seemed to try to focus her gaze on Ashe, but it appeared that just controlling her eyeballs exhausted her remaining energy. She couldn't say a word, and her eyes were devoid of any light, like a broken doll.

This wasn't the first time Ashe had seen someone in this state.

On their first day in Vamora, he had seen a whole carriage full of such broken people.

But the Senhaeser district was in the heart of Vamora, not the white mist-thinned outskirts—white mist?

Ashe quickly turned his head to look out the window, rubbing his eyes to make sure he really saw a clear night sky.

He ran over and opened the window, letting the refreshing night wind kiss his face.

The moon hung high, the Stars twinkled, and from his vantage point in the city on the second level of the Senhaeser district, Ashe could clearly overlook the myriad lights of Vamora.

The air was so clean it was almost sweet, and the visibility was so high that it made him want to take out an infrared lamp and aim at distant buildings.

"White mist," he murmured, "is gone?"

"I never thought I'd be on a mission in Vamora, let alone see the white mist of Vamora disappear one day."

A few hovercars flew past the chaotic intersection. Even with the assistance of an autonomous driving system, Vamora's traffic had inevitably come to a standstill under the horrific impact of the entire city's paralysis. The streets were filled with collapsed citizens, as if someone had pressed a mysterious button that put the whole city to sleep.

“But isn’t this a bit of an overkill?”

In one of the hovercars, a young man in a red hat chewing gum remarked, “Paralyzing all of Vamora just to catch a few people.”

“Shut up, Leite,” Cleos said, her eyes red and her nose sniffing. “We’ve got the advantage, so let’s not push our luck. Finish the task and leave, and give Vamora back to them.”

The two speakers were none other than two of the top ten Red Hat captains in the country, ‘Weeping Sand Red Cap’ Cleos and ‘Deadshot Red Hat’ Leite.

Leite was the Red Hat captain of Modora, and the two First-tier Cities adjacent to Azura were Modora and Vamora, which is why Leite was involved in this operation to capture Ashe.

Cleos had always wanted to claim the credit for capturing Ashe entirely for herself. She had repeatedly stated in internal communications that she would soon capture Ashe, so other Red Hat captains who were further away decided not to interfere. Only Leite, being the closest, insisted on coming to share some of the glory, leaving Cleos with no other choice.

Besides the two Red Hat teams, two firms were also accompanying them tonight.

Happy Family Firm needed no introduction; their ability to control smart home devices was useful anywhere. The other firm, however-

“No one has come out to intercept us so far. It seems Senhaeser really didn’t have any defenses,” Leite said, pulling up a Holographic Screen. “The final payment has been sent. It was a pleasure working with you.”

“Pleasure working with you too,” a voice replied from the screen. “‘Time Dissonance Firm’ is committed to providing the most comprehensive concealment services for our clients. We look forward to your next commission. Since the task is complete, our employees will now withdraw.”

Time Dissonance Firm, ranked first in Modora and tenth nationwide, was the key to the success of tonight’s operation.

At its core, their raid tonight was a well-executed conspiracy that caught Senhaeser completely off guard.

And the biggest fear of any conspiracy is being discovered in advance.

But in the Kingdom of Gospel, foreseeing a plot against oneself is quite simple.

For example, if the Senhaeser patriarch asked the Gospel Book each day, “Will there be a major threat to the family’s safety today?” tonight’s raid plan would have immediately fallen apart.

What Time Dissonance Firm provided was the service of concealing plots and deceiving the Gospel.

Although the Gospel Book faithfully records everything that has already happened, there is some room for manipulation regarding unimplemented schemes still in the mind. For instance, if their original plan was to launch the raid on the 19th, Time Dissonance Firm could make the Gospel Book believe the plan was set for the 22nd, thus preventing the Senhaeser patriarch from finding the correct answer in the Gospel Book.

This service comes at a great cost, of course. When the Gospel Book makes an error, it compensates tenfold or even a hundredfold in points, depending on the losses of the consulter. But the Gospel doesn’t take losses lightly; each mistake allows it to learn, making it exponentially harder to deceive next time.

Time Dissonance Firm, which used to be firmly in the top five several decades ago, has now fallen to the tenth spot, reflecting the rapid evolution of the Gospel.

However, until Time Dissonance Firm is completely eliminated, every service they provide means a group of people is about to face an unexpected blow.

“Confirm the mission target,” Cleos said into the radio. “Ashe Heath, whoever captures him, the credit will be split seventy-thirty. Seventy percent goes to me.”

“Next are Annan Dolan and Banjeet Dolan. Although they have no criminal records yet, they are close to Ashe, and they might present themselves as criminals during the upcoming Weaving Festival. Tomorrow is the day the second ranking list is released. We need to detain them for 48 hours under the pretext of assisting in the investigation. If anything happens, we can arrest them immediately.”

“This wasn’t the deal!” a voice from a nearby hovercar shouted. “Ashe goes to the Red Hats, Annan goes to the Firm!”

“After the second ranking list is out, if Nabistin doesn’t issue a bounty for Annan and Banjeet, I will release them. Then, your Firm can handle your own disputes.”

The affairs commissioner muttered something but ultimately lacked the courage to confront the Red Hats.

After Cleos turned off the radio, ‘Deadshot Red Hat’ Leite glanced at her. “Are you trying to protect the Purple Moth?”

“My target is Ashe Heath,” Cleos replied. “Not Annan.”

“But she can create chaos that could affect the Weaving Festival. What if—”

“Wouldn’t that be even better?” Cleos sniffed and laughed. “Capturing just one Ashe could make me the number one Red Hat. Unfortunately, I have to share the glory with you... But if another Ashe comes along, I’ll be the top Red Hat for the next fifty years!”

“The world is about to end, and you still care about rankings?”

Cleos hesitated and said, “But... I’m a Red Hat... Of course, I care about my ranking...”

Leite was silent for a moment, then waved his hand. “Forget what I just said... But keeping Annan safe won’t be easy.”

“Annan is still a law-abiding citizen. Who would dare harm her?”

“There’s someone in the car behind us,” Leite said calmly. “Don’t forget who dispelled the white mist that had Entangled Vamora for hundreds of years. The secret guard from Nabistin is a judicial disaster that even the Gospel Book cannot constrain.”

Through the rearview mirror, Cleos could see the armored guard sitting in the car behind them. Dressed in full Black Knight armor, not an inch of skin was exposed, and even the eyes were hidden behind a mask.

It sat in the backseat like an ancient tombstone.

Since gun sorcerers became the mainstream in combat, armor was relegated to the dustbin of history. Almost no sorcerers would wear such heavy armor unless they were stubborn adherents of ancient traditions.

And the secret guard, indeed, inherited centuries-old traditions. They were the most loyal shield and the sharpest blade of the Yisuo Royal Family. Since their appearance, they walked the Kingdom of Gospel as dark sentinels. No one knew who they were, and some even doubted if they were human—given that they neither ate, drank, excreted, nor entertained themselves. Many sorcerers believed that the secret guards were, in fact, animated suits of armor.

These walking armors represented the highest authority of the Yisuo Royal Family.

Not only did they represent this authority, but they could also directly mobilize royal resources to achieve any goal—such as dispersing Vamora’s white mist.

Neither the Firm nor the Red Hats had the ability to disperse the white mist.

A few days ago, Leite and Cleos were waiting outside Vamora, hoping Ashe and his group would leave voluntarily. It was then that the secret guard approached them, claiming it could disperse the mist and assist in capturing Ashe Heath.

Dispersing the mist covering an entire city without causing harm is no ordinary miracle; it could only be a Divine Intervention granted by the Gospel.

Indeed, after the Red Hats and the Firm were ready, the secret guard summoned the Gospel Book. After some operations, the white mist of Vamora disappeared.

Cleos couldn't imagine how many Gospel points this Divine Intervention cost. Perhaps if she spent a century's worth of savings, she might afford it, but she would never waste points so lavishly.

The points that a Sanctuary sorcerer might not earn in a lifetime were easily spent on what was essentially an environmental cleanup. Only the wealthy royal family could afford such extravagance.

Cleos initially thought the secret guard was representing the Yisuo Royal Family to capture Ashe and Annan. However, the secret guard shook its head, indicating it would not interfere in the capture.

It had another mission this time.

"To be honest, the secret guard really helped us," Cleos said. "Dispersing the white mist not only paralyzed all of Vamora but also ensured that Senhaeser's patriarch, who should still be in a Dream, couldn't return without the mist as a medium. For at least an hour, we'll only be facing a Senhaeser without a commander."

"In return for the secret guard's help, we'll make as much noise as possible, drawing all of Vamora's attention to us. This way..."

"The secret guard can more easily find its target," Leite finished.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 343: Deluxe Gift Box of the Five Spirits of the Peerless Secret Sword**

"Why is there such a heavy fog in Vamora..."

Ashe paused, scratched out the question, and rewrote in the Gospel Book: “Am I in danger tonight?”

Gospel Book: “Yes (costs 1 point).”

Ashe pondered for a moment, then hid behind the counter, turning the Gospel Book to the page of “Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook.” He then opened the “Senhaeser’s Dream” and accessed the “dream shards exchange.”

Tonight’s dream expedition was over, but with such a major incident—almost like a terrorist attack—Ashe felt their journey in Vamora might be coming to an end. Therefore, it was time to settle the gains from Senhaeser’s Dream in advance.

No matter what was about to happen, the best course of action was to convert idle resources into combat power as quickly as possible!

Ashe looked at his accumulated dream shards: 1553 in total, thanks to his (Substitute’s) hard work over the past few days. Although it seemed like a lot, the vast and rich rewards in the exchange made him feel like a kid with a \$50 bill in a candy store, needing to spend it wisely.

Fortunately, Ashe had already planned out which rewards to redeem during his idle moments while assembling his gaming team. This preemptive thinking about spending prize money before winning it was a form of mental entertainment for him.

Thanks to his thorough research on the cost-effectiveness of each prize, Ashe didn’t need to think too much now and could directly grab the best package!

First up was the “Deluxe Gift Box of the Five Spirits of the Peerless Secret Sword”!

Compared to the standard gift box, the deluxe gift box was only 100 shards more expensive but included two additional bonuses: an exclusive Miracle orb of the Five Spirits of the Peerless Secret Sword (immediately mastered upon use) and a crucial standard spirit needed to combine this Miracle.

Unlike the Sword Princess, who could instantly master new Swordsmanship spirits, Ashe needed a day or two of training to barely reach a combat-ready state. Even then, unless the spirit’s basic effect was exceptionally outstanding, Ashe would rather use a Miracle.

Don’t forget, the number of spirits a sorcerer can use simultaneously is limited. For Ashe, the maximum is four spirits at once; any more and he would be overwhelmed.

To illustrate, controlling spirits is like playing a real-time strategy (RTS) game. A powerful sorcerer can precisely control each unit for tactical maneuvers, but Ashe can only manage strategy—selecting all units and launching a single wave attack.

Since arriving on the Time Continent, Ashe hadn't updated his spirit system much. He stuck with a remote support setup centered around the "sword body barrier" because it was the only Miracle he had truly mastered. His self-created "Rush" Movement Miracle and the "Slash Me" negative status removal Miracle were mostly unused in everyday situations.

As for "Heart Sword" and "Sword Mark," they were basic attacks, akin to scratching an itch.

He desperately needed a Miracle that dealt burst damage, so he immediately set his sights on this deluxe gift box.

Redeem!

"You have opened the 'Deluxe Gift Box of the Five Spirits of the Peerless Secret Sword.'" Search the NôvelFire(.)net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"You have obtained the two-wings spirit 'Love Sword.'"

"You have obtained the two-wings spirit 'Devotion.'"

"You have obtained the Miracle orb 'Single-minded Devotion.'"

Although Ashe was thrilled that the gift box yielded the most suitable two-wings spirits for him, the names of these spirits made him feel like his dream of burst damage had once again slipped away.

"Love Sword"

"Two-wings Spirit"

"Restriction: The sorcerer must be capable of generating emotions."

"Basic Effect: Consumes current emotions to summon a freely controllable Love Sword."

"Passive Effect: Your emotions become more intense, outwardly enhancing your personality traits."

"You must be as happy as I am to share; you must be as sad as I am to apologize."

"Devotion"

"Two-wings Spirit"

“Restriction: The sorcerer must be capable of generating emotions.”

“Basic Effect: Transforms all your current emotions into a single specified emotion. Currently transformable emotions include anger, love, joy, and sadness.”

“Passive Effect: You will be more dedicated to any given task, reducing the likelihood of being indecisive or emotionally fickle.”

“In the sorcerer’s world, emotions can also be fabricated.”

“Miracle: Single-minded Devotion: By converting emotions through Devotion, a specific Love Sword is generated. Depending on the emotion, the Love Sword has different effects:

Rage Sword: Extremely fast attack speed with powerful armor-breaking capabilities.

Joy Sword: Provides healing effects to both body and soul.

Sorrow Sword: Moderate attack speed. Each hit applies various negative statuses to the target, such as slow, blind, tinnitus, and stun.

Love Sword: Enhances the target’s overall physical attributes.”

How should I put it... Although it can deal burst damage, is very practical, and has a wide range of applications...

This Miracle still seems like a support type! I’ll still have to stand in the back and provide support and sustain!

I just wanted to show off in front of the Witch and the sword Princess—was that too much to ask!?

After purchasing the deluxe gift box, Ashe’s dream shards dropped from four digits to three. However, the “Single-minded Devotion” Miracle was indeed a big help. Originally, Ashe had planned to buy a medical spirit for emergencies, but now with the Joy Sword, he could save a lot.

With some dream shards remaining, Ashe couldn’t help but eye the top prizes in “Senhaeser’s Dream,” which were the most expensive:

“One-Winged Spirit: Secret Toxin Diary”

“Random Spirit Summoning Card”

“Operator Possession Card”

Among these, Ashe had previously drawn the Random Spirit Summoning Card, a Golden Legend-level functional card. Its actual effect lived up to its rarity—the operator would summon a spirit at her current spellforce level within a week. When the sword Princess was still a One-Winged Sorcerer, she summoned a One-Winged Mental Spirit, which even elevated the Mental Sect to the silver level.

Now that they are Two-Wings Sorcerers, using this card would naturally summon a random two-wings spirit, and the corresponding spellcasting sect would also be upgraded to the golden level.

These three prizes were priced the same, indicating that the other two were also Golden Legend level. However, Ashe initially didn't consider these prizes. After all, the Empress in the Virtual Realm was always ready to disrupt their small family of three, and these prizes wouldn't immediately enhance his power. It seemed wiser to buy a spirit gift box to address his shortcomings in attack, defense, debuffing, and healing.

But the Love Sword turned out to be extremely practical. It was like Ashe planned to buy a bunch of entertainment devices but ended up with a smartphone that could barely meet all his entertainment needs. As the saying goes, "It's not unusable." Ashe didn't need to spend more funds chasing minor performance improvements.

Among the top prizes, the Random Spirit Summoning Card was the first to be eliminated. Although its practicality was widely recognized, its pitfalls were also well-known, thanks to the sword Princess's resistance. The Summoning Ritual was completely random; the sword Princess once drew a ritual requiring her to "speak only the truth," which drastically altered her social relationships.

Although the outcome was good, if Ashe dared to use it again, the sword Princess would definitely fight him to the death.

Since it couldn't be used on the sword Princess, it naturally couldn't be used on the Witch either, as her state was even worse than the sword Princess in many ways.

Ashe himself didn't need it either. This card was essentially a specialized training course for a specific Spellcasting Sect. It's like training employees, not bosses.

The Operator Possession Card had a more subtle effect. In short, Ashe could temporarily summon an operator to possess him, allowing the operator to control his body in battle.

Since it was a soul possession, the operator's spirit would come along, allowing the operator to unleash their full combat power using "Ashe's battle avatar."

To be fair, this card was worth its Golden Legend status. If used correctly, it could even reverse the tide of battle.

But the problem was, the sword Princess and the Witch were only slightly stronger than Ashe...

If they were four wings legend sorcerers, with Ashe focusing on support, the sword Princess on assault, and the Witch on control, the power gap between them would be significant. An enemy Ashe couldn't resist might be defeated by a single strike from the sword Princess. In that scenario, the Operator Possession Card could be Ashe's ace in the hole.

But they were currently only two-wings golden sorcerers. While the sword Princess could defeat Ashe, it wasn't to the extent of a complete stomp. Ashe could prolong his survival through defense, evasion, and harassment tactics. If Ashe couldn't defeat an enemy, switching to the sword Princess might not change the outcome either.

The card was good, but it came too early; the timing wasn't right.

Therefore, Ashe chose to purchase the first top prize.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 344: Ashe, Run**

"Secret Toxin Diary"

"One-Winged Spirit"

"Restriction: The sorcerer must possess writing skills."

"Basic Effect: Summon a diary in which you can freely write. When you complete a piece of secret toxin information, you will be immune to all effects of the secret toxin. Current number of secret toxins recorded: 0/1."

"Passive Effect: A copy of your notebook will appear in the Virtual Realm. When the copy exceeds 500 readings, this spirit will be automatically promoted to Two-Wings. Current readings: 0/500."

"Writing for yourself is called a diary; writing for others is called a biography."

Given his surplus supplies, Ashe found it hard to resist purchasing this diary-this was his only known means to resist the effects of the secret toxin!

For a sorcerer, secret toxins are akin to staying up late, smoking, or working a job: you know they'll severely impact your physical and mental health, but since the consequences manifest in a distant future, you endure them despite your worries, accepting the blows as they come.

Although the Secret Toxin Diary can currently record only one type of secret toxin, it at least offers Ashe, who suffers from multiple chronic conditions, a glimmer of hope for recovery.

Moreover, if Ashe's guess is correct, he should be able to update the recorded secret toxin information at any time. This means that if the number of secret toxin infections suddenly surges, he can promptly document the outbreak. As other infected individuals gradually succumb, the toxin's destructive power will decrease to a manageable level.

As long as multiple secret toxins don't erupt simultaneously, Ashe's life is not in immediate danger.

Every operator should have one of these diaries, but it's uncertain when the next event will offer it. Nonetheless, this is a long-term virus prevention strategy and cannot be rushed.

Another point that surprised Ashe was that the "Secret Toxin Diary" is a spirit, yet its effects far exceed those of a One-Winged Spirit and are highly specialized.

If a sorcerer unaware of the secret toxin obtained it, it would essentially be useless.

However, this wasn't the first time Ashe had encountered a low-level spirit with comprehensive yet quirky abilities. Compared to the zero wing spirit "Soul Summoning," the "Secret Toxin Diary" seemed a bit more balanced and less overpowered.

After purchasing the "Secret Toxin Diary," Ashe didn't have many dream shards left, but there were still plenty of odd prizes available.

For example, the "Spirit Relationship Information" could reveal an unknown spirit relationship. Using this information, the Gate of Truth of the spirit would designate a safe Virtual Realm area of about 50 square meters. In simpler terms, this information could grant a sorcerer a 50 square meter mobile storage space.

It sounded great, but the Virtual Realm only allowed souls to enter. To store items in the Virtual Realm, special artifacts or auxiliary Miracles were required, and Ashe had neither. It was like buying a wife cake without having a wife to share it with.

In the end, Ashe decided to buy a "Swordsmanship Orb" and a "Fist-Claw Orb." These Experience Orbs were not for Ashe's personal use. To maximize the Bond relationship and Experience Sharing, the Experience Orbs had to be fed to the witch and the sword princess.

Just as Ashe was about to close the exchange shop, he suddenly noticed a new prize at the bottom of the list.

“Witch’s Dream: 10 dream shards, use immediately upon exchange. For 24 hours, your Mental Sect Realm will temporarily elevate to the Golden level. Can only be exchanged once.”

Witch’s Dream? Ashe blinked. Did this reward appear because he chose the witch as his role in the dream expedition?

If he had chosen the sword princess, would the exchange shop have offered the Sword Princess’s Dream, temporarily elevating his Swordsmanship Sect to the Golden level for 24 hours?

Lost in thought, Ashe exchanged for the “Witch’s Dream.” After all, it was only 10 dream shards—why not?

Whether it was an illusion or not, after exchanging for the “Witch’s Dream,” Ashe felt that his Mental Sect seemed to have genuinely elevated. If before he could only glean short essays of no more than 140 characters from someone’s gaze, now it felt like he could deliver a full thesis defense just with his eyes.

Closing “Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook”, Ashe opened the Gospel Book and inquired, “Open the Funeral Firm chat group.”

Since these past few days were all free activity, Annan had spent some Gospel points to create their exclusive chat group. Any issues could be discussed there. While there were civilian alternatives, the instantaneity and confidentiality of the communication service provided by the Gospel were unparalleled.

The chat group’s logs were sparse, mostly consisting of Annan’s notifications and neat rows of “received” replies. After all, in a chat group with a superior, many things are left unsaid, so the quietness was expected.

However, the chat group was quite lively at this moment—

“Mr. Bukin: I’m on my way to meet Ashe. Where are you all?”

“Death Artist: I’m heading to Ashe too.”

“Butler: Same here.”

“Butler: Young lady? Young lady?”

“Butler: Why hasn’t the young lady checked the group?”

“Mr. Bukin: Can the young lady not handle the craving attack by herself?”

“Butler: Impossible.”

“Mr. Bukin: Why hasn’t Ashe checked the group either?”

“Death Artist: Ashe, run.”

Ashe was taken aback. He suddenly realized that if the enemy causing Vamora’s mutation was indeed targeting them, their first target would undoubtedly be him. He was currently wanted by the Empire, ranked on the Art Ranking as a suspected doomsday culprit, and eliminating him wouldn’t lead to a red name—

Crash! Crash! Crash!

The windows of the gaming floor shattered consecutively. Red Hats, representing the Gospel’s armed forces, burst into the room, stepping on balancer boots. Leading them, Cleos held a short gun in her left hand and raised a document with her right: “Inter-district search warrant. We are conducting a raid!”

“We’ve got him.”

Leite raised a bolt-action sniper gun with one hand, aiming at the black-robed Ashe hiding behind the front desk: “I am Leite Rex, captain of the Modora Red Hat team. You are suspected of being the individual on wanted notice 69-165. Raise your hands high and face the wall for inspection.”

“How did you know I was here?” Ashe put on the Twisting Mask. “The Twisting Mask should block the Gospel Book’s tracking on me.”

In the Weave rewards of the Art Ranking, the Fiend trench coat could cause mental shock, while the Twisting Mask improved concentration and distorted detection effects.

Annan and the others had all tried it. Whenever they attempted to determine Ashe’s location through any means, the Gospel’s feedback was always absurdly off the mark.

This was also why Ashe hadn’t been abandoned yet. He always carried the Fiend trench coat and the Twisting Mask. If they could easily determine his location through special items, Annan keeping Ashe around would be akin to turning herself in.

“The Gospel indeed couldn’t pinpoint your location,” Leite said with a smile. “But we found your gaming account at Annan’s place. Although you didn’t use that account here, it’s not hard to use the Gospel to search for two players with the same behavior patterns—after all, I was searching for your player account, not you personally. It seems the Twisting Mask isn’t that smart.”

“Then we pinpointed your login address, infiltrated your gaming team, and determined your playtime. Naturally, we knew you’d be here at this specific time.”

Ashe was stunned. “You...”

“Didn’t I tell you I had work tonight?”

Leite’s sniper rifle was aimed at Ashe’s chest. “Captain, you should feel honored. I’m an Ultimate Mode player. Playing Extreme Mode with a noob like you was really painful.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **- Chapter 345: The Battle Returns**

### **Chapter 345: The Battle Returns**

Escape? Escape was certain. Not to mention Leite, but Cleos was a bona fide three-wing Sanctuary. I had no chance of winning.

Hostage? The only person beside me was the receptionist, and not to mention whether my conscience would allow it, the problem was that the receptionist was already incapacitated and couldn’t even move.

If taking a mobile person as a hostage is like riding a horse, then taking an immobile person as a hostage is like being ridden by the horse. It would only increase the Red Hat’s anger without any other effect.

Ashe knew the battle was unavoidable. He was currently at the reception desk, a distance from the stairs, and had to fight to gain a chance to escape.

So, how should he fight? Generally, at this point, Ashe would choose to use a Substitute to attract the enemy’s attention by sacrificing it...

But the Substitute should still be with Lise...

After a moment of silence, Ashe suddenly raised his hands and stood up, walking towards the Red Hats voluntarily. “I surrender.”

“No surrender allowed!” Leite and Cleos shouted in unison. The Red Hats all raised their guns and aimed at Ashe—being a T0 level Spellcasting Sect of this generation, almost all Red Hats were gun sorcerers, and even if it wasn’t their main sect, it was their secondary sect.

Ashe was stunned. “You won’t even let me surrender? Then why haven’t you just shot me already? Are you really this barbaric?”

The two Red Hat captains were also frustrated. They knew exactly what Ashe was up to, but they really couldn’t lead by illegally killing a surrendering criminal. In fact, they didn’t even dare to harm Ashe—unless Ashe explicitly resisted arrest. Otherwise, even though Ashe was a fugitive, if they initiated the attack, the Gospel Book would deem them guilty of intentional harm.

Civilization is a shackle on violence; the more civilized a country, the more cautious it is in using violence.

In the Blood Moon Kingdom, they might still secretly break the law, but the strongest point of the Gospel Book Kingdom is that supervision is omnipresent. As long as the Red Hats wanted to remain on the ranking list, they absolutely wouldn’t dare to break the law first.

Cleos motioned for a Red Hat to put handcuffs on Ashe, her eyes reddening. “Keep your hands up. If you make any sudden moves, we’ll target your vital points. Any movement will be met with lethal force.”

“I’m just a mere two-wings sorcerer; how could I dare act out in front of a Sanctuary sorcerer?” Ashe shrugged and waited obediently for the Red Hat to restrain him.

However, as the Red Hat approached Ashe, his black robe suddenly split open—he had used his Heart Sword to cut through his clothes!

Bang! Bang!

“Close your eyes!”

As Leite shouted, Ashe immediately dashed towards the game pods.

Because he had waited for the Red Hat to get close before revealing his dagger, a slight sidestep allowed him to hide behind the Red Hat, making it impossible for the others to risk hitting their colleague. The bullets all struck the ground.

All the Red Hats quickly closed their eyes and scattered, but several of them still aimed their guns at the stairwell and windows. Ashe’s last bit of hope vanished as he obediently ran into the aisle between the game pods, feeling a pang of regret—

The Red Hats had almost entirely avoided his “Fiend Trench Coat” intimidation!

As soon as he slashed his robe, they had all closed their eyes, none of them witnessing Ashe’s fiendish visage!

It made sense, though. The Art Ranking had clearly displayed his reward, and after Ashe had used the “Fiend Trench Coat” to scare off two affairs commissioners from the Happy Family Firm in Azura, the Red Hats were undoubtedly prepared.

But this also worked in his favor. Since they had closed their eyes and abandoned their most crucial sense, Ashe could escape more easily. Though it was despicable, under the cover of the dense game pods, the Red Hats wouldn’t dare to attack recklessly. If they injured an innocent Vamora citizen, they could say goodbye to their hats—

However—

Ashe suddenly froze, a wave of fear crawling up his scalp, his cells screaming to prevent him from stepping into death. Without thinking, he immediately spat out his Honey Sword, driving it into the ground. A warm, yellow barrier formed instantly!

“Sword Body Barrier!”

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Three explosions echoed in the space. Ashe couldn’t see anything before his sword body barrier shattered, and his abdomen felt like it was struck by the tail of a Blade Fish Dragon. He only felt himself being lifted off the ground, his stomach bursting like a water balloon. The intense impact turned his vision into a kaleidoscope of colors—

Smack!

His back slammed into the cold, hard floor, and Ashe spat out a mouthful of bloody foam. The cold air he inhaled felt like knives stabbing into his lungs. The pain overwhelmed his thoughts, leaving only a faint glimmer of combat instincts—

It was a Bouncing Bullet!

Ashe was surrounded by game pods on all sides, so theoretically, the Red Hats shouldn’t have been able to shoot him. But that Bouncing Bullet ricocheted off the ceiling and walls twice, hitting Ashe from above at an impossible angle. Its power was undiminished, instantly shattering his two-wings Defensive Miracle, the sword body barrier, and still having enough force to strike his abdomen—not piercing it, but delivering a Miracle Shockwave Bullet that converted all its kinetic energy into a massive hammer blow, changing a potentially fatal shot into a more difficult-to-heal internal injury!

The Sword Princess had taught him that there were generally two directions for Gunmanship sects: either fatal precision, essentially headshots ensuring instant death, or extreme high-intensity destructive power, ensuring the enemy couldn’t defend or heal.

If it were a non-headshot piercing wound, it would be relatively easy for sorcerers to heal, given the small wound area and the effectiveness of various Healing Miracles. However, those high-intensity blunt force injuries that massively damaged the body could instantly incapacitate a sorcerer, preventing them from healing quickly.

Ashe felt like his abdomen had turned into mush, his intestines tangled worse than shoelaces, and several ribs were likely shattered. He was teetering on the brink of death, his strength completely drained. The Red Hats' bullets were indeed gentle; Ashe couldn't even think about resisting now, as even breathing required all his effort.

If only he still had the Reverse Day spirit gifted by the Sword Princess, he could have healed instantly.

Unfortunately, he had lost it by answering wrong in the Cabin.

Sword Princess...

"You don't need to surrender or resist. In ten seconds, you'll be unconscious. We'll take you away once you're asleep," Leite's voice grew closer, accompanied by the sound of footsteps. "Don't feel bad. I'm a three-wings gun sorcerer. Even if you are a physical sorcerer, if I want you unconscious in a few seconds, you'll be unconscious in a few seconds."

Another three-wings sorcerer, and the most violent kind—a gun sorcerer. Plus, Cleos was nearby, meaning two Sanctuary sorcerers were here to capture him...

The first time Ashe was caught, it was by one Sanctuary sorcerer.

The second time, it was by two Sanctuary sorcerers.

Ashe could only hope this was an arithmetic progression, not a geometric one.

But this time, escape seemed impossible. Ashe was finally about to return to his old profession—as a professional prison evaluator, he was ready to thoroughly assess the facilities of the Kingdom of Gospel's prison.

However, when Ashe barely recovered from his concussion and opened his eyes, he saw Igor on the ceiling.

The Con Artist had removed a ceiling tile and was peeking down at him, his gaze as cold as if he were looking at a piece of pork.

Igor pointed to himself, then to the ground, before finally beckoning Ashe to stand up.

Ashe didn't fully understand Igor's tactical sign language but grasped his task—to stand up as a decoy.

As long as he stood up, the “Fiend Trench Coat” intimidation effect would continue, and the Red Hats wouldn’t dare to open their eyes, forcing them to fight without their sight!

But standing up was extremely dangerous. Ashe wasn’t an upstanding citizen; he was a bona fide fugitive. The Red Hats killing him wouldn’t just be excused; they’d get a reward!

Yet, at this point, how could Ashe not trust Igor?

He clenched his sword fingers, activated the Devotion spirit, converting all his pain, fear, and fighting spirit into joy. Then he activated the Love Sword spirit, conjuring a “Joy Sword,” and stabbed it into his abdomen!

Miracle: Single-minded Devotion: Joy Sword!

Warmth spread from his abdomen, soothing his entire body. Joy seeped in from the outside in, and Ashe was pleasantly surprised to find his pain suppressed by the Joy Sword, at least not dominating his thoughts. The gears of his body could barely start moving again.

Though the pain would likely return once the Joy Sword’s effect wore off, Ashe could at least hold out long enough to complete his tactical task!

“Ugh!”

Ashe propped himself up against the game pod and stood. He saw Cleos appear in the hallway. He groaned and summoned the Heart Sword, launching it at the Sanctuary sorcerer!

“Confirming that Ashe Heath is resisting arrest,” Cleos said, effortlessly shattering the Heart Sword with her eyes closed. “Lift the kill restriction!”

Boom!

The floor suddenly shook, and a massive, ghostly green magic circle appeared beneath the Red Hats. Ghostly green smoke seeped into their bodies, quickly reacting with their souls.

Even with their eyes closed, the Red Hats seemed to see a deserted, rainy night street. Their clothes felt soaked, cold wind stinging their faces, and a barrage of negative emotions—despair, sorrow, self-pity, fear, and coldness—overwhelmed their hearts. Even Cleos and Leite shivered slightly.

Directly beneath the Red Hats, on the lower level, an inverted coffin was suspended from the ceiling. Several ghostly green chains emerged from the coffin, tightly anchoring

it to the ceiling, forming an octagonal magic circle. Harvey lay on the ground, gazing up at the coffin with his hands clasped in prayer.

Miracle: Immortal Coffin on a Cold Rainy Night!

Using necromancy to achieve the effects of the Illusion Sect and Mental Sect, it poured negative energy into the enemies, causing them to hallucinate!

In the few breaths while the Red Hats were dazed, Igor jumped down and pulled Ashe into the Red Hats' blind spot. He raised his voice and shouted, "I'm about to release a Mental Scream. Ordinary people within ten meters will drop dead instantly just by hearing it. Three, two, one!"

The Red Hats, struggling to break free from the negative energy, turned pale. The Mental Scream was imminent, and they had no time to kill Igor, the mastermind behind this!

Ashe was initially puzzled by Igor's habit of narrating his ultimate move, but just before Igor unleashed his silent scream, the Red Hats raised their guns and fired at various parts of the gaming floor—ground, ceiling, and walls—using Earth spell Miracles to create temporary soundproof barriers!

At the moment Igor released his silent scream, a petite blue figure flipped over the outer wall and onto the gaming floor—it was Banjeet Dolan.

The strongest ice gun sorcerer from the Funeral Firm.

At that moment, the young butler faced a group of Red Hats with their backs to him.

In one second, the dual ice spell guns emptied their magazines, and 62 Miracle bullets rained down on the enforcers like a sudden downpour. Upon impact, these bullets would extract the blood from the enemies' bodies, forming sharp ice flowers for secondary damage, turning death into a brilliant, crystalline work of art!

The perfect combination of gun spellcasting and ice spells, where efficiency and elegance complement each other!

Miracle: Blooming Ice!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 346: Abandoning Ashe

Igor discovered that in a dream, as long as your imagination is rich and detailed enough, you can create an illusion that interacts normally with you, even without a 'real person' assisting.

So, he created a cow-horse illusion and traveled with it through various dangerous ruins and mysterious places. When there was danger, the cow-horse would take the fall; when there was work, the cow-horse would do it. He had been very happy these past few days.

As for the love task arranged by Annan, he planned to just muddle through it. When the second ranking list comes out, he would explain to the young lady, "I'm sorry, I can't distinguish between my love and killing intent. When I fall in love, I end up killing the other person."

After ending tonight's dream journey, Igor crawled out from under the bed. Just as he was about to take a bath to relax his nerves, his heart suddenly pounded hard.

"The first heartbeat is the final warning."

The revelation he received while brushing his teeth in the morning was vivid in his mind. Before his other senses could react, Igor immediately cast 'Heart of Stone' and 'Iron Will' on himself, maintaining absolute calm to withstand the hormone imbalance triggered by his craving attack.

He didn't even need to look at the window to guess that the concentration of white mist outside had dropped to a life-threatening level. Even if it wasn't the whole of Vamora, at least the Senhaeser district was affected; otherwise, he wouldn't have suddenly experienced withdrawal symptoms while living in the core area of Senhaeser.

At this sensitive moment, a city-wide disaster in Vamora must be related to the few of them, the outsiders.

If I were the attacker, my first target would be...

Igor tightened his robe, took a few steps in his slippers, then kicked them off, put on his pre-prepared emergency escape outfit, and left the room barefoot. As he moved, he opened the Gospel Book and summoned the funeral chat group.

"Bukin: I'm on my way to meet Ashe. Where are you all?"

"Death Artist: I'm also heading to Ashe."

“Butler: Same here.”

“Butler: Young lady? Young lady?”

“Butler: Why hasn’t the young lady checked the group?”

“Bukin: Can the young lady not handle the craving attack by herself?”

“Butler: Impossible.”

Igor squinted his eyes, thinking that Banjeet and Annan were indeed prepared to leave Vamora at any moment.

He himself was temporarily suppressing the withdrawal symptoms with a mental miracle. If Igor guessed correctly, the necromancer didn’t suppress the withdrawal symptoms but rather satisfied his craving directly with smoking and sugar. It was said that he had been trying to quit smoking recently, but it seemed he was about to fail.

As for Banjeet and Annan, neither of them specialized in the Mental Sect, and they didn’t have a habit of smoking. Their ability to recover from withdrawal symptoms immediately could only mean they had prepared in advance.

Walking down the corridor to the elevator shaft, Igor saw several Senhaeser clansmen lying quietly on the side, their eyes vacant, their consciousnesses blank, like poor-quality toys whose springs had suddenly broken. Igor glanced at them and hurried by. Fortunately, there were no such still-breathing corpses inside the elevator.

However, Annan, Lise, and Ashe had remained silent until now, which made Igor’s heart sink-could Ashe have been overwhelmed by the craving attack?

“Bukin: Why hasn’t Ashe checked the group either?”

“Death Artist: Ashe, run.”

The Con Artist frantically pressed the elevator buttons, canceling the descent to the 72nd floor where the gaming floor was located, and selected the 73rd floor instead. Harvey’s warning was definitely not without reason. Going to the gaming floor where Ashe was now would be walking into a trap. Igor queried the Gospel Book, “Show personnel activity within a 100-meter radius and display a 3D perspective map, real-time monitoring for 10 seconds.”

The Gospel Book transformed into a real-time monitoring map: “(Consumes 50 Gospel Points) Please see the map.”

On the map, there were many green dots representing living beings. Most of these green dots were neatly arranged, likely the Senhaeser clansmen lying in the gaming

Pods; in the open area near the windows, there was a group of green dots still moving, clearly the invaders who had come in after the white mist dispersed.

From the map, it could be seen that this group of green dots was confronting another trembling green dot, which was undoubtedly their beloved primitive man, who didn't know to check the group chat in time.

"Bukin: Ashe was caught on the 72nd floor. I'm heading to the 73rd floor. Where are you all?"

"Death Artist: I'm going to the 71st floor."

"Butler: I've already slid down the outer wall to the 72nd floor. There's a group of Red Hats inside, eight in total. Among them are two three-winged sorcerers, 'Weeping Sand Red Cap' Cleos and 'Deadshot Red Hat' Leite. Ashe is beyond saving."

Two Sanctuary sorcerers!?

Igor felt a chill down his spine—they couldn't even handle one Sanctuary sorcerer, let alone two. Was it really necessary to deploy two Sanctuary-level sorcerers to capture a criminal as insignificant as Ashe? Such extravagant waste should be legislated against!

If Senhaeser were still functioning normally, due to the Pact restrictions, Qenna would definitely help them escape. Whether through official channels or violence, as a local powerhouse, Qenna could make these Red Hats pay dearly.

But now the white mist had dispersed, and the Senhaeser clan was nearly paralyzed. Qenna was out of the question! Igor even suspected that Qenna had become like the broken toys, only her Sanctuary-level strength made her a more advanced broken toy—broken sorcerer/patriarch/elf toy.

Let's not forget, Igor and the others had only been in Vamora for a few days, but the withdrawal symptoms caused by the dispersal of the white mist quickly rendered them incapacitated, giving them at most one or two seconds of blackout protection time.

If we use cured meat as a standard, they were still not properly marinated as newcomers.

Those who had lived in Vamora for decades, thoroughly marinated from their body pores to the folds of their souls inside and out, were likely instantly 'popped'—their fuses burnt out, causing a complete system shutdown without even a moment of blackout protection.

In other words, the fact that Vamora's people didn't immediately drop dead or explode, but merely blacked out and awaited a reboot, indicated that the Family Rebirth Dream

had indeed preserved their original human essence, preventing them from degenerating into bizarre creatures entirely dependent on inhaling and exhaling white mist.

“Butler: Forget about Ashe. We’ve lost contact with Miss as well. We need to protect her first.”

“Bukin: No.”

“Butler: Do you have a way to rescue Ashe from the Red Hats?”

The elevator stopped at the 73rd floor, the storage level. Igor’s mind raced with countless thoughts, and he exhaled softly.

“Bukin: Yes. Harvey, can you create a distraction from below? We don’t need to cause harm, just a distraction.”

“Death Artist: If we’re targeting Sanctuary sorcerers, the distraction time can only be measured in breaths.”

“Bukin: That’s enough. Banjeet, stay on the outer wall. When you get my signal, storm the gaming floor and shoot up the Red Hats.”

“Butler: The enemy comprises Sanctuary sorcerers who far surpass us. Whatever we do, we stand no chance. Attacking the Red Hats will only get us captured too! With Miss’s situation uncertain, we should protect her first. Once she’s safe, she can figure out a way to rescue Ashe from the Red Hats!”

“Butler: Bukin, Harvey, we have no choice but to abandon Ashe for now.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 347: The Sanctuary Sorcerer**

Banjeet’s refusal was expected by Igor.

Among the three who had lost contact, Banjeet only cared about Annan. Any action that might impede his rescue of Annan would never be approved. Banjeet initially rushed towards the gaming floor because he believed Annan would also seek out Ashe. However, now that Annan hadn’t appeared and Ashe was trapped, Banjeet had no reason to take risks.

If Ashe and Annan fell into the water together, Banjeet would undoubtedly let Annan step on Ashe to get ashore.

The young butler shared so much with the group because he hoped to persuade the two new employees to join him in searching for Annan. After all, Annan's current situation was unclear, and she likely encountered an enemy, so the more reinforcements, the better.

No matter how well they got along usually, no matter that Ashe had learned Gunmanship from Banjeet, or that Ashe, Lise, and Banjeet had once played the classic game of "we'll play this with our kids someday"-when it came to crucial moments, the weight of life still made a decisive difference.

What people value varies greatly from person to person.

The butler was like this, and so was the Con Artist.

Igor knew he had to convince Banjeet. Among the three of them, Igor could only serve as support, Harvey required extensive preparation, and only Banjeet could unleash explosive power at any time.

Banjeet had been a two-wings sorcerer for decades, primarily mastering Gunmanship and Ice Spell, both combat-focused spellcasting sects. Who knows to what extent he had honed his combat skills.

Although Banjeet had never ascended to the three wings Sanctuary in his lifetime, it only indicated the limit of his talent, not his lack of effort. In the world of sorcerers, effort is a fundamental quality every Virtual Realm traveler possesses. Any sorcerer not diligent enough would be motivated after being eaten by a Blade Fish Dragon a few times.

Unfortunately, the realm ceiling of spellcasting sects is intangible and elusive. If a sorcerer can't break through, they simply can't break through. Experience Orbs are extremely precious, and many sorcerers spend their entire lives without reaching higher levels of the Virtual Realm. But one can't hang themselves on a single tree; if they can't advance in one sect, sorcerers will train in other sects to try their luck.

Over time, every senior sorcerer typically masters several spellcasting sects and integrates them, creating new miracles and even new spirit systems. This is especially evident among Elf sorcerers. As long as an Elf sorcerer, who is several hundred years old, continues to update their knowledge system, their foundation becomes so deep that they can easily crush human sorcerers of the same level who are only a few decades old.

Even if their spellforce no longer grows, sorcerers can still transform time into overall strength.

For sorcerers like Banjeet, whose spellforce has stopped growing but has been immersed in techniques for decades and has the guidance of the Gospel, they have undoubtedly constructed a flawless spirit system. Among them, the only one who can challenge a Sanctuary sorcerer is Banjeet!

“Mr. Bukin, don’t forget, Ashe is Annan’s employee. The Red Hats will definitely arrest Annan on charges of harboring a fugitive. If we don’t intercept the Red Hats here, even if we find Annan later, we’ll still face the pursuit of the Sanctuary sorcerer.”

“Mr. Bukin, the Red Hats are all on the gaming floor now. They are in the open, and we are in the dark. If we can severely wound them now, our escape will be much easier. Or do you prefer a life-and-death chase with the Red Hats under the vast night sky, rather than using the terrain advantage to strike first?”

Three seconds.

Two seconds.

One second.

“Butler: Do we have a chance?”

“Mr. Bukin: Yes.”

Indeed, without Ashe’s involvement, schemes and plots usually proceed very smoothly.

“I’m about to release a Mental Scream. Ordinary people within ten meters will die instantly upon hearing it! Three, two, one.”

Igor pulled Ashe into the blind spot of the gaming pod’s view and calmly counted down aloud.

The countdown was not only to pressure the Red Hats but also to signal Banjeet’s timing to enter.

The key to breaking this situation wasn’t themselves, but the Red Hats.

The Red Hats have the legal right to use force, but they are also bound by numerous restraints.

1. They are not allowed to attack a fugitive first, unless the latter has clearly resisted arrest.
1. They are not allowed to harm innocent civilians at any time.

1. When a criminal makes a clear criminal declaration, if they have the ability to provide relief, they must prioritize providing relief!

Igor didn't spend all those days watching documentaries and TV dramas just for entertainment. These three Red Hat regulations were masterfully manipulated by scriptwriters to create numerous dilemmas that questioned the humanity of the Red Hats.

When he learned the attackers were Red Hats, Igor immediately realized he had a chance to exploit the shackles on the Red Hats and create a slim opportunity for Ashe to escape—

By using Ashe to seal their vision, Harvey to shock their minds, and then Igor to make a criminal declaration, he forced them to quickly erect a soundproof barrier to protect other Vamora citizens on the gaming floor. This emptied their magazines and diverted their attention, allowing Igor's Mental Scream to cover Banjeet's fatal gunshot, annihilating this group of Red Hats who were out at night kidnapping men!

As a price, Igor's clean Gospel citizen record, maintained for less than twenty days, would finally bear a significant criminal mark.

If Harvey could explain his actions as a prank, and Ashe's wanted notice might be revoked, then Igor's premeditated criminal act of attempting to release a large-scale destructive miracle in a densely populated area left no room for explanation. If this resulted in the deaths of many corrupted Senhaeser clansmen, Gospel might even place a bounty on him.

It was so embarrassing. Igor never thought his first criminal record in Gospel would be for endangering public safety—a crime only fools would commit—instead of fraud, illegal fundraising, or even blaspheming a deity.

It's always like this; nothing good ever happens when he's with Ashe. Who's the real burden here?

But Igor wouldn't be lonely. Banjeet, who was attacking the Red Hats, would join him in topping the day's hottest criminal chart.

Igor sighed inwardly and let out a heart-wrenching tenor scream.

Simultaneously, Banjeet burst onto the gaming floor, and his dual ice-curse guns spat out 62 miracle bullets in one second!

Just as the Red Hats were about to fall victim to the criminals' scheming, two Sanctuary sorcerers suddenly unfurled their virtual wings!

Silver wings!

Golden wings!

And... rainbow wings!

The moment these virtual wings manifested, they shattered, transforming into two transparent barriers that protected all the Red Hat members!

Pop! Pop! Pop! Pop!

Mental Scream caused faint ripples on the outer surface of the transparent barriers, while the 62 bullets were suspended in the barrier's exterior, shattering into 62 tiny ice flowers!

Inside the barrier, the Red Hats remained completely unaffected!

In the face of absolute strength, schemes and plots are no sturdier than bubbles.

"Very impressive tactical coordination," Leite remarked. "But you underestimated the Sanctuary sorcerers."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 348: Patriarch of the Six Heraldry

Igor did not truly expect them to be able to surround and kill the Sanctuary sorcerers. He merely hoped that they could cause some casualties among the Red Hats, ideally leaving everyone severely injured except for the Sanctuary sorcerers, forcing those two to stay behind to care for their team members—in the Red Hat regulations, taking care of team members takes precedence over pursuing criminals. This way, they could escape smoothly.

But now, far from causing any casualties, the Red Hats were completely unscathed.

Igor took out a hand mirror from his robe and used its reflection to see the transparent barrier that momentarily protected all the Red Hats. He murmured, "What is that?"

Ashe summoned the Gospel Book, "What is that?"

Gospel Book: "(Consumes 5 Gospel points) Sanctuary."

Before Ashe could continue his inquiry, the Gospel Book, which had formed a strategic partnership with the Funeral Firm, proactively added:

“Sanctuary is a universal ability of three wings sorcerers, and over time has become synonymous with them. Sanctuary is not an ability that sorcerers automatically acquire upon advancing to three wings. Instead, because three wings sorcerers must master Sanctuary to explore the Distant Sky Domain, every three wings sorcerer is necessarily a Sanctuary sorcerer.”

“Sanctuary requires no spirits as a casting basis (though they can assist). The sorcerer only needs to diffuse a mixture of silver, gold, and Rainbow spellforce outside their body to generate their exclusive Sanctuary.”

“Typically, a Sanctuary is a spherical transparent force field centered on the sorcerer, with an adjustable radius. The discrete reassembly of virtual wings is the most common way to summon a Sanctuary.”

“Every second a Sanctuary exists, it consumes mixed spellforce. Moreover, depending on the spellcasting sect, each sorcerer’s Sanctuary is unique, but all Sanctuaries have two basic effects—”

“① A Sanctuary is generated instantly, with its size freely controllable.”

“② A Sanctuary can be used as a defensive barrier, directly using spellforce to resist all external attacks. Depending on the attributes of the Sanctuary, the spellforce consumption varies greatly, but there is almost no attack that cannot be defended against.”

“Based on these two effects, it is generally believed that exhausting all of a Sanctuary sorcerer’s spellforce is a necessary but not sufficient condition for killing a Sanctuary sorcerer.”

Ashe showed Igor the two basic effects of the Sanctuary. Igor blinked.

“Key information missing. It turns out my plan had no chance of success from the start.”

“You didn’t know about the Sanctuary?” Ashe was astonished. It was one thing for someone like him, who was ignorant of such things, but how could Igor not know?

“The Sanctuary I had heard about was a kind of Miracle Ritual Track set at a fixed location, where three wings sorcerers are nearly invincible within its range...”

“Completely wrong.”

“Even a Con Artist can be deceived.” Igor spread his hands. “Tonight came too fast and too suddenly. I didn’t have time to check my information with the Gospel Book. Besides, I never intended to face a three wings sorcerer head-on. That’s not on my ‘One Hundred Things to Do in This Life’ checklist.”

“Sorry about that.” The Con Artist glanced at the Cult Leader. “We’re going to be captured again.”

“It’s alright,” Ashe said. “Worst case, we’ll just recreate Shattered Lake.”

As they chatted, Cleos gently landed on top of the game pod behind them, her light footsteps interrupting their pointless conversation. Her eyes were closed, and her righteous and kind guns were aimed at the red-named targets that would bring them glory. The Elf’s crimson lips uttered a cold warning: “Move and you die.”

To add weight to her warning, she half-pulled the trigger, the intricate metal mechanism making a teeth-chattering sound that would terrify any intelligent creature.

“Note that in the Red Hat regulations, as long as she gives a clear warning, shooting a suspect on the spot won’t lower her Red Hat ranking.” Igor raised his hands in surrender, not forgetting to educate Ashe on Red Hat common knowledge.

“It sounds like her warning wasn’t meant for me, but to explain to the Gospel.” Ashe obediently raised his hands too. “It’s like a student in class saying they need to pee-not really talking to their bladder.”

On the other side, Banjeet also lowered his icy curse guns, though not much could be expected from him. After all, when you’re being aimed at by the heavy sniper of a Sanctuary sorcerer, it’s hard to muster any strength in your hands.

Harvey managed to escape unscathed, but carrying an almost impossible-to-hide coffin made him no different from a Snail. Getting caught was only a matter of time.

With the three of them captured, no external reinforcements, and no internal plans, Ashe felt they could only contribute to the public security of the Gospel Kingdom in an indelible way.

Ding.

At that moment, the elevator light turned on.

The announcement speaker replaced the upcoming visitors, extending a warm greeting to everyone.

All the Red Hats turned to look at the elevator, along with the barrels of their guns.

However, the moment the elevator door opened, everyone redirected their guns—because inside the elevator was a colleague.

An Elf Red Hat.

But as soon as Banjeet saw her, he visibly relaxed. The sixty-something young butler wore a look of relief, as though he had encountered a guardian when being bullied.

“Do not point your guns at him.”

This sentence instantly spanned half the gaming floor. Although Cleos had been prepared, her body shimmering with multiple Miracle glows—Defensive Miracles being far more cost-effective than Sanctuary unless absolutely necessary—she was still kicked away!

Boom!

Accompanied by scattered Miracle fragments, Cleos was sent flying back into the Red Hat ranks. She immediately summoned the Gospel Book to search for enemy information, frowning as she said, “Nona Senhaeser?”

Ashe and Igor looked up to see a tall Elf Red Hat standing before them. She resembled Qenna slightly, but with less maturity and allure, and more innocence and cuteness. Her short hair was stylish, and she stood with one hand on her hip. To the two rescued individuals, she looked as heroic as a divine being descending to earth.

“Miss Nona?” Igor exhaled. “According to the Pact between Annan and your sister—”

Wham!

‘Nona’ landed a heavy punch to Igor’s abdomen. As the Con Artist bent over like a shrimp, she followed up with an elbow to his back, knocking him to the ground with a loud thud.

“Next time you use my clansmen as hostages, remember these three broken ribs.” She turned to Ashe. “Do you want to call me Nona too?”

Noticing the familiar cold arrogance in her eyes, Ashe suddenly recalled their elevator encounter a few days ago. “You’re Qenna?”

“Is it Patriarch Qenna?” Leite asked from the other side. “According to the records, Red Hat Vice-Captain Nona is just a two-wings sorcerer. No matter how deep her foundation, she simply doesn’t have the power to repel Cleos. In the entire Senhaeser family, only Patriarch Qenna possesses Sanctuary-level combat strength.”

“Logically, with the white mist dissipating so rapidly, an ordinary Vamora should instantly lose all mobility. And at this moment, Patriarch Qenna, you should still be in the Dream. After the white mist dissipates, you wouldn’t even be able to return to reality immediately. However, given the years of operation by the Six Heraldry family, as the patriarch, you must have mastered some hidden secrets.”

“Do you outlanders always speak in such a roundabout way? Are you sure you want to show off that pitiful eloquence in front of an Elf who’s several times your age?” Qenna said coldly. “The patriarch of a heraldry family controls the clan’s resources and commands the trust of the entire clan, naturally needing to be on standby at all times and never falling into dire straits.”

Ashe couldn’t help but nod internally. For example, in the Senhaeser family, because the clansmen’s desires in reality were extremely low, Qenna had effectively achieved absolute dictatorship. But the downside was that when the clansmen faced sudden events, they had almost no subjective initiative and had to rely on the patriarch to steer the course.

To put it another way, the Senhaeser family was like Big Sister Qenna leading a large group of kindergarten children.

If the patriarch suddenly disappeared, Ashe doubted whether the Senhaeser family had the capability to elect another patriarch.

“Years ago, our ancestors considered various scenarios in which the patriarch might be killed. Sudden events like the white mist dissipating and the Dream being sealed were also taken into account. To ensure the continuation of the family, which is of utmost priority, every patriarch of the Six Heraldry family has a ‘backup body,’” Qenna explained. “The backup body contains a soul split of the primary body, and there is more than one backup body. If a sudden situation occurs, the backup bodies will activate one by one according to priority. At least one will be able to temporarily lead the family.”

“Soul split?!” Cleos exclaimed in shock. “Wouldn’t that affect your future as a sorcerer? And this isn’t just any ordinary Miracle... Wait, isn’t this reincarnation and soul takeover? Those backup bodies-“

Cleos suddenly stopped short.

“It’s not as dark as you think. Usually, the backup body is at most influenced by my soul split’s emotions. Even if the soul split activates, the body will be returned afterward. As for my future, compared to ensuring the family’s continuation, it’s not worth mentioning at all,” Qenna said calmly. “The soul split is a simple matter. The Family Rebirth Dream isn’t just for entertainment.”

“Let’s end the chit-chat here.”

Leite said, “Patriarch Qenna, please hand over those two criminals. One is an imperial criminal under wanted notice 69-165, and the other just attempted to endanger public safety. As for your attack on Captain Cleos, I’m sure the Gospel will make a fair judgment-“

“Wrong.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Your stance is wrong,” Qenna said coldly. “The one who gets to say ‘please’ now is me.”

“Please leave Vamora immediately. Any search actions must be officially communicated to the Vamora Red Hats, and we will do our best to cooperate with your reasonable actions. As for your unauthorized raid on Senhaeser’s private territory, I’m sure the Gospel will make a fair judgment. As for this white mist, I won’t hold you accountable. You small-time families simply don’t have the financial resources to pray for such a Miracle.”

Cleos was stunned for a moment. “Miss Qenna, although you possess a three wings realm, Nona... only has two wings, right?”

“Even if you can use your sister’s body to exert Sanctuary-level combat power, we have two Sanctuary sorcerers and six elite Red Hats,” Leite said, raising his bolt-action sniper rifle, openly threatening her. “Eight against one, a simple math problem, right? Are you really going to shield an imperial fugitive?”

“I’ll repeat, first, I’m merely asking you to apply for a cross-city search through proper channels; second...”

“The enemy you’ll face is not a two-wings sorcerer.”

A strange male voice came from outside the window: “But six heraldry patriarchs representing eight million Vamora citizens.”

The Red Hats turned to see five Uninvited Guests climbing through the broken window onto the 72nd floor. Tonight, the doors had lost their favor, and windows had become everyone’s preferred entry point.

“The white mist has dissipated.”

“All clansmen have fallen, and I had to activate the backup body.”

“Outlanders brazenly invade our home.”

“And wreak havoc in Senhaeser.”

“Even attempting to capture our heraldry clansmen.”

“Vamora has never faced such humiliation since its establishment,” Qenna said coldly. “8764502 against 8, a simple math problem, right?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 349: Too Strange, Take Another Look

May 19th, 9:30 PM, 150 minutes until the 20th.

The 72nd floor of the Senhaeser Building, usually a haven for introverted gamers in the virtual entertainment zone, was now crowded with a large group of social monsters. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Edifel, Philippe, Bosch, Bierse, Suotian...”

Leite lifted his Red Hat, revealing his tousled red hair and his Miracle eye engraved with a spell formation. His laughter carried a hint of madness: “To think that I can meet with the six patriarchs of Vamora’s Six Heraldry at the same time, even a legendary sorcerer wouldn’t have such an honor, right?”

“Indeed,” the trench coat man said. “The last time the six patriarchs met was the last time.”

“That must have been hundreds of years ago, right?” the ponytail woman said. “How come nothing happened during the terms of the previous patriarchs, but now it’s my turn and such a big event occurs?”

“Isn’t this a good thing?” said the lazy man with a fisherman’s hat, smiling. “Bierse, you haven’t been a patriarch for long, have you? Someone like me, who’s been a patriarch for decades, eagerly anticipates these little episodes that can bring a change to the monotonous life.”

“It might just be pure noise,” the man with glasses said, taking out a comb to straighten his bangs. “Be careful not to harm Senhaeser’s family and resolve it quickly.”

Banjeet looked at the men and women before him, temporarily suppressing his grievances against Igor, replaced by the awe of witnessing a legend.

The Six Heraldry Patriarchs!

Leaders of Vamora, representatives of eight million people, inheritors of millennia-old families! Even in the entire Kingdom of Gospel, they are formidable figures, overlords of their domains!

Among outsiders who have seen Vamora's current state, the Six Heraldry Patriarchs are often regarded as second only to Empress Yisuo in power. Although their influence diminishes outside Vamora, Vamora is the largest producer of Beauty Houttuynia in the Kingdom of Gospel. In the Organization Ranking of various cities, Vamora consistently ranks near the top, and its annual city GDP has never fallen out of the top five!

If the six families of Vamora were separated, each family's GDP would far exceed that of ordinary Second-tier Cities, and they could even compete with First-tier Cities! Because the resources of the heraldry families are allocated uniformly, the patriarch can freely mobilize the entire clan's production resources, effectively meaning 'one is all, and all is one'!

Therefore, the patriarchs in front of Banjeet were not just patriarchs; they were practically the embodiment of their families, the human representation of their cities, carrying the weight of millions of clansmen in their every move. This is not just a metaphor—they truly have the ability to convert clan resources into power—

Whoosh—

With the sound of pages flipping, five Gospel Books appeared before the patriarchs. For someone from a small household like Annan, the Gospel Book is a high-end, conservative information platform, but in front of the heraldry patriarchs, whose Gospel points are measured in millions, the Gospel Book's openness is beyond ordinary people's imagination.

Sanctuary!

Two Sanctuaries instantly unfolded to protect the Red Hat members. Although no actual attack was visible, anyone seeing the dense ripples of rain on the Sanctuary barrier would know that sorcerers are no match for the Gospel. Money talks indeed.

Cleos's face turned extremely grim, tears welling up at the corners of her eyes as she bit her lip in frustration: "Leite, it looks like we're going to fail this time..."

"We cannot fail."

Leite also summoned his Gospel Book: "I reiterate, our mission is solely to capture the Empire fugitive Ashe Heath. We have no intention of offending Vamora. Once we capture Ashe Heath, we will leave immediately. The white mist is not our doing. We will apologize to the Vamora Red Hats for any procedural violations afterward... No, I am deeply sorry. Esteemed patriarchs, I beg your forgiveness for our rashness."

He suddenly bowed deeply to the patriarchs, saying with his head lowered: "According to information revealed during the Weaving Festival, Ashe Heath is closely related to the apocalypse of the next fifty years. We cannot allow him to remain free! I am willing

to hand over all my gains from this matter to the Six Heraldry of Vamora. We can let go of everyone else, but Ashe Heath must be brought back for questioning!"

Trench Coat Man: "Do you think Vamora is a bathroom, where you can come and go as you please—"

"Wait," the Man with Glasses said. "Senhaeser, what's your take on this? The Six Heraldry of Vamora stand together in both prosperity and adversity, but fighting a Sanctuary sorcerer and offending the Yisuo Royal Family for an outsider does not align with our family principles."

Ashe looked nervously at Qenna. She glanced at him, her expression thoughtful.

It's over!

Honestly, if the roles were reversed, Ashe would certainly not risk everything to protect an Empire fugitive, let alone one who seemed to be the culprit behind an impending apocalypse.

Although Qenna had signed a Pact with Annan, theoretically obligating her to protect them or face a ban in the Virtual Realm, there were complications. Firstly, standing before them was "Nona," not "Qenna." Ashe wasn't sure if the Pact could recognize Qenna logging in from a different account in another place. Secondly, Qenna valued her family more than herself. If she truly believed she was endangering Senhaeser, the Pact would just be a sunk cost she had to bear.

Threatening Qenna with the Pact? Absolutely not. Qenna was too proud to be threatened; it would only backfire. Ashe still remembered getting a bullet graze from Qenna for an offensive comment.

Persuading Qenna through Annan? Claiming he was very important to Annan to evoke Qenna's compassion? That didn't seem like a viable option either...

Ashe suddenly felt a tug on his pant leg. Glancing down, he saw Igor sprawled on the ground, mouthing two words.

"Annan and Nona."

Ashe suddenly recalled that Annan often spoke about her close relationship with her aunt, Nona. They had come to Vamora because Annan was confident in gaining Nona's support, so she brought her entire family to seek refuge with her aunt.

Unfortunately, Nona had been caught by Qenna, forcing them into cooperation with her. Otherwise, they would have smoothly infiltrated Vamora by now.

According to Annan, Nona was the kind of good aunt who would stand up to her sister for her niece, the only person in Senhaeser to whom Annan could confide, and the brightest light in the little girl's childhood.

However, the reality was that Nona had a soul split of her sister Qenna within her. When Qenna was trapped in the Virtual Realm, the first backup body activated was Nona. The relationship between these sisters was much closer than that between Qenna and her daughter Annan.

Ashe now also recognized that the two characters who appeared in the "Senhaeser's Dream" event illustration were none other than Qenna and Nona! Qenna sat in a chair overlooking Vamora, while Nona whispered secrets to her from the side. They were clearly the classic "warrior sister and strategist sister" duo!

In other words, the "good Aunt Nona" in Annan's perception was likely a role Qenna had arranged. According to educational theories, having Qenna play the strict role and Nona the kind role was actually a very effective method of upbringing.

Qenna might not necessarily love Annan, but she definitely cared a lot about her.

Ashe remembered his encounter with Qenna in the elevator. He felt that, at her core, Qenna was probably a kind and approachable person.

So, the correct strategy here should be...

Ashe steeled himself and hugged Qenna!

"Patriarch Qenna, I am Annan's fiancé. I will join Senhaeser in the future!" Ashe buried his face in her chest, avoiding eye contact with the female patriarch. "Please save me!"

He wasn't yet skilled at lying with a straight face. His expressions and demeanor would only give him away, so he had to rely on his body language to strengthen his plea.

Igor, lying on the ground, coughed up a mouthful of blood, his eyes full of shock. He didn't dare to breathe too loudly, fearing he would disrupt Ashe's performance.

This was definitely a risky move. They still hadn't fully deciphered the complex relationship between this mother and daughter. If they got it wrong, Ashe's actions would only provoke Qenna's ire!

The air was completely silent. Everyone was waiting for the response of the Senhaeser patriarch.

"You say you are Annan's fiancé?"

Was she doubtful? Did she think he was lying? Did they get the code wrong?

However, at this point, Ashe could only press on: “Yes... Do you disapprove?”

“No, I highly approve. In fact, this is wonderful news.”

Ashe’s chin was lifted, forcing him to meet the gaze of the Senhaeser patriarch. Qenna’s golden eyes were full of amusement and expectation, reminding Ashe of a half-satiated fox eyeing its next prey.

“However, from now on, you should call me Sister Qenna.”

Ashe blinked. “...Sister Qenna?”

“Good boy.” Qenna noticed a drop of blood on Ashe’s left cheek and pointed to her own face. “You have blood.”

Ashe instinctively reached for his right cheek. Qenna shook her head and leaned in closer.

Just when Ashe thought Qenna was going to wipe the blood off for him, he felt a slick tongue lick his face.

A shiver ran down his spine, and his body nearly went limp in Qenna’s arms as she gently held him.

Igor, watching their interaction clearly from the side, found this scene more disturbing than the pain of his broken ribs. It was shaking the Con Artist’s Heart Wall to its core.

Ashe, what kind of password did you crack?

Qenna’s attitude towards you doesn’t resemble how one would treat a daughter’s partner at all!

Though I’m from the Blood Moon, I’ve seen plenty of family dramas here, and I’ve never seen anything like this!

This is too bizarre. I need to take another look.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 350: Each Has Their Own Valued Thing**

“Enough.”

Qenna pushed the dazed Ashe away, lightly scraped her lips with her fingernail, and said loudly, "I don't know any Ashe Heath. I only know that I won't allow you to take my clansman Ashe Senhaeser!"

Leite turned to the other patriarchs, "Do you all agree?"

"The Six Heraldry advance and retreat together, with aligned interests," the man with glasses repeated. "Senhaeser would never act against the Six Heraldry. Her will is the will of the eight million people of Vamora."

"Alright," Leite said. "Cleos, our Pact is nullified."

"Huh?" Cleos couldn't help but open her eyes to glance at 'Deadshot Red Hat,' only to see Leite taking off his Red Hat uniform. "What do you mean?"

"It means, I don't want my share of the profit anymore. As long as you capture Ashe Heath, you will be the number one on the National Red Hat Ranking."

"But why don't you—"

Before Cleos could finish her question, Leite had already answered with his actions. The Sanctuary sniper directly aimed at Ashe, who was hiding behind several rows of gaming pods, and multiple spirits appeared on the gun barrel.

Ashe, in the line of sight, felt a chill seep into his body from his spine. Despite his Wild Instinct running at 120%, his body couldn't move. The air seemed to turn into an oppressive wall, trapping him in Qenna's embrace!

Miracle: Target Killing Bullet!

Fix the target into an immobile state and then shoot — that's the essence of Target Killing!

Bang!

Even though the Six Heraldry patriarchs reacted extremely quickly, the Sanctuary bullet still blasted through two gaming pods, creating large holes in the Senhaeser clansmen inside. The bullet stopped before the third gaming pod, spinning within six layers of invisible energy walls, releasing all its kinetic energy.

If not for the timely prayer to the Gospel Book by the Six Heraldry patriarchs, everyone in the line of sight would have been doomed to be pierced through.

"Do you realize what you've done?"

Regaining his ability to move, Ashe looked up and saw that Qenna's eyes no longer held any trace of a smile. Holding the Gospel Book, she stepped forward. Her cold voice couldn't hide her anger as she spoke word by word, "You actually murdered ordinary Senhaeser clansmen right in front of us?"

"More will die next." Leite spoke calmly, showing no emotional fluctuation after killing: "Ashe must be taken away. I will stop at nothing—though there's really no cost anymore, since I've already lost my Red Hat qualification and will soon become a target for other Red Hats."

"Cleos, and all of you, even if it's for the Gospel ranking, fight with everything you've got." The Sanctuary sniper made a statement that no Red Hat should ever make: "I'll take care of the innocent people standing in your way."

When Ashe looked over, Leite immediately closed his eyes. Although he couldn't make eye contact with this Sanctuary sorcerer, Ashe knew that his opponent's pupils were filled with a resolute determination that left no room for retreat.

Despite becoming someone's must-kill target for no reason, Ashe didn't feel much grievance. After all, he had started out as a Cult Leader in prison and was long accustomed to the ups and downs of fate.

Since the Weaving Festival, the 'Eternal Wanderer' had been demonstrating his prowess, first getting notorious on the Art Ranking, then encountering the ruthless Empress's heroic soul in the Virtual Realm. Compared to those, being targeted by a Sanctuary sorcerer was just dessert.

Oddly enough, if a normal person faced such continuous malevolence, they would likely become cynical or at least swear to the heavens, 'Better I betray the world than let the world betray me.' However, Ashe felt nothing. He simply helped Igor up and used a 'Joy Sword' to heal his broken ribs.

Igor coughed up some blood, "Gently!"

"Do you want me to carry you like a princess?" Ashe retorted irritably, "Sister Qenna, we'll leave now so we don't get in your way! Banjeet, let's go!"

"Don't even think about it!"

With a sharp cry from Leite, the Red Hats rapidly scattered to find cover and attack the native patriarchs, but they were all blocked by an invisible barrier.

Cleos's dual guns performed a requiem, and the bullets all hit the ground. In an instant, the ground beneath the patriarchs disintegrated into particles, causing these wealthy family heads to fall into the night sky along with the rubble!

At the same time, Leite aimed at Ashe again, firing another Miracle bullet!

Bang!

The bullet stalled less than a meter from the muzzle, spinning furiously in the air as if it was throwing a tantrum in impotent rage.

The five patriarchs did not fall. Despite the ground being gone, they could still walk as if on solid ground. This might be the most degrading use of Gospel points—they were stepping on the Gospel points, using money to pave a stairway to heaven.

“Do you have a grudge against him?” Qenna asked calmly, holding the Gospel Book as she walked out.

“No, I actually know him quite well. His gaming skills aren’t great, but he’s a decent guy,” Leite replied.

“Then why are you doing this?” Qenna asked. “You can’t even be a Red Hat anymore.”

“For the Gospel.”

Ashe, Igor, and Banjeet reached the 71st floor and saw Harvey lying in a coffin with Alice about to close the lid.

“What are you doing... never mind, I didn’t ask.”

“This is another one of my Miracles.” Harvey, eager to explain his Necromancy Sect skills, said, “It allows me to temporarily become a corpse, letting most of my Miracles work on myself, doubling my combat strength.”

“Why didn’t you use it before?” Igor asked.

“It requires some preparation time and has a slight side effect, so I avoid using it if I can.”

“What side effect?”

“If used for too long, temporary corpse state might become permanent.”

“Alright.” Banjeet exhaled deeply, trying to suppress his inner anxiety. “We need to rescue the young lady now.”

Igor opened the Gospel Book chat group. “Annan hasn’t said anything yet, which probably means she’s in serious trouble. Instead of—”

Click.

The young butler pointed his dual ice spell-guns at the Con Artist, unlocking the safety.

“—instead of wasting time, let’s find her immediately.” Igor’s face was pale, likely from his broken ribs. “Or it will be too late!”

“I agree.” Banjeet holstered his guns.

Harvey shrugged and climbed out of the coffin, “Then I won’t turn into a corpse.”

“Wait.”

Ashe raised his hand, sweeping his gaze over the group, and asked curiously:

“Where’s Lise?”

At apartment 5603 on the 56th floor of the Senhaeser building, a knock echoed through the dark room.

Knock, knock, knock.

After three knocks, the automatic door suddenly lit up with a green light and slid into the wall with a swish.

Tap.

Steel boots stepped into the room, pressing down firmly on the floor, transferring weight to the toes, and then repeating with the other foot.

The strides were uniform, the steps crisp.

Tap. Tap. Tap.

The owner of the steel boots stopped in the center of the room, not turning on the lights or saying a word.

Inside the closet, the Substitute tightly covered Lise’s mouth, clamping down on her like concrete, suppressing her trembles to the minimum.

After an indeterminate amount of time, the sound of steel boots walking away and the automatic door closing was heard. The Substitute released Lise, and the white-haired girl collapsed onto the clothes, breathing heavily, releasing all the tension that had built up inside her.

As she finally caught her breath, Lise realized her legs were weak. “Carry me to the mirror.”

The Substitute carried Lise out of the closet to the vanity. The Little Witch turned on the lamp beside it, eager to discuss countermeasures with her sisters—

The moment the light came on, Lise saw herself, the Substitute, and the Black Knight standing in the shadows, reflected in the mirror.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 351: You Are Just a Spirit

“Ah!”

In the instant the chandelier fell, the Substitute yanked Lise back. The square chandelier in the hallway crashed to the ground in front of Lise, and shards of glass cut her little foot encased in white stockings.

Ignoring the small injury, Lise anxiously looked at the Substitute. “Are you okay?”

Unlike her, the Substitute would immediately dissipate with even minor damage. If the current Lise was a helpless doll, then the Substitute was a true bubble.

The Substitute didn’t respond, simply carrying Lise over the shattered glass, silently and loyally fleeing down the corridor.

Behind them, the aloof Black Knight pursued their backs at a leisurely pace.

Clad in dense scale armor, with an ebony helmet extending into a plume of raven feathers, the Black Knight’s dark silver steel boots made a muffled thud on the carpet, moving like a stroke of ink on parchment.

It wasn’t particularly tall, nor was it especially burly even with the armor, but its silent oppression was enough to leave all prey gasping for breath. It wielded no weapon, holding only a black-silver-covered book—the Gospel Book. Search the [NôvelFire\(.\)net](http://NôvelFire(.)net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

As the Substitute and Lise passed by a window, the Black Knight lightly flicked its fingers, shattering the glass into countless fragments. If not for the Substitute’s timely dive forward with Lise, they would have been showered with glass shards.

The 13th time.

This was the 13th time Lise had encountered such an ‘accident.’

The moment Lise saw the Black Knight in her bedroom, the Substitute had immediately scooped her up and rushed out. Surprisingly, the Black Knight did not attack right away, even allowing them to run a few more steps, as if a doctor assessing a patient’s condition.

When they had fled a certain distance, and Lise nearly thought the Black Knight had entered the wrong room, the ‘accidents’ began.

Falling chandeliers, exploding fire extinguishers, shattering windows, crumbling plaster, splintering doors... The building, home to the core members of the Senhaeser family, suddenly turned into a danger zone, filled with startling surprises at every corner.

Just now, when Lise tried to run towards the stairwell fire exit, she watched in disbelief as the solid, thick wall collapsed into rubble, blocking the fire exit and turning it into the biggest fire hazard. Compared to the fire exit, the elevator shaft fared slightly better—it merely started smoking and prematurely retired.

Clearly, the Black Knight did not intend to kill her, but neither did it intend to let her escape this floor. Lise had two choices: hide in another room and play hide-and-seek with the Black Knight, or jump out of the window.

Not to mention, the Black Knight had just demonstrated its exceptional hide-and-seek skills. Lise had experienced what it was like to play hide-and-seek with someone holding the Gospel Book a few days ago—Ashe was terribly unfair, using Gospel points to cheat even in a game with children.

Lise didn’t know what to do now. Although she wanted to discuss it with her sisters, they hadn’t appeared in the mirror when the Black Knight showed up; at that moment, the Little Witch understood what her sisters meant.

If she guessed correctly, this Black Knight was after her sisters, and they couldn’t show up easily!

Now it was her turn to protect her sisters!

“Why are you chasing me!?” Lise climbed onto the Substitute’s shoulder and shouted at the Black Knight, “I don’t even know you, and I haven’t done anything wrong, so why are you doing this?”

“My foot got cut, and it hurts, and I hurt my hand just now too, it hurts so much, boo...”

As she spoke, tears started rolling down Lise’s cheeks. She bit her lip in grievance, rubbing her eyes messily and smearing her face. Her hairband was pulled off while running, and her snow-white, pure hair fell onto her trembling shoulders. Her nose

tingled—she felt more and more wronged the more she spoke, even shaking her fist at the Black Knight from afar in defiance.

She had to act utterly innocent—this was indeed a task only she could accomplish, something her sisters couldn't do!

In response to Lise's questioning and crying, the Black Knight paused for a moment, then pulled out a pen from the spine of the Gospel Book and began writing in it.

Suddenly, the speaker in the corner of the hallway emitted a flat mechanical voice: "The white mist has dissipated; you have not been affected."

Lise was stunned. She turned her head to look outside the window and realized that the white mist that had entangled Vamora for hundreds of years had quietly hidden away at some point. The playful night was trying to find it.

Although they had been focused on researching the Gospel Incarnation these days, this was Vamora after all, and they inevitably gathered a lot of information about it.

Lise didn't bother to remember the various social changes caused by the Beauty Mist. She only remembered one thing—staying in Vamora for more than 6 hours required special treatment to leave the dense mist area; otherwise, it would trigger severe withdrawal symptoms. Note, this wasn't about leaving Vamora, just leaving the dense mist area. For example, the developing intercity new district was a thin mist forbidden zone that Vamora citizens couldn't enter.

Conversely, even if you didn't leave Vamora, as long as the white mist concentration decreased, you would still be choked by withdrawal symptoms!

Lise thought it was terrifying when she read the information. Those ordinary people who fell into withdrawal symptoms almost all became dazed, their eyes hollow, consciousness dissipating, and some even losing control of their bowels. She had asked Ashe how to solve this problem, and Ashe's solution was to prepare diapers. That was when Lise deeply realized the limitations of a single-parent family, and that a stepmother had to be arranged as soon as possible.

At that moment, Lise suddenly remembered seeing a few maids lying on the ground in the corridor. She had thought they were beaten by the Black Knight, but there were no wounds on them, and they all had vacant eyes and drool, fitting the symptoms of withdrawal perfectly!

No wonder Senhaeser was so quiet. Perhaps everyone besides her had already lost control, hopefully with diapers prepared.

...So, why was she unaffected?

“So what!” The Little Witch stiffened her neck and said, “Can’t I be healthy and not affected? Is it wrong to be healthy!? You aren’t affected either!”

The Black Knight continued to write in the Gospel Book, using the corridor’s speaker to speak: “You said you were hurt and in pain just now, is that true?”

“Of course, it’s true!” Lise angrily waved her fist. “My hand is still bleeding!”

Boom!

The Black Knight suddenly pointed from a distance, and the ceiling above Lise and the Substitute cracked and collapsed instantly. Stones and dust fell together, threatening to crush Lise and shatter the Substitute!

“Get down!”

The Substitute couldn’t speak; it only followed orders.

It immediately curled up into a ball on the ground. Countless debris clattered onto the floor around it, but not a single stone touched it.

However, it wasn’t entirely unscathed.

Drops of blood fell onto its face, mingling with the dust to form a dirty, sticky mixture. It turned its head upward to see a small, delicate figure.

Lise had spread her arms to shield the Substitute. A stone larger than her had struck her back. Her head seemed to have been injured, as red droplets slid down by gravity, carving a path through the dusty white hair, soaking her delicate brows, and falling onto the Substitute’s face like dewdrops. Her knees were slightly bent, her white stockings torn and tattered, with rust-colored stains spreading from the wounds, resembling roses blooming in the snow.

This fragile and seemingly breakable crystal child now stood like an unyielding fortress, bearing all the damage alone to protect a bubble.

“Take me away,” she said.

The Substitute immediately hugged Lise and fled, narrowly avoiding the secondary collapse of debris. Lise clung tightly to the Substitute, glaring at the Black Knight with hatred.

“You actually don’t feel any pain. With your current injuries, you should have passed out.”

Hatred overwhelmed rational thought at that moment. Lise screamed, “Die, die, die! I’m not afraid of you! I won’t pass out! Waaa, I’ll call Dad to come and kill you!”

The Black Knight ignored Lise, continuing to speak methodically, “Originally, I was just suspicious, but now I’m almost certain. Your so-called pain is just a sensation you’ve imagined. Hormones and neurons can’t truly affect you.”

“Why aren’t you affected by the white mist? Because you can’t imagine the effects of withdrawal symptoms.”

“Why don’t you pass out from severe injuries? Because you don’t want to.”

“As long as you don’t care or think about it, nothing exists.”

For some reason, listening to the Black Knight’s meticulous analysis of her situation, an indescribable panic surged within Lise. She resisted the urge to take out her hand mirror, gripping the Substitute’s neck so tightly that her nails nearly pierced its skin, as if fearing that the Black Knight’s next words would strip her of everything.

“What... exactly are you trying to say?!”

Crash!

Another window shattered nearby, and the Substitute hugged Lise, dodging the shower of glass shards.

In the chaotic rain curtain of fragments, Lise saw the Black Knight write something in the Gospel Book. The speaker above echoed a cold declaration:

“You are not the master of this body, so this body cannot affect you.”

“You are not even human.”

“You are merely a spirit.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 352: Deceived!**

Let the Celestial Bull step back to a few days ago.

In Annan's penthouse library, after Igor and 'Lise' completed the Pact, Igor made an unreasonable request.

"You want to study 'us'?"

'Lise' shook her head and waved her hand, giving the Con Artist a double rejection: "Absolutely not."

"Even if you say no, I will still keep observing you," Igor threatened. "I'm not trying to do anything excessive, I just want you to answer some questions and fill out some surveys. Think about it, while you're smart and cautious, Lise is an adorable child who wears her thoughts on her sleeve. Instead of tricking a child into giving me colorful candy, wouldn't it be better if you personally made a psychological ice cream that satisfies a mental health professional?"

'Lise' continued to shake her head: "Lise isn't as easy to read as you think. She only acts like a fool in front of fools, and becomes smart in front of smart people... But why are you so interested in us? Didn't you just say you've seen many cases of multiple personality disorder?"

"I have seen many cases of multiple personality disorder," Igor said, "but none as special as you... as you all."

"Generally, multiple personality disorder manifests in two forms: The first is one soul with multiple personalities, where different personalities coexist within the same soul. These personalities can persist long-term but have difficulty communicating with each other. In severe cases, their memories can't coexist either, with one personality having to 'sleep' for another to awaken. Such patients are like dice, always showing only one face."

"The second form is multiple souls with multiple personalities, which means the soul itself splits, leading to multiple personalities. This is an extremely dangerous condition, as the personalities can communicate and even attack each other within the mind, making long-term coexistence nearly impossible. The souls tend to devour each other, resulting in mutual personality destruction. However, it is said that some mental Miracles can transfer souls out, leading to what is called 'soul split' or 'soul division.'"

"And your case, not only have I never seen it, I've never even heard of it," the talented yet unscrupulous mental doctor marveled. "Multiple souls in one body, able to communicate and coexist harmoniously, even having common goals and clear divisions of labor, it's practically the ideal organizational form."

"For others, multiple personality is an uncontrollable disorder, but for you, it's a controllable Miracle."

“So I’m very curious,” Igor scrutinized ‘Lise,’ “in what manner do your personalities coexist within the soul?”

On the 72nd floor of Senhaeser, after Leite completely lifted his restrictions, the battle instantly reached a fever pitch. Even though everyone tried to conserve their strength, much of the 72nd floor was destroyed, bullet holes were everywhere, and the ceiling and floor were nearly blasted through.

“Speaking of which, I have a question for the patriarchs,” Leite said while ducking into Cleos’ Sanctuary to reload his magazine, trying to disrupt the battle with conversation. “I understand that you patriarchs have ‘backup bodies,’ but the white mist affects all Vamora people. The ‘backup bodies’ would also experience withdrawal symptoms and be unable to move. How do you control the ‘backup bodies’?”

“It’s simple, we don’t directly connect to the ‘backup bodies,’” the trench coat man loudly replied. “It’s like playing a virtual game; even though we players can fully control the game characters, we aren’t possessing the characters. Instead, we control them through virtual equipment.”

“So even if the game characters are blinded, petrified, heavily injured, or weakened, it’s the characters that suffer, and the players can still continue to control them.”

“Enough,” the man with glasses said. “Don’t be so eager to reveal secrets to the enemy we’re fighting.”

“I still don’t understand,” Leite asked in confusion. “In games, there’s virtual equipment. What is the medium you use to connect to the ‘backup bodies’?”

The trench coat man seemed unable to resist the opportunity to show off his knowledge. “The ‘backup bodies’ own souls, of course.”

Leite was stunned. “Aren’t you controlling them using a soul split?”

“How is that possible? Each body can only house one soul. For us to keep a soul split in the ‘backup body’ as a last resort, we must—”

“That’s enough, Bosch!” the Man with glasses interrupted sharply.

However, Leite had already caught the underlying meaning of their words.

As a Sanctuary sorcerer, even without deep knowledge of the Mental Sect, his broad understanding allowed him to glimpse the secrets of the Six Heraldry family.

“The only entity that can hide within a sorcerer’s soul is one and only one kind.”

Leite looked around: “You all are spirits.”

In the hallway on the 56th floor, Lise, clutching her Substitute's neck, was bewildered.

Am I a spirit?

How could I be a spirit?

I am the Little Witch, the most beloved sister of my siblings, Dad's cutest daughter, I am...

"After Princess Lise Deya left, we made countless speculations about the princess's psychological state, but they were all denied by Her Majesty the Empress. The princess has grown up healthily under Her Majesty's watchful eye, with no thoughts of running away, nor would she enter the Virtual Realm on her own."

"Therefore, the one who left the tower wasn't the princess, or rather, the princess was coerced, deceived, or even harmed."

"So who entered the Virtual Realm, who met the Bronze Dragon, who tried every means to escape Nabistin?"

The Black Knight wrote: "It could only be a spirit born from the princess's memories."

"You, or you all, usurped the princess's soul, controlled her body, and like despicable thieves, stole the Yisuo Royal Family's most precious treasure, hastily escaping the palace."

"I can't possibly be a spirit!" Lise pulled at her hair. "Don't try to fool me just because I didn't go to school. Spirits are born from knowledge—"

"Triggered by the Virtual Realm, born from knowledge," the Black Knight wrote. "But the carriers of knowledge are many: memory, emotion, will, even the soul... Each self-summoned spirit contains much information about the sorcerer. Moreover, when a sorcerer summons a spirit, it is often with intense desire—wanting fists to be stronger, swords to be sharper, guns to shoot faster and more accurately."

"The father of a spirit is knowledge, but its mother is desire. Although it's difficult to achieve, if a sorcerer offers their soul willingly during the summoning of a spirit, combined with a strong desire, the spirit can indeed mutate into a life form that can communicate with the sorcerer."

"You are a spirit, merely endowed with a personality, hiding within the princess's soul to observe this world, even capable of manipulating the princess's soul to disguise yourself as a human. But you have no past, no future, no life, no death."

Lise opened her mouth to retort, but no sound came out.

Suddenly, she recalled a conversation with her sisters.

“White Queen, how did I come into this world?”

“You were summoned by Deya.”

“Summoned?”

“Yes, we needed a super cute Little Witch sister, so you appeared.”

“What? Hehe, I’m not that cute~”

Exactly!

That’s right!

Lise suddenly said with confidence, “So what if I am? I’m loved by my sisters, loved by Dad, I am the cutest-!”

“You admitted it.”

The Black Knight tapped the Gospel Book with his pen: “Finally found you, Princess Lise Deya. I thought I had really mistaken someone else.”

A curse word that no child should say popped into Lise’s mind.

Damn it!

It was lying to me the whole time! It wasn’t even sure if I was Lise Deya! Damn it, damn it, damn it, how can anyone be more shameless than Dad!

“Because there was no trace of the princess, Her Majesty the Empress believed the princess had used the Bronze Dragon’s blessing to erase all her past. But the princess is someone blessed by the Gospel, and those around you would also attract the attention of the Omniscient Weaver. So our primary investigation targets were the Echoers at the Weaving Festival.”

The Black Knight continued: “The secret guard was dispatched across the country to search, and my targets were those around Ashe Heath. In this form, it’s indeed hard to associate you with the original. But after the white mist cleared, you were one of the seven completely unaffected people. I know the reasons for the other six, but you were the special one.”

“Princess, stop letting the spirit use your body recklessly. It’s time for you to return. Nabistin needs you, the Yisuo Royal Family needs you, and the Gospel Kingdom needs you.”

As the Black Knight closed the Gospel Book, the ceiling of the hallway in front of Lise and her Substitute began to collapse. It didn't just collapse one layer but multiple layers, until rubble and debris completely blocked the entire corridor.

The Substitute attempted to open the nearby room door, but with a mere gesture from the Black Knight, the automatic door accelerated its aging process to the point of complete lock failure. This time, the Black Knight didn't use the Gospel Book, so Lise understood-the Black Knight's attack method likely involved accelerating time in a specific area, probably only affecting inanimate objects.

The Black Knight wasn't directly using the Gospel Book to create accidents, but rather asking it how much time to accelerate, the range of effect, and when to deploy it to create an 'injured but not dead' accident for Lise.

Lise finally understood everything.

Everything it had done was merely to force out my sisters. When it realized I wouldn't admit anything, it deliberately said those things to deceive me, provoke me, and ambush me! S

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 353: Scarlet Dead Apostles**

There was no way out, and the Black Knight was closing in step by step.

Lise was completely out of options. She hurriedly took out the small mirror from her pocket, disregarding the risk of being discovered by the Black Knight, and initiated a high-speed mental exchange with her sisters. "I'm sorry, I messed up."

"It's okay," the White Queen reassured her. "The enemy has already assumed you are Lise Deya. Confirming your identity is just a matter of time. You've done well, Lise."

Lise asked, "But what do we do now? I'm about to be captured."

There was a moment of silence in the mirror before the White Queen suddenly asked, "Lise, do you resent us for keeping secrets?"

Lise was puzzled. "What do you mean?"

Deya clarified, "Do you resent us for hiding the fact that you are a spirit?"

Lise tilted her head. "A little bit, but no matter what I am, I'm still your favorite little sister, right?"

The White Queen responded, "Of course, without a doubt—as long as you don't make me angry."

Scarlet Dead Apostles added, "And as long as we are here, Lise, you don't need to know you are a spirit."

Lise was a perceptive child.

"Scarlet, what do you mean by that? Are you saying you might not be here someday?"

Scarlet Dead Apostles didn't answer Lise's question. "Lise, listen to the White Queen more in the future. Black Butler, don't keep things to yourself. White Queen, don't try to handle everything alone. Trust others more. Deya, you must stay true to yourself."

Lise was anxious. "Scarlet, what are you talking about?!"

The usually silent Black Butler suddenly spoke, "Let me handle it. Scarlet Dead Apostles, you are more useful than I am."

Scarlet Dead Apostles replied, "No, Black Butler, you are more useful. I can't help in the Virtual Realm anymore. I was born to fight. Now that Deya can fight on her own and has trustworthy allies, my continued existence would only be a burden to her."

Deya protested, "That's impossible! Scarlet, you are my sister, not some combat substitute, and you would never be a burden to me!"

Lise was on the verge of crushing the mirror. "What are you all talking about?! I don't understand any of this!"

"The Trial of the Bronze Dragon erased our past in reality and sealed our spellforce," the White Queen said in a low voice. "That's why Annan never suspected us. But without spellforce, we can't activate our spirit forms, so we have no power to resist in reality and must rely on others for protection."

"But there is always an exception—if a spirit activates voluntarily, it doesn't require spellforce."

Lise had a vague understanding but still hoped for the best. "So Scarlet is going to beat up this bad guy and come back?"

Scarlet Dead Apostles replied, "I won't be coming back."

“Why not!?”

“Lise, do you know what kind of spirits we are?”

“Sister spirit, little sister spirit, cute spirit?”

“No, we are all derivative spirits of the Mask spirit,” Scarlet Dead Apostles explained. “I am the Scarlet Dead Apostles Mask, she is the White Queen Mask, and you are the Little Witch Mask.”

“When used on ourselves, we can switch freely and use them permanently. But if we use them on someone else, it means I have to enter the other person’s soul to put the Scarlet Dead Apostles Mask on them.”

Lise asked, “So... Scarlet, are you going to take over this bad guy’s body!?”

“I can’t,” Scarlet Dead Apostles shook her head. “A mask is still just a mask.”

“Then what are you going to do?”

“It’s simple. When it takes off the mask, it will also take off its face. I will actively merge into and disrupt its soul, confuse its memory, and shatter its worldview. By the time it completely removes me, it might not even remember who it is.”

A chill ran through Lise’s heart. “And what about you, Scarlet?”

“The only way to forcibly remove a mask is to destroy the spirit,” Scarlet Dead Apostles said.

“No!” Lise immediately objected. “I don’t want you to die, Scarlet. We... we have Dad, Annan, Aunt Bukin, Uncle Harvey, and Sister Qenna. They will save us. You don’t need to die!”

“The white mist has dispersed for so long, and we have been running for so long,” Black Butler suddenly said. “Who has come to save us?”

The image in the mirror froze.

“They might save Annan, Banjeet, Ashe, Igor, and even Harvey, but no one will save us. Annan and Banjeet are master and servant, Ashe and the others are companions, but we are outsiders that no one cares about.”

“In ordinary times, it might not matter, but in moments of danger, the weight of life becomes clear,” Black Butler said. “Moreover, they can’t save us. The Black Knight just said it—it is a secret guard. Deya, do you remember that name?”

Deya replied, "I heard it once in a bedtime story. The secret guards are the royal blades, representing the Yisuo Royal Family. They can freely use the royal family's Gospel points and have the authority to invoke Forbid... secret guards can even be considered legendary sorcerers."

Black Butler continued, "If I'm not mistaken, the white mist in Vamora was dispersed by it using points. It wasn't even serious just now, merely playing a game of chase with Lise. Even if someone came to rescue us, who could stand against a legendary sorcerer? Who would dare offend a secret guard of the Yisuo Royal Family?"

Lise exclaimed, "So we just let Scarlet go to her death? I don't want that!"

"So... we should go back."

Black Butler spoke softly, "If we surrender, Scarlet won't have to sacrifice herself. If we go back, we won't have to keep running. White Queen, Scarlet, Lise, Deya..." By the end, there was a note of pleading in her voice.

Deya didn't respond.

"We absolutely can't go back."

Scarlet Dead Apostles firmly rejected Black Butler's suggestion.

"The witch needs Lise Deya, not Scarlet Dead Apostles, not Black Butler, not White Queen, not Secret Princess, and certainly not Little Witch. Even if we obediently return to the tower, the witch will still cleanse us all. She won't allow us to continue existing and obstruct the 'true Lise Deya' from achieving Armored Sanctification. Everyone will die, no exceptions."

"One death versus five deaths—it's simple math even I can do, Black Butler."

"But what if it's not just one death!" Black Butler roared. "This time we encounter a secret guard and Scarlet has to sacrifice herself. What about the second time we encounter a secret guard? Will it be me? Then the third time? The fourth time? Will it only end when Deya is the only one left?"

White Queen interjected, "Black..."

"Three months remain until the Weaving Festival ends. If we behave well, the witch might let us live for those three months," Black Butler pleaded. "Deya, do you really want to watch everyone die one by one? Can't you let us live peacefully for these three months? Do you know what Scarlet likes to eat? Do you know where Scarlet wants to go? Do you know that Scarlet actually loves listening to music?"

Deya didn't respond.

“Don’t embarrass yourself, Black Butler,” Scarlet Dead Apostles said. “Don’t make it sound like I’m afraid of death. I am Scarlet Dead Apostles—that’s the name I chose for myself.”

“Lise, without other spirits to assist, I can only activate through contact. Just touch the secret guard with your hand.”

Lise almost wanted to hide her hands. “No!”

“Don’t be so stubborn. You’re an adult now.”

“I’m not an adult! I’m Little Witch! And how is this different from killing Scarlet with my own hands? Absolutely not!”

“Deya!” Black Butler’s scream nearly shattered the mirror, but then it turned into a tearful plea. “I’m begging you...”

White Queen said, “Black Butler, don’t do this. The person suffering the most here isn’t you, it’s Deya.”

Deya still didn’t respond.

Even the swiftest mental exchange takes time, and the Black Knight had already reached the end. The Substitute spread its arms to shield Lise, as if trying to repay her for saving its life moments ago.

“No...”

Pop.

With a light wave of the Black Knight’s hand, the bubble burst. Lise looked up, forced to face this cruel nightmare up close.

“Lise, look at me.”

Lise instinctively glanced at the mirror, and then her Mask was removed.

Black Butler roared, “Deya!”

White Queen cried, “Deya...”

Little Witch screamed, “Deya!”

Their shouts came to an abrupt halt.

Drip, drip.

Her tear ducts worked harder than ever to cleanse her eyes, her teeth bit deep into her lips, drawing blood. Large teardrops mixed with thick blood droplets fell onto the mirror, forming a new layer that obscured the faces of her sisters, reflecting only a girl sobbing uncontrollably.

“Deya, you are the strongest among us. From now on, you’ll have to bear the burden.”

Deya hastily wiped away her tears and looked up to see the Black Knight’s outstretched hand. Fighting the nausea rising in her stomach, she raised her hand to reach out—

Buzz!—

Suddenly, a sharp screech came from the ceiling, jolting Deya’s mind into a daze. The unprepared Black Knight also paused for a moment.

At that instant, an inverted sword body barrier emerged from the ceiling above the Black Knight, and the section of the ceiling was cut out and began to plummet downward!

Crash!

Deya stared in shock as the Black Knight was directly hit by the falling ceiling piece, complete with the sword body barrier. In the midst of the swirling dust and debris, along with the ceiling, descended a figure in a dark red trench coat—a person with the presence of a high-quality father figure.

“Hmm?”

Ashe saw Deya’s small hand reaching out towards him and instinctively reached out to grasp it.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 354: Lise is Different from Annan**

“Do you really think you’re her dad?”

While running down the stairs, Igor suddenly asked Ashe, who was just ahead of him.

They had just left the perilous gaming floor when Ashe and Banjeet erupted into a brief but fierce argument. Annan was on the 86th floor and Lise on the 56th. According to the character activity map displayed by the Gospel Book, Annan was fighting several

people, while Lise was being pursued by one person. Therefore, Banjeet wanted everyone to first go support Annan.

Igor and Harvey had no objections, but Ashe insisted on going down to find Lise.

Given the urgency, they quickly took action after stating their opinions. Banjeet took the elevator up, Ashe ran down the stairs, and Igor signaled to Harvey. Thus, the necromancer and the butler went to curry favor with the boss, while the Con Artist accompanied the year's worst employee to pick up the kid.

Without a doubt, Ashe's "mixing business with personal matters" would surely anger both Banjeet and Annan.

After all, Lise's situation seemed less dangerous, whereas Annan was barely holding on. Ashe, putting the boss after his "cheap daughter", was unreasonable in every sense. Did he really think the Firm was his family?

Igor didn't understand either. He knew that although Ashe had the intelligence of an Ogre and the cunning of a Goblin, his brain would often wander off on its own. However, Ashe wasn't the kind of societal degenerate who couldn't differentiate between priorities.

Judging by the situation, they should have all gone to rescue Annan first and then find Lise. Yet Ashe insisted on splitting up.

If things went south, Ashe would bear full responsibility.

Igor should have gone with Banjeet to rescue Annan, but that would have made it seem like they were isolating Ashe. Even if it was just to show some solidarity as outsiders, Igor had to accompany Ashe down this path. Though it was inevitable that Annan would hold a grudge against him in the future, having Ashe, the perennial scapegoat, around made Igor less worried.

"No way," Ashe's voice interjected between the rapid footsteps. "I'm an unmarried guy, far from being old enough to be anyone's dad."

"Then why do you care so much about Lise that you can't wait a few minutes? If we all went to save Annan together, we could quickly deal with those enemies and then turn around to rescue Lise. Isn't that a more reasonable plan?"

"You're right. Why didn't I think of that? My bad."

"Are you playing dumb in front of me?" Igor reached out and slapped Ashe on the head. "Even in a rush, how could you not figure that out?"

"I really didn't think that much just now—"

“If you don’t want to explain, then forget it.”

As they turned a corner on the staircase, Ashe said helplessly, “Lise is different from Annan.”

“Ah, I can only hope you’re not talking about their body differences,” Igor mocked. “They are different in so many ways. For example, their names are different.”

“Putting aside their combat abilities, the most crucial difference,” Ashe said, “is their mindset.”

“Their mindset?”

Igor was slightly taken aback, but as a mental sorcerer, he instantly grasped Ashe’s implication.

“No matter how critical the situation, Annan can remain calm,” Ashe said. “She knows that many people care about her—her mother Qenna, her butler Banjeet, and her companions like us. She has plenty of reasons to hold on. She believes time is on her side, convinced that many people are rushing to save her. She holds onto hope.”

“But Lise is different. She...”

Ashe paused, seemingly racking his brain for a suitable example, finally settling on the worst one he could think of: “She’s a lot like you.”

“She is not.”

“She doesn’t know if anyone will come to rescue her, or if she even matters. Time is on Annan’s side because with every passing second, she believes help will arrive any moment. Time is not on Lise’s side because with each passing second, she feels abandoned.”

“People act spoiled when they feel they are favored; they act mature when they suspect they might be abandoned. Igor, Lise has always been a smart and sensible child.” Ashe smiled. “Even though I’ve never met her, I feel she’s very much like you when you were a kid.”

“She is not.”

“So even if it’s just me, I have to go find her first.” Ashe jumped off the steps, landing heavily on the concrete floor. “Maybe my arrival won’t make a difference, and I might even get caught. But at least I can show her through my actions—no matter what, always hold onto hope.”

“So, she’s not like me,” Igor kept pace with Ashe. “I haven’t fallen so low that I need someone else to give me hope.”

“Be a little more tolerant with kids, Aunt Bukin.”

“But you still haven’t answered my question. You explained why you need to save her, but not why you care so much about her.”

“Did you forget? I have a Pact with her. I have to protect her.”

“Is it just because of the Pact?”

“And there’s one other insignificant reason…”

Ashe grabbed ‘Lise’s’ hand, hoisting her onto his shoulder and giving her a firm smack on the bottom. ‘Lise’ couldn’t help but yelp.

“See, you always get into trouble, making me come to your rescue every time.” Ashe pretended to be angry, laughing as he spoke. “Let’s see if you dare to disobey next time!”

Ashe felt that Lise had been showing him less respect recently. She used to always call him Dad, but lately, she had been mixing ‘Ashe’ and ‘Dad’, even daring to tease him in front of Harvey. It’s one thing to do it privately, but how could she disrespect him in front of others?

If this continued, Lise might evolve into the kind of brat who says, ‘Hey, you, give me some money.’ This was the perfect opportunity to establish some adult authority. For Lise’s healthy development, it was time to take a firm stand!

Upstairs, Igor wore a peculiar expression. He never expected that Ashe’s main reason for rescuing Lise first was to show off in front of the little girl.

This guy has the nerve to say I’m like Lise. I think he’s the one who’s like Lise—two immature kids.

Deya covered her flushed face, wishing she could revert to her original form and beat this guy up, but she couldn’t. She had never been spanked by anyone, not even a witch, and now Ashe dared to smack her loudly!

She should have immediately returned the body to the Little Witch when she saw Ashe!

After all, it’s one thing for the Little Witch to get spanked, but she was the Secret Princess. How could she face the White Queen and the others in the future?

Wait a minute... Deya's face changed, and she quickly slapped Ashe on the back. "Run!"

Boom!

The ceiling above them suddenly collapsed. Ashe immediately grabbed Deya and moved out of the way, narrowly avoiding the falling steel and concrete.

"Still not dead?" Ashe looked at the pile of rubble with a grim expression.

After discovering that the stairway on the 56th floor was blocked, Ashe and Igor had moved up to the 57th floor. Using the Gospel Book, they determined that Lise's pursuers were directly below them and quickly devised a plan. Igor would unleash a Mental Scream to create an opening, and Ashe would drop down to ambush the enemies.

For this attack, Ashe chose not Sword Art, not Single-minded Devotion, but his most proficient miracle—the sword body barrier!

His sword body barrier was a Defensive Miracle that combined both offense and defense. It could repel ranged attacks, but if anyone came into close contact with it, their attacks would be neutralized, and they would be cut by the barrier's sharp sword energy.

The sword energy of the sword body barrier originated from the Earth Sword and was shaped by the Wind Wall. Since the Earth Sword was connected to the ground, its sword energy was virtually indestructible—unless you could shatter the ground, you couldn't penetrate the sword body barrier. Unless someone could instantly break through it, anyone who tried to clash with it would find themselves shattered, not the barrier.

In virtual realm combat, almost no virtual realm creature would directly confront the sword body barrier. They would either retreat or switch to long-range attacks.

Even virtual realm creatures knew to avoid its sharp edges, so sorcerers wouldn't even consider it.

Thus, the offensive capabilities of the sword body barrier had always been lackluster, earning it the nickname "the sword of kindness," with a record of 0 kills, 10 deaths, and 65 assists—having been broken at least 10 times but protecting teammates 65 times.

But Ashe keenly realized that the current terrain was the perfect opportunity for the sword body barrier to shine.

The biggest drawbacks of the sword body barrier were twofold: it had to be grounded, and it couldn't move. That's why it was called a "barrier"—it could only take hits passively and couldn't attack proactively.

Yes, the sword body barrier couldn't move, but what if you moved the ground instead?

The sword body barrier had to rely on the ground, but the ceiling was the ground too!

So Ashe planted his sword, causing the sword body barrier to form on the ceiling directly beneath him. Then, using the Heart Sword to cut through the floor and coordinating with Igor's Mental Scream, Ashe finally executed his plan perfectly—

Miracle: Air Raid Sword Body Barrier!

"The damage should be sufficient, and with the enemy stunned by the Mental Scream, they shouldn't have had time to react..." Ashe set Deya down, his eyes gleaming. "Could it be..."

Igor immediately opened the Gospel Book: "Reveal all the information you can about that person!"

Gospel Book: "(Consuming 30 Gospel Points) The opponent's name is hidden."

"Identity: Secret Guard of Yisuo, representing the Yisuo Royal Family, with administrative privileges second only to the royal family, authorized to oversee all imperial units."

"Professional Privilege: Secret Gaze: Secret Guards have intelligence privileges second only to the royal family, allowing them to access any information without cost."

"Professional Privilege: Weave: Secret Guards have Miracle privileges second only to the royal family, allowing them to use the royal family's Gospel Points to request Miracles or even Divine Interventions from the Omniscient Weaver, and to weave fate at will."

"Professional Privilege: Darkest Night: The Secret Guard's armor is blessed with 'Darkest Night,' automatically consuming Gospel Points to resist all damage."

"Professional Privilege: Requiem Prayer: The Secret Guard's soul is blessed with 'Requiem Prayer,' automatically consuming Gospel Points to heal all mental injuries."

There was a long list of additional privileges, but Igor didn't bother reading further. He urgently shouted, "Ashe, don't—"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 355: The Black Witch and the Black Knight

Boom!

The 58th floor instantly collapsed into rubble, drowning out Igor's voice on the 57th floor in the roar of steel and stone.

Though chaos reigned above, Ashe's attention was riveted to the shifting pile of debris.

Suddenly, his sleeve was tugged. He looked down to see his daughter, her eyes brimming with tears.

"Don't, don't go," Deya stammered, her voice trembling. "You can't win..."

"All you need to say now is, 'Thank you, Brother Ashe,'" Ashe said, wiping away her tears, though he only ended up smudging her face more, making her look like a little kitten. "And besides, we can't escape now. If I don't go, who will?"

Ashe's lips curled into a smile as he knelt and gently patted Deya on the back of her head. "Don't worry, I'm the top of the Art Ranking. Annan hasn't even painted my portrait yet."

A warm wave of joy quickly swept through Deya, dispelling her inner gloom and drying her tears. At the same time, she felt a tingling sensation all over her body. Looking down, she saw all her wounds rapidly healing.

Miracle: Single-minded Devotion – Joy Sword.

"And, I have a secret weapon."

Secret weapon?

Deya paused, just about to ask when she felt the heat from his gaze. Her eyes were drawn to the tenderness in Ashe's eyes, her soul seeming to melt away in those depths, leaving her momentarily dazed.

She had seen that look before.

In Banjeet's eyes.

In the Sword Princess's eyes.

But she never imagined someone would look at her that way.

For a moment, it wasn't just Deya; the White Queen, the Black Butler, even the Scarlet Dead Apostles with their death wishes, all felt a pang of jealousy towards the youngest sister.

What they didn't see was that as Ashe turned to walk towards the rubble, the intense passion in his eyes had transformed into his strength.

Miracle: Single-minded Devotion – Love Sword.

After enhancing himself, Ashe didn't feel a surge of power overwhelming him. Instead, he felt his grip on his sword become steadier, his steps quicker, and his mind clearer. It was as if he was back in his senior year of high school, with only one determined goal in his heart—

Victory, and then survival with Lise and Igor!

Miracle: Sword Art!

Miracle: Rage Sword!

As the secret guard burst through the rubble, Ashe unleashed three strikes, like dark red meteors, rushing towards the Black Knight!

Clang!

A transparent miracle barrier blocked all the blades' charges, the dark red meteors stopping a yard short. The Black Knight calmly pulled out the Gospel Book and glanced at Ashe with a serene expression.

At that moment, Deya suddenly realized.

The secret weapon Ashe mentioned, could it be...

Hiding under a table in a safety triangle, barely surviving the collapse, Igor used all his strength to open the resonance chamber, trying to make his voice penetrate the layers of chaos:

"Ashe, don't count on the Fiend Trench Coat! The secret guard can use points from the Gospel Book to resist mental suggestions!"

Fiend Trench Coat, Twisting Mask.

Ashe looked like he had stepped straight out of the top-rated artwork on the Art Ranking. His figure was imprinted in the secret guard's eyes.

The dark red paint of the trench coat spread out like a sea of blood, the crumbling corridors twisted into the intestines of a monster, the light refracted into a kaleidoscope of decay, and then everything collapsed, plummeting downwards.

In a daze, the secret guard found himself standing on a beach.

Before him, a towering black tsunami rose dozens of feet high, a massive raft woven from fingernails riding the crest of the wave. Ashe stood at the bow, blowing a horn, the sky responding with serpentine lightning, the earth quaking with sorrowful cries, the black sea singing a frenzied chorus, the entire world hurtling towards an unstoppable apocalypse!

‘So this is the mental scan of the Fiend Trench Coat...’ The secret guard thought calmly: ‘My Mental Sect is also at the Golden level, but I didn’t expect Ashe Heath’s mental sect to surpass mine, even dragging me into this illusion.’

‘But this is as far as it goes.’

A black and silver Gospel Book appeared before the secret guard. He raised his hand and gently tapped the cover.

Ding ding ding...

As the beautiful Gospel descended, the stormy sky gradually cleared, becoming a vast expanse of blue under the bright sunlight. The once-trembling, crumbling earth stabilized, blooming with spring flowers and lush green trees.

The sound of the horn was gradually replaced by the holy resonance of the Gospel, pacifying the tsunami and purifying the black sea. Even Ashe’s phantom knelt in penitence, dissolving in the sacred redemption of the Gospel.

The secret guard was unsurprised by this. It was the Empress Yisuo’s envoy, a follower of the Omniscient Weaver. Under the protection of the great Gospel, nothing in the world could stand against it.

All evil would be dissolved by the Gospel, all harm neutralized by its power.

For at this moment, it represented the will of the Gospel... Wait?

The secret guard realized it hadn’t escaped the illusion.

Moreover, although Ashe’s phantom had vanished, the raft he was on remained in the sea.

And on the raft was a slender figure.

As the raft drew closer to the beach, the secret guard struggled to maintain its calm and detached demeanor, even its armor began to tremble. When the raft finally beached, the secret guard, forgetting its vow of secrecy, spoke in a trembling voice:

“Your Majesty the Empress?”

But it quickly shook its head, stepping back hurriedly. “No, you’re not the Empress. Who are you?”

“I’m certainly not that old witch.”

The Black Witch stepped off the raft, her bare feet sinking into the soft sand. “As for who I am, can’t you guess? Aren’t you here to find me?”

The secret guard clutched the Gospel Book tightly, as if it could lend more authority to its words. “But you can’t be Princess Lise Deya. The Armored Sanctification isn’t complete, she wouldn’t... I understand now, you’re one of the spirit manifestations of the Bewitching Princess!”

“Bewitching Princess... ha ha...”

The Black Witch laughed. “Did the old witch tell you that, or are you just deceiving yourself? Never mind, let’s not talk about that wretched old woman. But here I am, revealing myself to you, and yet you won’t even take off your helmet? —”

“—My dear aunt.”

The secret guard instinctively touched her face. S

The Black Knight’s helmet, which had concealed her appearance since adulthood, and the mask she hadn’t removed in over a decade, were now gone. As the sunlight directly hit her face and the wind brushed against her skin, she felt a profound sense of unfamiliarity.

When you’ve been hidden within armor for over ten years, the sunlight feels like the sun’s tongue licking you, and the wind feels like a demon caressing your skin.

The Black Witch and the Black Knight, different in age, identity, and status, yet they shared the exact same appearance.

“No wonder the old witch made you wear helmets.”

The Black Witch looked at the secret guard, whose face was identical to her own. Her tone was a mix of mockery and pity: “Seeing a bunch of people who look exactly like you is just too disgusting.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 356: Falling from the High Tower Once Again

Boom! Boom!

The previously serene illusion of peaceful times suddenly turned catastrophic. The sky erupted in thunder and torrential rain, the ground spewed lava, and monstrous sea creatures emerged from the ocean.

But this time, it wasn't the Fiend bringing about a mental apocalypse.

This time, it was the secret guard who initiated the natural disaster!

"You seem to know a lot of information that Princess Lise Deya shouldn't be aware of," said the secret guard, standing amidst the storm and flipping open the Gospel Book. "But if you think these words can shake my resolve, you're gravely underestimating a secret guard."

"I only need to confirm two things: 1) You are not Princess Lise Deya, but a spirit deceiving and beguiling the princess; 2) I must kill you to escape this illusion."

"Submit to the judgment of the Gospel. To eliminate phantoms like you who threaten the princess, I will pray for the harshest Gospel."

Amidst the cataclysmic chaos, the sacred and solemn Gospel rang out clearly. Even as the overture to an execution, it granted the condemned a sense of despair without incongruity.

First came eight dark bolts of lightning, akin to black serpents. This was the Divine Intervention known as Orochi's Teeth, which once pierced through hell, leaving eternal, unhealable scars. To this day, hell still echoes with the venomous hiss of these thunderous snakes.

Orochi's Teeth instantly obliterated the Black Witch, but the secret guard had no intention of stopping there. The Gospel Book in her hand glowed with iridescent light, and the storm suddenly transformed into a golden downpour, converging on the Black Witch's location to form a river of gilded rain that pierced the heavens and earth!

Divine Intervention: Golden Time Flow!

The Omniscient Weaver could summon a Golden Flow from the Time Continent, using time to destroy all tangible life in the world. Even spirits could not withstand the decay of time!

The secret guard turned to another page in the Gospel Book and suddenly moved thousands of miles into the sky. She gazed as a colossal meteor broke through the clouds, shaking the air and crashing into the ground!

Divine Intervention: Starfall!

Though it was an apocalyptic miracle of the Dark God from an exotic land, it was perfectly suited for this execution!

Then, a tsunami engulfed the continent, with countless frenzied waves forming a massive whirlpool. Within it, one could vaguely see the ocean transforming into two immense serpents, chasing and entwining each other, mercilessly crushing the continent and obliterating life!

Divine Intervention: Whirlpool Twin Serpents!

This was a Divine Intervention borrowed by the Omniscient Weaver from ancient history. It is said that the whirlpools and undercurrents in the present-day Sea of Knowledge are merely aftershocks caused by the ancient Whirlpool Twin Serpents!

From the murky depths of the sea suddenly erupted towering flames, forming a vast inferno fortress. Within this fortress, boiling lava heated the ocean, with scorching air currents spreading, hot enough to burn lungs—a terrifying scene akin to hell's descent!

Divine Intervention: One Hundred Million Malevolent Spirits' Molten Iron Hell!

This was a punitive Divine Intervention created by the Omniscient Weaver, capturing a fragment of hell's landscape. With temperatures capable of melting steel, unbearable even for the dead, all emotions and thoughts would be vaporized, leaving only the purest knowledge and memories!

As the Molten Iron Hell gradually shrank and disappeared, the secret guard slowly closed the Gospel Book.

The clouds gathered around her, forming a majestic and sacred palace in the sky. She stood on the alabaster floor, overlooking the distant embers, as if gazing down from heaven upon hell.

In the Mental Illusions, Divine Interventions could destroy all tangible things but could not extinguish the intangible heart.

Just as Ashe's 'Fiend's Intimidation' created apocalyptic scenes to intimidate targets, the secret guard could only use Divine Interventions to torment the target, thereby stifling their mental light.

In the Mental Illusions, giving up was the only true failure.

However, the fear, pain, and torment brought by the Divine Interventions were not mitigated in the slightest. Merely witnessing them from a safe distance, the secret guard was herself shocked and terrified by the Divine Interventions she had prayed for. She couldn't even begin to imagine the excruciating pain and the sheer despair the spirit, who faced the Divine Interventions directly, must have endured.

Theoretically, under such intense bombardment of Divine Interventions, the spirit should have collapsed and perished within a second. Yet...

She still hadn't escaped the illusion.

"Pain..."

From the burning embers came a chilling, sorrowful female voice: "It really hurts..."

The secret guard's body trembled slightly, making it difficult even to hold the Gospel Book steady. She quickly flipped open the Gospel Book, causing a meteor shower to rain down from the sky, saturating the ashes below!

From the burning rubble emerged a fragile humanoid figure made of black smoke. With each light step she took, the black smoke began to solidify into bones; with the second step, flesh sprouts appeared on the bones; with the third step, exposed nerves grew; by the fourth step...

Eight dark thunderous serpents had already descended.

Then came the Golden Flow, thunderstorm, Starfall, vacuum distortion, black coffin corrosion, molten iron hell, nerve chaos... several, dozens, even hundreds of Divine Interventions capable of destroying cities and nations stacked on each other. However, their impact was as dull and flavorless as this straightforward description, instilling neither fear in the condemned nor reassurance in the adjudicator.

Useless.

Useless!

Useless!!

Now, the entire Mental Illusions had been ravaged into hell by Divine Interventions. The light here could melt all tangible things, the air would corrode all material bodies,

fingernails would escape in the chaos, and neurons would rebel and harm their originals.

If not for the “Heavenly Palace” protecting her, the secret guard would be tormented to death by the ubiquitous curses in just a second of exposure to the outside air. Her body would spontaneously disintegrate.

Such despair would make any living being willingly give up struggling!

So she couldn’t understand at all why that spirit hadn’t given up by now, why it was still moving forward!

Whoosh!— Search\* The novelFire.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Surpassing countless Divine Interventions, as the shadow finally stepped onto the alabaster floor, bones first solidified, then blood and flesh grew, and nerves wove together until the figure resumed the form of the Black Witch.

The mere sight of this grotesque regeneration was enough to shatter most people’s mental defenses.

The secret guard stared blankly at the woman who had emerged from hell, her legs giving way and collapsing to the ground.

No armor could protect her frailty.

No great paradise could conceal her insignificance.

Her fighting spirit had long been crushed under the Black Witch’s advancing steps.

She murmured, “What exactly are you? How can you endure so much pain? Why won’t you give up?”

“The questions you’re asking, I actually want to know too.”

The Black Witch looked down at her own hands. “Unlike me now, she was only a year and a half old at that time, hadn’t experienced betrayal or setbacks, hadn’t seen disaster or death. She was like a flower in a greenhouse, only using her mouth to harden her resolve. Apart from a facade of strength, inside she was just an anxious young girl.”

“My heart is much stronger than hers. The pain she has to endure would be a thousand times greater for me; the torment I’ve gone through is just a trivial moment for her.”

“How did she crawl out of hell and drag you into the Abyss?”

The secret guard stared blankly at the Black Witch. "What are you talking about? I don't understand."

"It's okay. I'm not talking to you."

The Black Witch's lips curled into a smile as she walked over and squatted in front of the secret guard.

"Aunt, can you tell me why, even though I am your niece, you show me no mercy at all?"

"I..." The secret guard's dazed expression showed a hint of conflict. "I just..."

The secret guard stammered for a long time without saying a word, but the Black Witch seemed very patient, not rushing at all. She reached out to touch her aunt's head, holding the Black Knight in her arms, comforting her like a sister would.

The secret guard gradually relaxed, softening in the Black Witch's embrace, her voice barely audible. "I... because I hate Lise Deya."

"Why do you hate her?"

"Because she is the Empress's chosen heir... she is the future Yisuo Empress... the future Mortal God, Gospel Incarnation, the Omniscient Weaver's worldly avatar."

The secret guard murmured, "Clearly, I am exactly like Lise Deya, even better than her... but why is she so fortunate, while I can only hide in armor, living as a nameless secret guard, forever detached from happiness?"

"I want to wear dresses, I want to fall in love, I want to be loved... What did I do wrong to deserve nothing?"

"I hate Lise Deya, I'm jealous of Lise Deya, I hate myself for not being Lise Deya... so, so I..."

Hearing the sobs in her arms, the Black Witch gently stroked her aunt's hair, whispering softly, "I understand, I understand it all. I know what it feels like to want something so badly but never get it."

"So, I hope you can understand me too."

The secret guard stared blankly at the Black Witch, who cupped her face and wiped away her tears with her thumb. "Someone once told me that 'making up for regrets' is actually just 'self-consolation.' I understand that even if I seek revenge here, it won't lessen that person's pain one bit."

“But I’ve always wondered, if it hadn’t been the Scarlet Dead Apostles who died that day, but me, would everything be different? So, I’m not here to make up for regrets, nor for revenge, but to...”

“Make a different choice.”

Whoosh!

Four murky black wings unfolded behind the Black Witch. The secret guard, held in the Black Witch’s arms, watched in indescribable shock.

Four Wings... a spirit?

“Thank you, Aunt.”

The Black Witch held the Black Knight tightly as the Heavenly Palace began to collapse, and they both fell into the burning world.

“You’ve granted my wish.”

“Ahhhhhh!”

The Black Knight suddenly let out a roar, and a shockwave burst forth, sending Ashe flying into the wall.

With a groan, he cast a ‘Joy Sword’ on himself, ready to continue fighting, but saw the Black Knight clutching his head, rolling on the ground, screaming hysterically.

Ashe immediately thought of his ‘Fiend Trench Coat’ and breathed a sigh of relief.  
“Hmph, anyone who dares look at me ends up like this!”

Deya was also a bit bewildered. Could the Weaving Festival’s reward really be so powerful that even a Royal Family’s secret guard couldn’t withstand it?

At that moment, the ceiling near the window suddenly collapsed, creating a small opening. Igor’s dust- and blood-covered hand reached out from it, shouting, “Get up here! The secret guard has a Miracle blessing that absorbs all damage. You can’t kill her, run!”

Damn, an invincibility blessing? How are we supposed to fight that? Ashe immediately rushed towards the hole, signaling Deya to hurry up.

“Ugh... ahhh...”

The secret guard felt her once-light armor now become unbearably heavy. The stomach acid she retched up collected inside her helmet, burning her face. She felt like every

bone in her body was decaying, every nerve twisting, every blood vessel reversing flow. The immense pain from deep within her soul permeated her entire being, even affecting the reality around her.

She vaguely saw the princess running towards a man, her jam-like consciousness squeezing out a sliver of remaining clarity.

Four-winged Spirit, Lise Deya, Yisuo Royal Family, Gospel Incarnation, jealousy, dissatisfaction, yearning, loneliness, Weaving Festival... The chaotic thoughts and emotions made her soul swell and bloat until she recalled a conversation before setting out:

"If an unforeseen event occurs that even the Gospel can't foresee, and the princess is about to fall into someone else's hands forever..."

"Then she will no longer be the princess."

The secret guard shakily raised her right hand, and the Gospel Book appeared loyally before her.

"For the..." The secret guard didn't even notice she was speaking out loud. This was her first spoken word in reality in over a decade: "Gospel."

As the secret guard pressed her hand onto the Gospel Book, her consciousness plunged into an endless abyss of pain.

Deya, running towards Ashe, suddenly lost her balance.

She missed her step.

The ground beneath her crumbled into the finest dust, layer after layer below it disintegrating like ancient tomb relics, turning the Senhaeser Building into a gaping hole allowing the night to flood in.

Ashe, having grabbed Igor's hand just in time, didn't fall. He saw Deya's misstep and immediately turned the Honey Sword around, grasping the blade tightly with his palm, extending the hilt towards her, hoping she could grab it.

Deya gritted her teeth and reached out. Never had she hated her own smallness more than at that moment.

However.

However.

It wasn't even a matter of regret. No matter how much strength Deya mustered, no matter how much she wished her arm would dislocate, her fingertips were still over a meter away from the hilt.

The only thing that crossed between them was their gaze, and then she fell into the embrace of the night.

She fell from the high building once again.

But this time, there was no Bronze Dragon watching over her.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 357: The Fallen Knight

Whoosh—

The night wind roared in Deya's ears. Her body felt free, unbound, like the freest of birds. Looking down at Vamora below, which resembled a pile of building blocks, Deya surprisingly felt no fear. Instead, a faint joy welled up within her.

When the Observer and the others shared the Secret Toxin, what Deya envied most was not their teamwork in the Sea of Knowledge, but their embrace as they flew to uncover the secrets of the Golden Fish.

For Deya, flying was her deepest wish. Every time she gazed out from the tower window at the distant horizon, she longed for a pair of wings.

After becoming a sorcerer, Deya's greatest hope was to quickly form the Golden Wings. Even if it was only in the Virtual Realm, even if it meant facing danger, Deya still wanted to experience the feeling of flight, just like now.

The problem was, she didn't have wings capable of independent flight.

Last time, the Bronze Dragon had helped her.

This time, she was truly falling.

"When a princess falls from the tower, will a knight catch her below?..."

Deya suddenly remembered this fairy tale she had told her sisters countless times. Then she thought of the people she knew.

If Annan were falling, Banjeet would definitely catch her, right?

If the sword Princess were falling, the Observer would surely reach out his hands, right?

Then, as I fall, will someone...

"Every time, I have to save you."

A helpless sigh chased her through the roaring wind, and the girl was tightly embraced by a pair of arms.

Deya looked up. In the inverted world of descent, she saw the fate falling with her.

"Why did you—" Her tender voice was quickly swallowed by the wind.

"This is the time to just say 'Thank you, Ashe.'" She felt Ashe's body trembling. "I actually have a bit of a fear of heights..."

Deya couldn't understand. She shouted at the top of her lungs, "Ashe, why... you haven't formed the Golden Wings, at this height, we'll both die... why are you so stupid?!"

"Great, now you don't even call me Dad," Ashe said, looking at the rapidly approaching ground below. "Did you forget? We have a Pact. I have to save you."

Deya paused, tears swelling up in her reddened eyes, and buried her head deeply in Ashe's chest. "I'm sorry... I'm really sorry..."

"No need to apologize," Ashe replied. "The moment I saw you falling, my body just moved on its own, kicking off the walls to catch up to you... I don't know if it's the Pact's influence. I hope it is."

"And don't talk like I'm going to die with you."

Deya lifted her tear-streaked face and saw Ashe wink at her. "I've been marked by the Weaving Festival as the harbinger of chaos. How could I possibly end up as an indistinguishable mess with you? Though, I guess this metaphor would make Igor frown, but Harvey might find it amusing."

As Ashe spoke, buildings whizzed past them, and the ground rushed up to meet them!

"Hold on tight."

Deya clung tightly to Ashe's neck, her small face pressed against his chest. The wind in her ears disappeared, leaving only the synchronized beating of their hearts.

"And then, let's become a Miracle together."

Ashe raised his Honey Sword, plunging it toward the ground like a meteor!

The moment the Honey Sword pierced the asphalt of the city on the first level, two warm yellow beams of light burst forth.

One beam rose from the asphalt, enveloping Ashe and Deya. The other beam emerged on the 56th floor of the Senhaeser building, enveloping Igor, who had just plunged the Substitute Sword into the pristine corridor floor!

Speaking of the structures in Vamora and Azura's city on the second level, there is a notable difference. This can be seen from the floor numbering of the buildings. Azura's city on the second level constructs Inverted Skyscrapers, where the topmost ground level descends into negative levels. For instance, Annan resides on the -51st floor, and the lowest point of the Inverted Skyscrapers does not connect with the city on the first level.

Vamora, however, is different. The city on the second level is directly connected to the city on the first level through a hundred-story high building. Therefore, the floor numbering starts from the ground of the first level up to the ground of the second level. For example, the highest floor of the Senhaeser building is the 112th floor, which also serves as the ground level of the city on the second level.

Introducing all this is just to illustrate one point—

The ground of the city on the first level and the interior corridors of the Senhaeser building share a continuous and direct relationship.

In other words...

Starting coordinate: Honey Sword.

Target coordinate: Substitute Sword!

Using the Heart Sword as a guide, the Earth Sword as the path, and Flow to transform!

Miracle: Rush.

Ashe and Deya transformed into a faint yellow streak, flying from the ground straight to the 56th-floor corridor.

Igor blinked and saw Ashe, holding his daughter, appear before him.

The Con Artist exhaled softly, wiping his bloodstained and dirty hands across his forehead. Ashe braced himself for mockery or scolding, but Igor simply leaned against the wall and slowly sat down, looking utterly exhausted.

“It actually worked.”

Ashe, grasping for something to say, remarked, “Though I’ve always heard that a sorcerer’s Miracle, once the conditions are met, can defy all physical laws, I thought they were mostly just outlaws. Now I see, Miracles aren’t just outlaws—they’re outright tyrants, trampling over the laws of reality.”

Ashe had always used Rush as a short-distance teleportation Miracle. Due to its instant movement characteristic, Ashe had immediately thrown the Substitute Sword to Igor upon leaping.

Fortunately, Igor knew the specifics of Ashe’s Miracle and promptly planted the Substitute Sword into a safe spot on the ground.

Theoretically, as long as there was an unbroken ground path between the Honey Sword and the Substitute Sword, the Earth Sword could create a teleportation route, transferring Ashe, who was wielding the Honey Sword, directly to the coordinate of the Substitute Sword. However, this time Ashe was falling from hundreds of meters high; even a 0.1-second delay in the Miracle’s activation would have resulted in them both splattering on impact.

But Miracles exist precisely to defy fate.

Inertia, kinetic energy, physical laws—these mundane terms all bowed to the will of the sorcerer the moment the Miracle took effect.

Reflecting on it, Ashe couldn’t help but give himself a thumbs up. This Rush Miracle was by far the best use of a Miracle in his life, at least for now.

However, no one echoed his sentiments, leaving Ashe’s self-praise hanging in the air. Igor sat on the ground, still recovering; Lise clung to him, wrapped around him like an octopus.

“You two made such a mess, Qenna is definitely going to lose it.”

They looked over to see a hovercar approaching from outside the corridor, with Annan, Banjeet, and Harvey inside.

The young lady waved at them. “Get in quick! I don’t have the money to pay for the damages to several floors.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 358: Even Witches Have Knights to Protect Them

Igor leaned against the wall to stand up, pulled a bandage from his skirt, and wrapped it around his hand. Ignoring Ashe, he walked straight into the hovercar.

Ashe suddenly remembered something and looked at the Black Knight not far away. "What about that person..."

"The man from the Firm is already dead."

Igor glanced at the slightly trembling body of 'Lise'. "Although its body is still alive, the soul inside has already extinguished... That's the judgment of a mental sorcerer. Believe it or not."

Ashe had no choice but to believe it. The Black Knight had the blessing of absorbing all damage, so Ashe couldn't finish him off. He looked down at 'Lise'. "You don't expect me to carry you into the car, do you?"

Deya lifted her head. "Can't you?"

Ashe didn't respond, just glanced at his right hand.

Deya took a look and was immediately frightened, jumping down and hesitating to reach out. Ashe's right hand was cracked and split open everywhere, with his arm bone even exposed through the flesh. The hilt of the Honey Sword was embedded directly into the base of his thumb.

To buy as much time as possible for the 'Rush' miracle to take effect, and worried that he might lose his grip on the sword under strong inertia, Ashe had deliberately used his palm to press against the hilt. This caused the falling momentum to tear his right arm, gaining an extra 0.1 seconds of air time.

Who knows if that 0.1 second made any difference, but Ashe's hand was definitely ruined.

Incidentally, the Honey Sword was unscathed, not even bent. Ashe felt like his hand was the shattered screen beneath an intact protective cover.

Fortunately, Ashe had cast a 'Joy Sword' on himself beforehand, or he would have fainted from the pain long ago.

“Your hand needs continuous treatment for six hours,” Banjeet said as he jumped out of the hovercar. “I’ll perform an emergency ice seal now, at least to keep it functional.”

An old person in the house is like a treasure. As a two-wings sorcerer in his sixties, Banjeet always had the right solution for any situation. Ashe nodded gratefully to Banjeet.

Though the young butler didn’t show much expression, his actions in treating Ashe were as gentle as possible, suggesting he had forgiven Ashe for their earlier split-up-mainly because Ashe was in such a bad state that Banjeet couldn’t stay mad at him.

Deya didn’t interrupt Ashe’s treatment. She entered the back seat of the hovercar and asked Igor, “Do you have a mirror?”

Igor glanced coldly at Deya, took out a hand mirror from his skirt, then turned to look at the night sky outside, begrudging even a single word or glance for her.

Deya didn’t mind the Con Artist’s attitude and looked down at her reflection in the mirror.

“Lise, before the exchange, I want to tell you and everyone else a story.”

Lise replied, “Hmm? Now?”

“Once upon a time, there was an innocent and lovely princess who lived in a tall tower. She had been there since birth and had never set foot outside. Everyone told her that the outside world was full of bad people and that it was safest and most comfortable for her to stay in the tower. The knights were all protecting her, but the princess still longed for the outside world.”

“One night, the princess heard strange noises outside. She looked out the window and saw a Bronze Dragon coming to take her away. Trapped in the tower, the princess had nowhere to escape. But she felt happy in her heart because the Bronze Dragon finally gave her a reason to leave, so she jumped out of the window.”

“Whether she would be taken by the dragon or caught by a knight, she could finally leave.”

“But just as she jumped, the princess suddenly remembered: the Bronze Dragon was just a phantom of her imagination, the knights below the tower were merely guards sent by the witch, and the princess had really jumped out.”

The Little Witch listened intently, but the White Queen and the others found it quite strange.

In Deya’s original fairy tales, there was no mention of the Bronze Dragon. The princess would jump down and be caught by a knight, and they would escape together to start a

new adventurous life. The old version of the fairy tale had an upbeat and positive tone, while the version Deya told now was heavily influenced by reality, making it very somber and negative.

“But.”

“That night, a thief happened to sneak into the witch’s palace. He thought there was some treasure in the tower, but instead, he saw the princess jumping down. He followed her, caught the falling princess, and grabbed a silk thread hanging from the sky to swing out of the witch’s palace, stealing the witch’s most precious treasure.”

“The princess quietly observed the thief. Compared to the powerful Bronze Dragon, the fully armed guards, and the terrifying witch, the thief seemed too weak. But in the princess’s heart, the thief who fell with her was the real knight, and she was willing to wander with him.”

“Okay, I’m done. What do you all think of the story?”

The Black Butler, who had been holding back for a long time, couldn’t help but burst out, “Wait a minute, we were the ones who sent Lise to bind Ashe! We were the initiators! Or did I misunderstand? Is the princess in the story actually Ashe, and we are the thieves?”

The White Queen laughed, “Deya is so concerned about her own glorious image that she’s started using the Time Sect’s power to rewrite history.”

Lise suddenly realized, “Huh? Deya, is the thief in your story Dad, and the princess is you? Does that mean you like Dad?!”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles calmly said, “Deya, Ashe just saved us. Don’t repay kindness with ingratitude.”

Deya replied, “Great, it seems everyone likes this new fairy tale. Thanks for the support, sisters. I’ll strive to write new chapters.”

The Black Butler exclaimed, “She’s lost her mind.”

The White Queen remarked, “She doesn’t hear a word we say anymore.”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles added, “But Deya, Ashe has eyes for Lise, not you.”

Lise chimed in, “Yeah, Dad likes me, and he saved me. Deya, don’t try to take Dad from me!”

“How can it be called taking between sisters? It should be called sharing.”

The sisters were stunned, but Deya quickly explained, “Just kidding. The Little Witch will continue to play [Lise], and I won’t take her role.”

“After all, [Lise] is just a little girl now. It wouldn’t be useful for me. But once the Bronze Dragon Trial is over, and we revert to [Lise Deya]...”

The Black Butler interrupted, “Will the Little Witch have to call you Mom then?”

Lise exclaimed, “I don’t want a stepmom right now...”

Deya responded, “You’re all thinking too far ahead. Let’s put the naming issue aside for now. If we revert back, I’ll be [Lise Deya]. As for the [Little Witch] in the Virtual Realm, whoever wants to be her can take that role.”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles remarked, “Just putting it aside for now, huh...”

The Black Butler interjected, “You have sisters, isn’t that enough? If you’re lonely, you can summon more sisters. Why care so much about that guy...”

“Black Butler, don’t tell me you want to be [Lise Deya] too?”

“That’s ridiculous! I definitely don’t! I think you’re just addicted to being spanked!”

“Better not be.” Deya snorted, “And White Queen, Scarlet Dead Apostles, you two don’t want to be her either, right?”

The White Queen affirmed, “Of course not.”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles added, “Not interested at all.”

Deya continued, “Then swear it. Sisters don’t lie to sisters.”

The White Queen said, “Deya, you know me. The proud White Queen doesn’t care for any man.”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles stated, “The Scarlet Dead Apostles, born for battle, don’t need love.”

The Black Butler added, “I wouldn’t let him lick my boots!” Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Deya insisted, “Then swear it. Sisters don’t lie to sisters!”

The White Queen replied, “Deya, you actually don’t trust me? That hurts.”

The Scarlet Dead Apostles said, “I was just about to sacrifice myself for you, and you still want me to swear?”

The Black Butler concluded, “Believe it or not.”

Even Lise could tell something was wrong now.

“Dad, my dad, is going to be taken by the sisters... Deya, give me my body back!”

“The Little Witch has entered a rebellious phase, daring to order her sister around... You’ll be punished by coming online later.”

Deya watched Ashe squeeze in, holding his frozen right hand. She immediately wrapped her arms around his waist. Ashe quickly raised his almost icy right hand and said, “Hug your Aunt Bukin, not me. I’m covered in wounds, and my right hand is ice-cold. Aren’t you cold?”

“No, it’s warm.”

Once upon a time, Deya was a bit envious of the Sword Princess. She envied her for joining the team from the beginning, for having a better relationship with the Observer, for being able to banter with him freely, and for receiving more attention from him.

Even though the Sword Princess tried her best to hide it, even though the Observer adjusted the team’s atmosphere to the best state, Deya sometimes still felt like the third wheel.

But now, she no longer envied her.

The Sword Princess might stand shoulder to shoulder with the Observer, but the Little Witch also had her knight to protect her.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## **Chapter 359: Qenna Agreed to Our Marriage**

Thousands of bare winter fir trees stood like the legs of a centipede’s corpse, pointing stiffly towards the night sky. The sparse streetlights could only illuminate the brownish-yellow ground, and the air was filled with a sweet and earthy scent.

“Where is this place?”

Igor glanced at his boots, now covered in the marks left by the muck. The soles had met their end on their very first day of use.

It wasn't just the Con Artist; everyone had changed clothes on Annan's orders. They were all wearing thick leather jackets and fully enclosed filtration Masks, walking through a quiet, deserted forest. Anyone who saw them would think they were up to no good.

"Forest Park."

"Miss, no offense, but what I meant was-why are we here instead of leaving Vamora directly?"

After leaving the Senhaeser building in the hovercar, Igor thought they would drive straight out of Vamora. However, Annan headed in the opposite direction, bringing them to Forest Park in the center of Vamora. Once they got out of the car, Banjeet took everyone's clothes and protective gear out of his suitcase from his spatial tool. It was clear that even without tonight's unexpected events, Annan, who was still in her rebellious phase, would have run away from home sooner or later. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Banjeet said calmly, "You and Ashe didn't come to the 86th floor, so you don't know that the ones chasing Miss are those bastards from the Happy Family Firm."

Annan pointed to the sky. "It's clear and fog-free tonight, so all the people of Vamora are resting and not moving around. No one will be driving out."

Ashe suddenly understood. "So the Happy Family Firm outside the city only needs to check the traffic conditions in Vamora through the Gospel Book to pinpoint us accurately! And their specialty is hacking and controlling all intelligent tools. If we drive straight out of the city, it would be like handing ourselves to them on a silver platter!"

Unlike Ashe, who only focuses on enemy intelligence, Igor detected a hint of resentment in Banjeet's words and followed up, "So, it's the people from the Homewrecker Agency Firm... Last time we were exhausted just dealing with those two operators. And now, Miss Annan can single-handedly take on a group of pursuers? Harvey, if you had been a bit slower, would Miss Annan have taken them all down on her own?"

"How could that be..." Annan laughed. "Those two last time managed to mobilize all the drones in the city, but Vamora happens to have fewer smart robots and drones. The Homewrecker Agency Firm's combat strategies revolve around smart robots. So, after I destroyed the robots they brought with them, they couldn't do much to stop me and had to rely on their numbers. Luckily, Banjeet and Harvey arrived in time, or I would have exhausted all my spellforce."

“But it also takes Miss Annan’s formidable strength to hold out until Harvey and the others arrived. If it were us, we might have already been captured by the Homewrecker Agency Firm.” Igor sighed. “Miss Annan moves too fast; we have to give our all just to barely keep up with her pace.”

Annan hummed happily, and Banjeet glanced back at Igor. Although the Mask covered 90% of his expression, Igor could tell from the butler’s softened gaze that his verbal massage had hit the mark.

The fact that Ashe and Igor did not go to rescue Annan first would definitely leave a thorn in both Annan and Banjeet’s hearts. The difference was that Annan didn’t show it, while Banjeet openly expressed his displeasure.

Igor’s solution was straightforward-explanations were pointless. When one’s life is at stake, emotions will always prioritize one’s own life, while reason will find a thousand reasons to justify this prioritization. Here, there was no need to mention not rescuing Annan; instead, he should find ways to praise Miss Annan.

Banjeet saw Annan as a daughter, so praising Annan was a hundred times more useful than praising Banjeet himself. As for Annan, if Igor’s judgment was correct, she had likely grown up in an environment lacking positive reinforcement.

Her mother, Qenna, was out of the question, and the butler, Banjeet, who raised her, wasn’t the type to excel at “praise.” When Annan achieved something, Banjeet would most likely commend her with “Miss, you’re amazing” or “Let’s bake a cake to celebrate tonight.” However, such praise was too ordinary, too boring, and full of a patronizing feel that Annan had long grown tired of.

Therefore, Igor only needed to gently guide Annan to recount her achievements, scratching her itch with words, and this thorn would naturally be removed. As for Banjeet, as long as you praised the Purple Moth, you were practically his long-lost brother, and his resentment would dissipate.

However, this method couldn’t be overused. Annan was, after all, in her twenties. If Igor praised her too frequently, she would quickly become desensitized.

Whether it’s praise, criticism, or love, being more sparing makes it more precious.

Igor noticed Ashe mouthing the words: “80 points.”

Initially planning to ignore this fool for at least 24 hours, the Con Artist couldn’t help but give a disdainful look: “Then show me what a 100-point performance looks like?”

Ashe cleared his throat.

“Annan.”

“Hmm?” Annan glanced at him—calling me by my name so boldly?

“Qenna agreed to our marriage.”

Igor stumbled, Lise, on Ashe’s back, let out a couple of surprised sounds, and Banjeet’s body stiffened—due to the distance, he hadn’t actually heard Ashe’s conversation with Qenna on the gaming floor.

Annan, however, remained relatively calm: “What’s going on?”

Ashe explained how he had disguised himself as her fiancé to survive, “...and then Qenna decided to help us escape. You won’t blame me for seizing the opportunity, will you, Miss Annan?”

Lise let out a sigh of relief, “You scared me, Dad. So you were just lying.”

“If we don’t leave Vamora, then it’s not a lie,” Annan said. “If Qenna really protected you on the premise that you would marry into the Senhaeser family, then even if it’s a lie, Qenna will make it true—she never makes a losing deal.”

Lise became anxious. “But, Sister Annan, if you don’t want to, there’s nothing Big Sister Qenna can do!”

“It doesn’t matter if I don’t want to. All Qenna wants is for Ashe to marry into the Senhaeser family. It doesn’t matter who Ashe’s wife is, as long as she has the Senhaeser name,” Annan explained. “Luckily, we escaped quickly. Otherwise, with all Qenna has done for Ashe, she would have squeezed you dry.”

Hearing the phrase “squeezed you dry,” Igor couldn’t help but glance at Ashe. Ashe’s expression was somewhat distant... or perhaps longing?

“But will Qenna really protect you just because you marry into the family? She’s not that naive, right?” Annan murmured softly, making Ashe and Igor break out in cold sweat. “Is there some benefit I’m not aware of...”

“Look!” Igor loudly pointed to a nearby underground stairway. “Is this our escape route?”

Annan nodded. “That’s right, it’s here. Let’s go in.”

Just as they were about to step into the passage, Harvey, who had been silent, suddenly stopped and sneezed. He raised his hand and said, “Wait a moment.”

The necromancer lifted his head in a rapturous manner, his nose tracing a figure-eight in the air as he inhaled deeply. He murmured something that sent chills down everyone’s spine: “Ah... the mucous membranes are screaming, the heart rate is

increasing, the nerves are contracting, the pores are opening... a hundred thousand? A million? Or ten million?... Ah!"

The necromancer's body convulsed, then suddenly stopped trembling as if entering a sage mode. In a cheerful tone, he said, "Alright, I'm ready to go down now."

"But we're not ready," Ashe and Lise shivered. "What kind of hellhole is down there? I've never seen Harvey like this before, not even when he smoked ten catnip cigarettes at once."

Igor raised an eyebrow. "Is it the Six Heraldry family's tomb down there?"

"Rather than a tomb, you might be more familiar with its other name."

Annan said, "Beauty Houttuynia Farm."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 360: Igors Malice

Deep, oppressive, and dark, the space seemed to compress more and more, while the sound of heartbeats grew louder, as if eager to tear open the chest and breathe the murky air.

The group from the Funeral Firm descended the abandoned stairwell step by step, like a troop of Lala Fatties willingly running into the mouth of an Ogre.

Each of them had switched on the shoulder lights of their protective suits, even Lise, who was clinging to Ashe's back, had turned hers on. However, the beams of light couldn't penetrate the seal of darkness, limiting visibility to barely five steps. Beyond that, the darkness was as active as jelly.

"Ah!"

Everyone jumped and turned to look at Ashe and Lise at the back. Lise stammered, "I-I just felt a breeze go into my clothes and it tickled my neck..."

Lise was, after all, just a child, and the environment here was intense enough to test even an adult's nerves. Her jumpiness was quite normal, so everyone just mumbled a few words of comfort and continued their descent.

But soon, another blood-curdling scream echoed.

“Ah!”

The group scattered instantly. Igor stared at the screaming Ashe and asked, “What’s wrong with you?”

“I-I-I feel something heavy on my back!” Ashe trembled, each word shaking out like a shadow. “Is there a corpse riding on my back?”

The tense atmosphere broke instantly. Annan reverted the Second Miss back into an earring, Banjeet put down his icy double guns, and Harvey, who was carrying a coffin, shrugged and said, “Ashe, corpses don’t just climb onto your back. You’d at least have to prepare a coffin for them.”

“Dad! Dad!” Lise tightened her grip around Ashe’s neck, exclaiming angrily, “It’s me behind you! And Lise isn’t heavy at all! Stupid Dad!”

“Let go, let go, I’m suffocating…”

Igor said coolly, “I didn’t expect you, Ashe, to learn how to be sarcastic and complain indirectly. I’ll give you a 90 for that performance. By the way, Lise, do you still need Ashe to carry you?”

Earlier in the car, Lise had been clinging to Ashe, and because the roads in Forest Park were in such poor condition, letting Lise walk on her own would have significantly slowed down the group. Thus, Lise had insisted on being carried by Ashe.

Lise’s eyes darted around. “It’s so dark here, and I’m so small. You might turn around and lose me, so it’s better if Dad carries me.”

Igor chuckled. “Oh, losing you would be a blessing?”

Ashe gave Lise a firm pat on the butt, causing her to loosen her grip. Panting, he said, “Then let Aunt Bukin carry you. He’s got a soft body, smooth skin, and a nice fragrance. You’d be much more comfortable with him. If not, you could ask the beautiful and mature Second Miss to carry you. I should be your third choice at best.”

Annan gave Ashe a peculiar look. “Why am I only the second choice? Is Igor that much better than me?”

“Second Miss, we ordinary humans shouldn’t compare ourselves to Bewitchers.”

“I’ve said it before, the Bewitcher lineage is only female. I just have a bit of Bewitcher blood!” Igor retorted through gritted teeth. However, he glanced at Lise and suddenly showed a gentle, kind smile, opening his arms. “Fine, since Ashe is begging, I’ll carry Lise.”

Seeing Igor's smile, Lise felt goosebumps rise all over her body, a chill running up her spine.

The malice beneath that smile was so clear that the Little Witch felt the Con Artist's every hair bending at an angle that threatened to squeeze the life out of her. She clung to Ashe like a facehugger. "No, no, no, no, I-I only want Dad."

This time, she wasn't joking. As the sister most adept at sensing the goodness or evil in people, the Little Witch had a strong premonition—if she ended up in Aunt Bukin's hands, he would find a way to kill her!

He wouldn't even need to get his hands on her; if she was alone, he would definitely find a way to ditch her!

Only by holding onto Dad could she ensure a slim chance of survival!

"Um," Harvey raised his hand, offering a very considerate suggestion, "there's still some space in the coffin. Alice wouldn't mind sharing it with Lise."

Amidst the banter, the Funeral Firm successfully reached the end of the passage. What greeted them wasn't a blood-soaked lair filled with corpses, nor was it Harvey's Happy Cave of a thousand graves. If anything, it resembled a dilapidated park square.

A very lively park square at that.

Little girls were playing on slides, kids were chasing each other, a handsome and elegant man was strutting around, a beautiful and serene young woman was reading on a bench, a cute boy with a passion for gunmanship was disassembling a handgun, and a diligent young girl was practicing her swordsmanship. More than anything, there were many idle, lazy beauties lying on the grass. Despite being dozens of meters underground, the scene was as if bathed in sunlight, creating an atmosphere of peaceful times.

Ashe suddenly recalled a saying: "As long as your heart has the sea, everywhere is a beach."

This phrase fit perfectly here. Though light couldn't penetrate through the dozens of meters of earth, these 'people' were emitting light themselves, illuminating the entire underground space as brightly as day.

"These are..." Igor muttered.

"These are Beauty Houuttuynia," Annan pointed at the lifelike glowing figures on the street. "Harvey, the catnip cigarettes you smoke are extracted from these."

“Second Miss,” Harvey tapped on his mask, “I’m wearing a mask right now, so I can’t smoke. Please don’t tempt me like that.”

Even the well-traveled Purple Moth was momentarily speechless at the necromancer’s response. She suddenly realized that in this era, there was no ultimate evolutionary creature that could match Harvey’s unique taste.

Ashe walked up to the nearest ‘girl’ and examined her closely. Upon closer inspection, he could see the texture of plant fibers in her skin, which made it even more terrifying—every expression and movement of the ‘girl’ was so real and natural, completely unlike the forced resemblance of a ‘ginseng fruit.’ It was as if a real girl had turned into a plant person, sending chills down his spine.

Ashe even had the eerie feeling that the ‘girl’ might come to life and strangle him. His throat felt constricted, making it hard to breathe...

Continuing from Chapter 360 – Igor’s Malice

“Stop choking me when you’re scared!” Ashe snapped, giving Lise a pat on the back. The little spirit trembled. “I’m scared too!”

However, Harvey, who had been so enthusiastic moments ago, now wore a disgusted expression after observing for a bit. He reached out and slapped the nearest ‘beauty,’ scattering her into a pile of leaves.

“Ugh,” he said with revulsion. “This is just too disgusting.”

Hearing such a sentiment from a necromancer was quite surprising. Ashe couldn’t help but ask, “Harvey, are you actually picky?”

Igor gazed at the seemingly endless square in the distance. The bustling yet eerily silent ‘crowd’ filled the Con Artist with a deep sense of dread.

“Did the Six Heraldry turn their dead clansmen into Beauty Houttuynia?” Although phrased as a question, Igor’s tone was declarative.

“Now I’m really curious about your thoughts on this place, Mr. Harvey,” Annan said. “I only know the general situation of this farm, but not the specifics. I thought you would like it here, but your reaction is quite unexpected.”

“This place insults life, desecrates corpses, and twists souls,” Harvey said, enunciating each word carefully.

Hearing such words from Harvey left Ashe and Igor exchanging grim looks.

Ashe suddenly said, “My ideal is to create a Miracle that would take care of me. My top three dislikes are work, society, and exercise.”

Igor chimed in, “I like fools, dislike smart people, and my dream is to travel and explore with endless wealth.”

Lise joined in the fun, “I like my dad and sister who are nice to me, and I hate bad people who aren’t. My dream is to grow up quickly.”

Annan gave them a puzzled look, not understanding why they were suddenly introducing themselves. Banjeet, however, realized what was happening and couldn’t help but laugh.

“Well, it seems our mental states are all normal, and our personalities haven’t drastically changed,” Ashe mused. “Which means the mental attacks here only target the person with the darkest skin...”

Igor added, “I think it’s aimed at those with the most abnormal aesthetic sense. Ashe, with Harvey here, you got lucky this time.”

Lise, less sharp-tongued, proposed a more reasonable hypothesis, “Maybe Uncle Harvey’s brain got messed up from smoking too much?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.