

Sorcerer's Handbook

- Chapter 441: We Are Just Like a Family

Chapter 441: We Are Just Like a Family

The spellcasters exchanged glances — threatening a Spirit? Is that really an option!?

“In Spirit Relationshipology, it does mention that spirits have a certain level of intelligence...” Sonya hesitated, “But to not share their powers unless threatened, that’s really...”

“Pretty annoying,” Ashe concluded.

Without delay, Ashe summoned the soul summoning Spirit, while Deya’s Water-born Thread, Sonya’s Evil Light Slash, and Ashe’s Rage Sword all entangled it in their sights. Although, due to the pact, they couldn’t actually destroy the soul summoning Spirit, the anger in the Rage Sword and the killing intent in the Evil Light Slash flowed unreservedly toward the tricolor crystal.

Soon they saw numerous little black shadows inside the crystal scurrying around as if it housed a small nation. Quickly, a piece of intelligence flowed into Ashe’s mind:

“Mysterious Power: Shrouded in mystery, your true identity remains unknown, allowing you to assume any role, gender, or identity. Your existence is inherently logical.”

“Troop Skill-Mystery: Units of your armed troop type will be perceived as neutral by all Virtual Realm creatures, only being considered hostile when entering a guarded area.”

After Ashe shared the new skill with everyone, they immediately realized an issue — not only had the “Secret Incarnation” but the “Incarnation of the Stars” had also concealed its true power from them, revealing only the enhancement effect for Star Prayer!

Reflecting now, it became clear why an Empress commander could annihilate a Star commander despite being of the same legion level. Why couldn’t the latter escape if they were losing? It must have been the camouflage effect of the Mysterious Power, allowing the Empress’s legion to launch a surprise attack at close range, leaving the Star commander defenseless without most of their followers!

Truthfully, the Mysterious Power was decent, but for them, it was somewhat redundant — with their strength, unless they encountered a heroic soul legion, the Time Continent wasn’t enough for them to wreak havoc upon. Why would they need to disguise themselves as neutral units?

However, after inquiring Rainbow Tail for Intelligence, Ashe and the others discovered that the Mysterious Power would soon prove useful.

The last time they consulted the Golden Fish, Ashe and Sonya strained their brains with yes-or-no questions trying to find out where the Golden Fish was in the sea, only to find out it was in the sky. It was absurd. While not entirely useless, it was like asking if you could bring a scientific calculator to a literature exam — pointless.

This time they decided on a more straightforward approach and let Deya ask directly, “What should we do next to help us find Rainbow Tail?”

The Virtual Realm responded, “Obtain the Complete Realm Map of Time Continent.”

Other spellcasters might be perplexed, not even knowing that such a map existed. However, Ashe and his group knew how to obtain the map — by killing the heroic soul commanders in each region and taking their Commander Maps!

“Why does Rainbow Tail have to do with the Complete Realm Map?” Sonya felt puzzled. “Could it be that Rainbow Tail only appears on the map?”

“Could it be the main city?” Deya speculated, “The main cities of the Six Nations might form a tail-like shape, and we can find the edge of that tail?”

“Don’t forget, this is Witch’s answer to a question. The Virtual Realm likely didn’t give an honest answer,” Ashe reminded, “Getting the Complete Realm Map is just helpful, not necessarily the decisive factor... But regardless, it’s a direction.”

“But now the heroic soul legions have started retreating to defend; we can’t find them in the wild,” Sonya said, “Are we supposed to storm the main city regions?”

“Exactly.”

“Huh?” Sonya immediately understood Ashe’s idea. “You want to use the Mysterious Power to disguise yourself and infiltrate the main city regions? But if we get close to the heroic soul legions, we will still be discovered. Once a battle breaks out, the main city will certainly send an army to hunt us down...”

As Sonya’s voice trailed off, Deya also started to grasp the plan. “You want to recreate the Oasis main city battle?”

“That’s right,” Ashe said. “As long as I bring the Secret Incarnation to paint in other main city regions, the Spider Tower legion will likely follow. Then we can take advantage of the chaos to loot the battlefield.”

“Even if we fail, we’ll just waste a bit of soul power from a few troop types. At worst, we take a stroll and leave. But if we succeed...” The Cult Leader smirked, “I’ve been itching to use the Commander Handbook on you all; it’s far superior to the Experience Orbs.”

Returning from the Virtual Realm to reality, Ashe sat up in bed and shook his head. He glanced at the Gospel Book to check the time; it was just past 4 a.m.

There was a strange noise coming from the upper bunk, like bones gnashing against each other. Still, Ashe was grateful he didn’t see any cockroaches when he opened his eyes; he couldn’t ask for more. The opposite bunk was empty, and he could hear faint water sounds from the bathroom. Suddenly feeling like taking a bath himself, he thought he’d ask Igor not to drain the bathtub to save the trouble later. On the opposite upper bunk, Banjeet leaned against the wall, writing on a notebook. Noticing Ashe’s gaze, the young butler smiled and greeted him.

Ashe quietly got out of bed to get a drink of water and immediately ran into Little Lise at the door.

“Can’t sleep?”

“Mm-hmm.”

Ashe thought for a moment, then made two cups of hot tea for himself and Lise. They went out to the balcony together. Outside, a cat was meowing, and a few Goblins at the street corner were drunkenly causing a ruckus. Cool wind blew through the cracks of the clasped buildings. The night in Fidrola was far from quiet, even a bit noisy, but compared to the foggy nights of Vamora or the bustling nights of Mephila, Ashe enjoyed this kind of night more.

“Have you been happy these past few days?” Ashe suddenly asked.

‘Lise’ was slightly startled, then nodded vigorously. “Yes, very happy!”

“I’m happy too,” Ashe said. “Although the room is a bit small, it’s much more comfortable than in Vamora or Mephila. Just seeing you study, watching the Substitute work, basking in the sun, watching TV dramas — if we could just spend the entire Weaving Festival like this, that would be great...”

He placed the teacup on the balcony rail, squatted down, and looked at ‘Lise’. “We’re going to Nabistin next to assassinate the Princess. You must be very worried, maybe even scared enough that you couldn’t sleep and came to find me.”

‘Lise’ blinked and then put down the teacup, moving over to grab Ashe’s hand. “Mm-hmm.”

“Don’t worry, Annan is smart. She won’t make a move without absolute certainty, so we shouldn’t be in much danger... Even if there is danger, we have a Pact. I will definitely protect you.”

Ashe paused, his tone becoming somewhat hesitant. “Actually, there’s something I’ve been wanting to ask you...”

He knows?

Did I slip up somewhere?

Or did Igor figure something out?

Lise’s body tensed, but she forced herself to stay calm. “What is it?”

Ashe held her by the shoulders, looking intently into her eyes. “After the Weaving Festival ends, would you still want to live with me?”

‘Lise’ looked at him blankly, her big eyes quickly filling with tears. Her lips pressed together, and her face turned red. Ashe smiled at the sight. “You look like I’m bullying you.”

“You are bullying me,” ‘Lise’ sniffled, then threw her arms around his neck. “That’s so unfair...”

“What are you talking about?” Ashe patted her head. “I’ll take that as a yes. After the Weaving Festival, we’ll be a family.”

Suddenly remembering something, ‘Lise’ wiped her tears and said, “You need to be careful of Aunt Bukin!”

Ashe’s expression instantly became peculiar. “Oh? Why?”

“He’s learned the Dominance Sect spells now. He will definitely look for a chance to dominate you!” ‘Lise’ said seriously. “If he dominates you, he might turn you into a submissive female beast that only goes into heat—”

“Thank you, Miss Lise, for your concern about my profession. Excellent suggestion, I’ll be sure to consider it.”

Igor, toweling his hair as he walked through the living room, glanced coldly at the duo who appeared to be father and daughter.

‘Lise’ was stunned.

So was Ashe.

“Hey, you can’t be serious! Answer me! Don’t leave me hanging like this—it’s terrifying!”

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

Chapter 442: Two Matters

Virtual Realm, Sea of Knowledge.

A small boat suddenly emerged from the Whirlpool, with Freya, holding a little bat, sitting on it. Freya immediately spread her silver wings, noticing that her virtual wings were already starting to take shape.

Even if she no longer took risks creating whirlpools, staying in the Virtual Realm for about another month should be enough to fully condense her silver wings.

Though she had the little bat’s assistance, creating whirlpools was still quite a challenging task. First, they had to encounter a knowledge creature, then precisely control the blood to bring the target to the brink of death, and finally, they had to track the target until it naturally exhausted and perished in the sea, forming a whirlpool.

It was quite normal for things to go wrong—killing the target accidentally, failing to catch up, or not encountering a knowledge creature at all. Despite having the Secret Toxin diary for several days, Freya had only successfully created three whirlpools.

“Did you see that? I’m very close to condensing my silver wings!” she joyfully told the little bat, “Then I’ll be able to climb to the Time Continent, and maybe I’ll meet him in the Virtual Realm!”

The little bat fluttered its wings. Although it said nothing, Freya almost felt as if she could understand its thoughts: “You think my realm sect is not strong enough? Hmph, I don’t need to upgrade my realm sect to the Golden level. His diary contains intelligence about the Golden Fish!”

“Yesterday’s chapter ended with his discovery that the Sea of Knowledge is actually inside the Golden Fish’s belly. Today he will update how to find the Golden Fish—he surely also reached the Time Continent through the Golden Fish! After all, he’s even lazier than me. When we lived together, I never saw him train. Without smuggling, how could he have become a two-wings spellcaster from zero in just one month? I just need to follow his path, and I’ll catch up to him one day!”

“Speaking of which, the update should be out by now...”

Freya summoned the diary, seeing a red bookmark at the top right corner, indicating a new update.

However, when she opened to the latest content, she found it wasn't the next chapter on the Golden Fish.

“What? No new Golden Fish chapter, just leaving it hanging there? How mean!” Freya let out a sigh, and the little bat on her shoulder seemed equally frustrated, nodding its head repeatedly.

Although Ashe left it on a cliffhanger, she still had to read the new update.

The Bewitcher looked down and found him writing today's diary—

“June 8th, today I went through two events. The first happened in the morning, which annoyed me quite a bit but was within expectations. The second event occurred at night and, although it seemed unrelated to me, combined with the first, it added layers of mystery and intrigue.”

“Chronologically, I should write about the first event first, but I feel like starting with the second.”

In the afternoon, on the blue-glowing sky highway bridge, three Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle Racers were speeding along the Miracle Road, moving so fast they seemed to transform into phantoms.

Getting bolder, the rider of the middle motorcycle lifted the front wheel, riding on one wheel, frightening the passenger at the back, who clung tightly to the female rider: “Young Lady, please can you steady the bike a bit?!”

These three Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle Racers were carrying part of the Funeral party. Banjeet and Harvey shared one bike, Ashe was with Annan, and Igor with Lise.

Logically, Ashe should have shared a bike with either Lise or Igor, but since he couldn't ride a motorcycle himself, he couldn't carry Lise. Igor, on the other hand, firmly refused to have prolonged physical contact with Ashe, as if afraid Ashe might do something to him, making Ashe feel somewhat rejected.

Initially, Ashe thought the arrangement was pretty good—he got to hold the Young Lady's slender waist and enjoy the ride, truly a perk from the Firm. But once the bike got on the Miracle Road in the sky, all his romantic thoughts vanished—the speed was terrifying!

Although Annan didn't appear to be a goody-two-shoes, Ashe didn't expect her to be this wild, pushing the motorcycle to its highest speed the whole way. Initially, Igor and Banjeet were driving leisurely, but she forced them to squeeze every bit of power from their steel monsters to keep up.

Not only that, but she also loved performing various motorcycle stunts. Lifting the front wheel was just an appetizer; the true main course was the highway's sharp turns.

She first executed a high-speed corner drift, causing Ashe to feel as if he might smear across the highway and turn into a pile of mush. From then on, every time he saw the road, he clung to Annan as if trying to fuse himself with her.

After what seemed like an eternity for Ashe, Annan finally slowed down a bit, her voice projecting from within her helmet: "Having fun?"

"Fun? Hell no, I—"

"Looks like my service wasn't up to par. I still have plenty of tricks I haven't shown—"

"No, no, please, I've had enough. I can't handle any more of your stunts, Young Lady."

"Heh," Annan chuckled. "I've always had this side to me. You better get used to it."

"Isn't this just a rare occasion where we don't use a hovercar?" Ashe's eyes widened. "There are more rides like this in the future?"

"Of course, I love riding motorcycles," Annan replied. "Do you like it?" [search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

For some reason, Ashe picked up a touch of nervousness and anticipation in Annan's tone, as if she were sharing her most cherished passion with a friend. He suddenly realized that Annan probably hadn't had many friends growing up, and this dangerous hobby of hers clearly didn't have Banjeet's approval. She might not have had anyone to share it with.

More importantly, Ashe needed a way to stop Annan from speeding: "I like it. Can you teach me how to ride?"

"But you don't sound too enthusiastic."

"I'll try my best for you!" Ashe said sincerely. "Please teach me!"

"Sweet talker." Annan snorted with laughter. "No wonder you're the man who eliminated the Evil Arts Ranking."

Ashe's expression darkened. Just then, Annan suddenly crouched on the bike seat and asked, "Are you ready?"

Behind them, Igor and Harvey saw her movements and accelerated, frantically honking their horns. Ashe, still confused, asked, "Ready for what—"

Before he could finish, Annan lightly jumped up and settled back down, pushing Ashe into the driver's seat while she landed behind him, pressing against his back. In an instant, they swapped positions. Grabbing Ashe's hands, she placed them on the motorcycle's handlebars and explained, "Left hand is the clutch, right hand is the front brake, left foot is for shifting gears, and right foot is the rear brake. Got it?"

"Can't you teach me while driving?" Ashe was on the verge of a breakdown; he felt completely out of sync with the Young Lady's pace.

"You learn faster when you're the one driving," Annan replied matter-of-factly. "Come on, don't think about your back, just focus on driving."

Initially, Ashe hadn't paid attention to her mention of his back, but now every nerve in his body seemed to zero in on it—leave it to the Young Lady to make him genuinely enjoy riding a motorcycle!

With a master rider guiding him step-by-step, Ashe quickly picked up a new skill worthy of being added to his Spellcaster's Handbook. Not only did he learn to ride, but he also instinctively got the hang of the 'accelerate-decelerate-accelerate-decelerate' trick, until Annan twisted a piece of skin on his waist to make him stop goofing around.

Once Ashe managed to drive the motorcycle at a steady pace, Annan suddenly said, "Since this morning, the empire has canceled your wanted notice. Congratulations, you're legal now."

"It's because of the Evil Arts Ranking, isn't it?" Ashe said, looking rather disheartened. "But I can't seem to feel happy about it at all."

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

Chapter 443: I Became a Substitute

At 6 AM this morning, just as the sky was beginning to brighten and Ashe followed Igor into the bath, everyone's Gospel Book popped out on its own.

In just four days, the Gospel Book had already updated the fifth ranking list: the Evil Arts Ranking.

As the name implies, “Evil Arts” refers to spellcasting sects considered malevolent.

This definition is actually quite absurd. Even an ogre spellcaster with two brain cells to rub together knows that spells have no inherent moral value; it’s the spellcaster who determines good or evil. For example, the legendary necromancer of the Six Heraldry, who established the Beauty Houttuynia Farm for their family. Regardless of Ashe’s personal views, the Beauty Houttuynia Farm indeed turned Vamora into a happy and prosperous city, greatly increasing the productivity of its citizens. In this context, the Necromancy Sect is unquestionably advanced, just, and good.

Though spells have no moral alignment, the environment in which they are practiced can be good or bad.

Take the Necromancy Sect, for instance. In a heavenly place where everyone is granted immortality and there are no sources of corpses, how can the necromancy be practiced? In such a paradise of immortality, the Necromancy Sect would be classified as evil because practicing necromancy implies murder.

In the Kingdom of the Gospel, evil arts are defined as those spellcasting sects that cannot be practiced within a normal society: plague, famine, war, death, chaos, despair... for a spellcaster to practice these arts, they must deliberately induce societal collapse. Thus, every evil spellcaster can be considered gravely sinful, and Lala Fatty’s fate is their ultimate destination.

More importantly, these evil sects offer no benefit to productivity. At least necromancy increases corpse recycling efficiency, but plague, famine, war, and chaos? They all reduce productivity!

Even other battle sects, while they might not increase productivity, at least they don’t decrease it!

During the chaotic era when nations bordered each other, these evil arts could be used to defend the homeland. However, now that each nation stands on its own and one needs permission from the Virtual Realm just to travel abroad, state preparedness is entirely unnecessary.

If it weren’t for the fact that the Virtual Realm requires constant combat and the Abyss needs powerful suppression, Ashe has no doubt that battle spellcasters would be considered the lowest on the pecking order (unless they are from a Legendary Sanctuary). Each era has its own prevailing themes, and in a stable society, creation spellcasters are the answer to all versions.

If ordinary battle spellcasters are considered sewer dwellers, then evil spellcasters are undoubtedly the equivalent of the foulest sewers.

Thus, today's update to the Gospel's Evil Arts Ranking lists the ten most repulsive sewer spellcasters for the next fifty years. In an era approaching Doomsday, they may not be remembered fondly, but they will certainly be infamous for generations. Each of them exploited social turmoil to orchestrate city-level catastrophes, bringing concepts nearly eradicated by the Gospel—plague, famine, war, chaos—back into the Kingdom.

To be honest, Ashe doesn't really have a strong stance against the people on the Evil Arts Ranking. He himself has done his share, and Igor has caused city-wide destruction on the Ranking of Schemes, while Harvey has created the top ten necromancer families listed on the Family Ranking. Compared to them, the people on the Evil Arts Ranking aren't even fit to carry their shoes.

If Ashe truly despised villains, he would activate his violent biker mode and kick the two motorcycles beside him off the highway bridge.

But for one, Ashe believes the Gospel has simply misunderstood Igor and Harvey, and for another, he's good friends with them, so naturally, he'll side with his friends. Just as the Gospel constantly maligns him as the Source of Calamity, Igor and Harvey have never doubted him—in fact, Ashe wishes they would doubt him a little, as their unwavering faith makes him feel underestimated.

Just like the Happiness Ranking, the Evil Arts Ranking was instantly nullified by Ashe. That's why they were racing on the highway bridge—Annan had finally confirmed that all subsequent ranking lists would be nullified more quickly, allowing their "Assassinate the Princess" plan to officially commence. They no longer needed to play house in Fidrola.

However, the actions of "Gospel Ashe" on the Evil Arts Ranking left the original deeply dissatisfied.

If "Gospel Ashe" had coerced, threatened, or even killed the Echoers on the Evil Arts Ranking, Ashe could have accepted it, despite it not quite fitting his personality.

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But "Gospel Ashe" chose to make them confess.

Naive to the point of cruelty.

In simple terms, "Gospel Ashe" appeared before the Echoers before they even embarked on their path of dark magic. He implanted vivid scenes of the disasters they would cause in the future, the overwhelming despair of their victims, and the pain inflicted by their evil arts directly into their minds. This forced them to repent for their sins and subsequently end their own lives.

Perhaps the Empire's Red Hat believed Ashe had performed a good deed this time, or maybe they thought the wanted notice against him had become meaningless. Regardless, they finally canceled the wanted notice, as if encouraging him to continue killing villains and doing good deeds in the future.

Yet, Ashe was most dissatisfied with the Evil Arts Ranking.

If the first three ranking lists misrepresented his character, and the Happiness Ranking twisted it, then the Evil Arts Ranking completely reshaped his character.

In the ranking, "Gospel Ashe" was seen judging the Echoers for crimes they hadn't yet committed. Not to mention that he had the capability to reform these Echoers, which was far too saintly for Ashe's tastes—he had no interest in saving potentially fallen souls.

"However, 'Gospel Ashe' could have simply killed the Echoers with a single sword strike, whether it was to undermine the Gospel, save the world, or even out of sheer loathing. But instead, he insisted on forcing repentance first, positioning himself as a judge, much like a deity passing judgment on sinners who haven't yet sinned."

"If you could judge 'present self' based on 'future crimes,' wouldn't Ashe himself be the most deserving of death?"

Within the Evil Arts Ranking, Ashe didn't see people, only a deity and its playthings.

And unfortunately, ever since his time travel, his role has always been that of a plaything, making "Gospel Ashe" seem like a worker turned traitor in his eyes.

Sensing Ashe's low spirits, Annan changed the subject, "Look, Nabistin is not far off."

Ashe lifted his head and saw buildings flickering with blue arcs of light on the distant horizon. The technologically advanced metropolis gradually came into view.

"Is Nabistin just one level?"

"Nabistin has three levels."

"Huh?" Ashe was taken aback, looking up at Nabistin's clear and pristine sky. "But—"

"Ashe, do you know why the technology for constructing cities on the second level developed?" Annan asked. "It was because the Yisuo Empress wanted to implement the latest technological advancements in the Imperial Capital."

"However, renovating and reconstructing the existing city was too troublesome. It was simpler to build a new city, but the Yisuo Royal Family did not want to relocate the capital. Thus, an audacious and miraculous plan was conceived: construct a new city

above the original site of the Imperial Capital. Once the new city was built, they would use Earth spells to sink the old city underground and then lower the new city to the ground level. This way, the transition between the old and new capitals could be completed seamlessly.”

“The technology for constructing second-level cities developed due to this and only became fully mature and usable in the last fifty years. Although the Imperial Capital cannot build a second-level city that blocks the sun, it doesn’t matter. The capital has already been renewed twice, so Nabistin has three layers: the lower level, the middle level, and the ground level.” Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Nabistin has stringent checks for outsiders, but that’s just for the ground city,” Annan explained. “The lower city, on the other hand, is a chaotic area without even Red Hats. That is our destination tonight, a gathering place for countless criminals, dreamers, and ambitious individuals.”

At this moment, the sky bridge began to merge into the road below. Three paths appeared before Ashe and his companions: the ground road, the middle tunnel, and the lower tunnel. Under Annan’s direction, they entered the lower tunnel. As they proceeded, the traffic around them increased, including both trucks and hovercars, making them inconspicuous.

After a long journey through the narrow tunnel, they finally emerged into a spacious scene that left them momentarily dazed.

Tall buildings reaching dozens of stories high, giant virtual reality advertisements, drones zipping through the air delivering packages, and the congested flow of vehicles entering the city... if it weren’t for the glowing mushrooms on the ceiling overhead, Ashe and his companions might have believed they had arrived in some bustling city that never sleeps.

At the end of the entrance traffic’s toll bridge, a brightly lit banner hung overhead, its words glowing vividly.

“Welcome to Nabistin’s underworld, the closest place to heaven-Nabistin’s lower city,” Ashe read softly.

After paying the entry fee, the members of Funeral smoothly entered the lower city. Since they were riding motorcycles, no one questioned their full-face helmets.

“Did we get in this easily?” Igor asked incredulously. “Doesn’t Nabistin care at all?”

“On the surface, no. Even if people are wearing hooded cloaks, no one checks,” Annan explained. “Though it’s likely intentional. Being the Imperial Capital, Nabistin pools the

most resources from the Gospel, naturally attracting the most antisocial criminals... This place is the Gospel's largest trash can."

"I thought Fidrola was already the lowest point of the Gospel," Ashe commented.

"Fidrola is just backward; here, it's chaos," Annan whispered in Ashe's ear. "The Blood Moon must have similar places to manage unstable elements, right?"

Indeed, Ashe realized the Blood Moon had places like this, but they were prisons combined with War Zones. Unlike the Gospel, which used an entire underground city for this purpose, situated directly below the Imperial Capital—calling it a garbage bin seemed too kind. It was more of a cesspit of the Gospel... although, come to think of it, that comparison wouldn't exclude himself.

"So," Harvey chimed in suddenly, "is it likely that the Echoers from the Evil Arts Ranking are here too?"

"Even if they're not here now, they'll eventually come," Annan replied. "There's no place left for them outside."

At that moment, a commotion erupted among the surrounding traffic. Many people exited their vehicles and looked up. Someone shouted in terror, "Plague Shadow!"

Ashe and the others glanced up and saw a figure standing on the bridge with the vivid banner. It was a person they all recognized—ranked fifth on the Evil Arts Ranking, 'Plague Shadow,' Roger Dior!

About twenty years old with a plain and delicate appearance, Roger was an ordinary spellcaster. Before Doomsday, he primarily trained in Toxic spells; after Doomsday, he shifted to plague spells. By appearances alone, you'd never guess he would go on to create virulent plagues resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths, all to elevate his standing within his sect to the legendary level—a crime of absolute inhumanity.

This future infamous figure stood on the bridge with a vacant expression. He nonchalantly pulled out a dagger and sliced open his chest, revealing a black, beating heart.

Ashe's mind raced, recalling Roger's actions in the Evil Arts Ranking after the appearance of 'Gospel Ashe'...

"After the confession, Roger deeply realized the futility of his existence. Under Ashe's watchful gaze, he walked to the bridge, tore out his own heart and crushed it. He then triggered a ritual Miracle he would master in the future, infecting himself with the very savage Plague he created. His flesh, bones, and even soul rapidly melted. Like tears of regret, the residue on the ground formed the word 'SINNER'..."

By now, Roger had begun to melt into liquid, creating corrosive marks on the road, causing the nearby traffic to hurriedly avoid the area. Once Roger fully dissolved into the air, no one dared to come near, only observing the corrosive marks from a distance.

“Sinner...”

“It looks exactly like the scene from the Evil Arts Ranking...”

“It’s that man... it can only be that man!”

“He’s come to Nabistin!”

“The future Calamity Demon Lord, the Doomsday Source of Calamity, the Undying Fiend followed by countless others, Ashe Heath has arrived in Nabistin!”

“He even followed the steps from the Future Ranking, making Roger confess and commit suicide!”

“Destiny is as interwoven as fabric, as steadfast as a rock! The Gospel was correct; everything is set in stone!”

Amid the chaotic and frenzied crowd, the members of Funeral, wearing full helmets, silently observed Ashe, who helplessly shrugged.

“Obviously,” the Cult Leader remarked, “I’ve become the Substitute.”

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

Chapter 444: The Revelation of the Gospel

“Could it be that my substitute was suddenly enlightened by the Gospel Book and ran off to work on its own?”

In a room at the Farewell Inn, Ashe sat on the bed, examining the spirit of his substitute in the palm of his hand. Due to vigorous development (daily use) and proper nourishment (being supplied with premium materials), the substitute spirit had already advanced to the two-wings stage, gaining an additional small wing. Although it still looked like a human infant, the quality of its pajamas and sleep hat had improved significantly, and it even had a pillow now.

Ashe had no doubt that the four-wings substitute spirit would carry a bed with it.

Facing Ashe's question, the substitute spirit rubbed its eyes, yawned, and then turned its butt towards Ashe.

"If Ashe wants you dead in the morning, who dares keep you alive till evening'," Igor said, sitting up straight in the chair, flipping through the Gospel Book. "The underground forum is flooded with discussions about you, people speculating about your Spellcasting Sect: prophecy, mental, fate, ritual, necromancy, chaos... Pfft, some even guess you're from the justice sect."

"What's so funny about that? Don't I look just?" Ashe responded angrily.

"If you represent justice, then I'm loyalty, Banjeet is maturity, Young Lady is purity, Lise is a bunny, and Harvey is grave grass."

Hugging Ashe from behind, Lise said, "Why do I get compared to an animal?"

Harvey, with a cigarette in his mouth by the window, commented, "I don't get it, but it sounds like a compliment."

Igor continued, "According to the forum's descriptions, Ashe is already considered a strong presence starting at the Sanctuary level. He follows the Future Ranking to kill Echoers because it's part of a Miracle Ritual. Every future he realizes boosts his power rapidly. Once he accomplishes all the futures, he'll become the Lord of Disaster, the bane of Revelation... The logic is sound, the reasoning accurate; I'm almost convinced myself."

"Huh!?" Lise exclaimed, "Does that mean Dad is going to sleep with Auntie Qenna and Auntie Nona!?"

Ashe quickly ruffled Lise's hair to avoid Annan's death glare. Banjeet poured six cups of warm tea for everyone, sat down, and said, "It's the first time I've seen a prophecy fulfilled so quickly."

"Too hasty," Annan said, touching her amethyst earring, her voice low. "It's like a poorly managed company flaunting its wealth to reassure its employees and customers."

"Exactly," Igor added. "Even we can see that something's wrong with the Weaving Festival. Other spellcasters, corporations, and families must be equally unsettled. Unlike us, those big organizations heavily rely on the Gospel to manage human resources, develop technology, and distribute benefits... They form the basic support for the Gospel. Once the seed of 'the Gospel is unreliable' is planted in their minds, it will cause a panic similar to a bank run, prompting them to quickly convert Gospel points into tangible benefits."

"So, the Gospel not only needs to use Ashe to clean up this mess, but it also has to clean it up thoroughly, beautifully, and comfortably, for everyone to see, ensuring that only Ashe is implicated, while the Gospel remains pure forever."

“For them, Ashe murdering Roger is enough to prove that the Gospel is still functioning normally, equivalent to major positive news.”

“Then who exactly impersonated Ashe and killed Roger?” Harvey asked, fiddling with his lighter but not lighting his cigarette. “And they did it exactly like what’s on the Evil Arts Ranking...”

“In this matter, maintaining the credibility of the Gospel benefits someone the most—that’s who the mastermind is,” Igor said. “And the credibility of the Gospel is closely tied to the city’s development, social stability, and corporate support. Therefore—”

“The Yisuo Royal Family,” Annan interjected. “I was wondering why they suddenly canceled Ashe’s wanted notice... Now they might actually fear catching Ashe because they can’t achieve their future goals if he’s taken in.”

She moved to sit beside Ashe and continued, “If it’s the Yisuo Royal Family, it’s not surprising they could pull this off. As you know, the more Gospel points you have, the more permissions the Gospel grants. From what I understand, the royal family likely has the highest level of access to the Gospel. Forget miracles; they can even request a Divine Intervention...”

As Annan spoke, she reached out to touch Ashe’s arm. When Ashe looked at her in confusion, Lise suddenly swooped in and playfully kissed him on the cheek.

“Wait, what are you all doing?” Ashe felt something was off. “Am I an ice cream cone or a doll to you? Why are you both touching and kissing me? Igor, is this your doing? ... Igor?”

Ashe looked up to see the Con Artist immediately avoiding his gaze, not even glancing out of the corner of his eyes, his body trembling slightly. When he turned to Banjeet, he saw the young butler suddenly pulling out a notebook and writing furiously, as if he had transformed into a pig that could only type.

The Cult Leader turned to Harvey and noticed something strange. “Harvey, why can’t you seem to light your cigarette?”

The necromancer stared at the lighter in his hand. Every time he sparked a flame and brought it close to the catnip cigarette, his thumb instinctively released the button. When the lighter was pointed at the cigarette, his thumb couldn’t press down at all. Ashe had initially thought he was being considerate of Lise and Annan, but this behavior seemed more like a symptom of senility.

“Are you all being controlled?” Ashe grabbed Annan’s delicate shoulders and shook her. Annan looked at him in confusion but quickly regained her composure, holding his hand and saying, “This is normal; no one is attacking us.”

“Normal?”

“This is the unique feature of Nabistin,” Annan explained. “The Imperial Capital is a Boon of the Gospel, a celestial abode, a Trouble-Free Zone. Although the lower level is just the old city of Nabistin, it’s still embraced by the Imperial Capital, allowing it to enjoy the Gospel’s favor. That’s why so many people are willing to live in the underground city and stay in Nabistin...”

“So what exactly is this unique feature?”

“Don’t be impatient,” Annan said slowly, as if enjoying Ashe’s anxious expression. “In simple terms, we are all under the ‘Revelation’ of the Gospel. The Gospel doesn’t directly guide us, but it allows us to tap into its computational resources, giving us the keenest intuition to know exactly what we should be doing at any given moment.”

“What we are doing now is the most reasonable action to easily satisfy our surface desires.”

Annan turned to Harvey. “Harvey has always wanted to quit smoking but couldn’t, so under the ‘Revelation,’ he can’t light his catnip cigarette. Lise wants to get closer to you but is a bit shy, so only within the ‘Revelation’ does she dare to kiss you. And Igor is likely using mental willpower to resist the intuitive urges brought by the ‘Revelation.’”

“Wait!” Ashe exclaimed in panic, “Doesn’t this mean you’re all being controlled by the ‘Revelation’?!”

“No,” Annan explained, “We are not controlled by the ‘Revelation.’ Instead, a more farsighted, rational, and proactive version of ‘us’ is taking over. Everyone has negative traits like hesitation, laziness, and fear. Even if people know the right thing to do, they often don’t do it, can’t do it, or won’t do it. This is true even for spellcasters. The biggest difference between a talented person and an average one often lies in the amount of these negative traits they carry.”

“The essence of the Gospel Book is not just to find information but to help you take the ‘next step.’ When you don’t know how to move forward, the Gospel can guide you in all aspects of life—be it personal, emotional, spellcasting, work, research... even in something as dark as murder, the Gospel can provide you with target information.”

“But consulting the Gospel requires points, so the vast majority of the populace can’t enjoy such life consultation services. That’s why the ‘Revelation’ is so remarkable. Even if you don’t query the Gospel, by tapping into the Gospel’s computational resources and vast database, you can still make the best choices through intuition.”

“When I contemplate my next step, various action plans naturally spring up in my mind, analyzed for their feasibility and benefits, leading me to act immediately,” Annan said,

winking at Ashe. “This is why Nabistin is called a Trouble-Free Zone—it’s as if simply following your intuition can guide you to a happy ending.”

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

Chapter 445: Where Is the Princess?

“Will this ‘Revelation’ state persist indefinitely?” Ashe glanced at everyone. “Also, none of your next steps seem to include work... So, are we disbanding our Funeral Firm on the spot?”

“It’s not about work right now; it’s about daily interactions to strengthen our bonds,” Annan responded. “Also, ‘Revelation’ isn’t on all the time. In the lower city, it only lasts for five minutes every hour.”

Just as Annan finished speaking, Harvey finally ‘puffed’ his catnip cigarette alight. It was like a signal of liberation. Igor instantly relaxed and returned to normal, Banjeet closed his notebook and exited his code-writing mode, and Annan released Ashe’s hand but remained seated beside him.

Only Lise kept her head buried in his arms, adopting an ostrich-like posture, too shy to face anyone.

“How are you feeling?” Ashe asked.

“Honestly, I feel pretty good.” The necromancer exhaled a smoke ring towards the underground city and said, “An irresistible craving is suppressed by a higher form of rationality, absolute will reigning over all hormones... It feels like the easygoing days before prison.”

“Indeed,” Banjeet couldn’t help nodding. “It’s like a clogged sewer suddenly cleared. Thoughts flow smoothly with perfect clarity. The name ‘Revelation’ is well deserved. Unlike Vamora’s ‘white mist,’ which forces physiological satisfaction through stimulants, ‘Revelation’ offers mental fulfillment. If there are five minutes of such bliss every hour, it’s no wonder so many people want to stay in the underground city.”

“Sounds pretty good,” Ashe looked at the Con Artist. “But why do you look so miserable, Igor? Just act according to your instincts.”

Igor glared fiercely at the Cult Leader. “Who do you think caused this?!”

Ashe shrugged. "Could it possibly be me?"

The Con Artist took a deep breath and turned his head, saying, "As a well-prepared mental spellcaster, I've already made my own choices. I don't need 'Revelation' to help me determine what's best!"

"Ashe," Annan suddenly asked, "didn't you enter Revelation just now?"

"I didn't feel any different," Ashe pondered. "Maybe it's because I'm already intelligent enough to be on par with Revelation?"

Harvey instantly choked on his smoke, Igor's mouth twitched, Banjeet spilled some tea, Annan burst into tears while trying to hold back her laughter, and Lise shook with laughter on Ashe's shoulder.

Seeing this, Ashe got angry. Unable to deal with the others, he decided to bully Lise a bit more and continued to playfully mess with her hair.

However, no one was surprised that Ashe didn't experience Revelation. After all, in the Gospel, Ashe is classified as a "Disrupter of Fate." This means that Ashe isn't even considered an external laborer; he's more like a highly threatening invasive species. Naturally, he wouldn't be entitled to enjoy citizen benefits like Revelation.

"Alright," Annan stood up and said, "Whether it's the Yisuo Royal Family or anyone else, whoever is imitating Ashe's crimes is insignificant. Our goal remains the Divine Sovereign's Wish, and the 'Assassinate the Princess' plan must not change due to these minor incidents. Let's go; my appointment time is near."

"Where are we going?"

"To Nabistin, the person most likely to know where the princess resides."

Outside the sewer entrance, Ashe watched as Banjeet stuffed three Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycles into a suitcase. Unable to hold back, he said to Igor and Harvey, "Why don't you two have such great ranking rewards?"

"My ranking reward is superb," Harvey said. "The Ghost King Shackles allow me to transform directly into an undead being. This reward is as significant to me as turning into your favorite game character would be to you."

Perhaps due to the aftereffects of Revelation, Harvey's eloquence suddenly surged, leaving Ashe speechless and unable to retort. He turned to Igor. Igor raised an eyebrow and said, "My ranking reward is a Kingdom Coin that protects my mental will. I gave it to Anfel for—"

"Sorry," Ashe immediately apologized.

“What are you apologizing for—”

“Sorry, I was too arrogant and dared to inquire about your tokens of affection.”

At this moment, Annan signaled them to enter. The group from the Funeral Firm ventured deeper into the underground city’s sewers. Though they were sewers, they weren’t dirty or foul-smelling. However, under the dim lighting, they could hardly be called clear. Unlike normal sewers, the walking area was in the middle of the waterway, with water on both sides, where armed Sirens watched them vigilantly. □

Walking through this, Ashe and the others felt like Lala Fatty voluntarily walking onto the dining table, an inexplicable sense of dread gnawing at them.

With a Siren leading the way, they reached the end of the sewer, the Mermaid Palace of Nabistin. Like the outside service industry, the palace was divided into various business areas labeled “People,” “Events,” “Factions,” and “Spellcasting.” Apart from them, there were also numerous cloaked men, anonymously handling their affairs while exercising.

Seeing such a formal service facility, everyone couldn’t help but breathe a sigh of relief. However, Annan asked at this moment, “Aren’t we going to the ‘People’ area?”

“Please follow me,” the Siren didn’t answer, merely continued leading them deeper into the Mermaid Palace. When they reached a conference room, she gestured for them to enter.

The Funeral Firm members exchanged glances, sensing something amiss. However, with Siren guards in the surrounding waters, they had no room to back out.

Annan pushed open the conference room door. Inside the bright room was a long table, but instead of chairs around it, there were water channels. Ten Sirens were swimming in the channels, and various exercise equipment was placed around. Their clingy, damp gazes unabashedly scanned the Funeral Firm members.

“Sirimoro?” Purple Moth spotted a familiar face immediately. “What brings you to Nabistin?”

Sirimoro was the Sea Witch of the Azura Sewers. When Annan initially fabricated fake résumés for Ashe and others, she enlisted Sirimoro’s help, even consuming a favor she earned helping Sirimoro become a Sea Witch—a favor that saved the Funeral Firm thousands of Gospel points each year.

“The night you left Azura, I was also recalled to Nabistin,” Sirimoro shrugged, looking at the Sea Witch seated at the head. “But I’m not the one in charge here.”

Annan also glanced over and thought that this Sea Witch looked somewhat familiar. “I made a reservation for Mermaid services as a regular customer. Do regular customers now get to enjoy the personal care of ten Sea Witches?”

“Regular customers certainly don’t qualify,” the Sea Witch at the head said. “But the presence of Purple Moth, Rust Crow, Ghost King, and Demon Lord warrants the highest level of hospitality from us.” [search the NovelFire\(.\)net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“You foresaw our arrival?”

“Water knows everything,” the Sea Witch extended her hand. “You also know our rules. Please choose the exercise equipment you prefer.”

The Sirens have a peculiar hobby: watching people exercise. Especially when conducting business or discussing collaborations, if you’re not drenched in sweat, the Sirens feel disrespected. Ashe and the others were aware of this custom beforehand, so they weren’t surprised and each began using an exercise machine.

The least fit, Igor, chose the elliptical machine. Harvey went for the parallel bars, Banjeet picked the horizontal bar, Ashe and Annan chose bicycles, and Lise opted for jump rope.

Once they all started exercising, the Sea Witch said, “Allow me to introduce myself. I am the Speaker of the Ten Sea Witches Council, a member of the Nabistin lower level Decision-making Committee, and the overall head of the Mermaid Palace of Nabistin—

“The First Sea Witch, Helephes.”

The Funeral Firm members were slightly stunned but then underwent a dramatic change in expression, instantly drawing their weapons—

Click!

Gun turrets rapidly emerged from the ceilings and walls, their cold steel aiming menacingly at the guests who dared to act out on someone else’s turf.

However, Ashe and the others had no choice because the person before them was Helephes!

Ranked second on the Evil Arts Ranking, the ‘Chaotic Witch,’ Helephes!

Although the ranking already indicated that Helephes was a Siren, there were many Sirens in the Gospel, with each city hosting several. The Six Heraldry families also had their fair share. Who would have thought that they would just come to purchase some

intelligence and end up running into Helephes? Moreover, Helephes was the leader of the Mermaids!

It was like going out to buy a pack of cigarettes only to run into an enemy who wants to devour Ashe!

Information about the names of the Underworld's organizational leaders isn't disclosed unless they unveil them themselves. Annan couldn't gather it on her own!

If the meeting had taken place before dusk, Ashe and the others wouldn't have been so on edge. But with Roger, ranked fifth on the Evil Arts Ranking, having just committed suicide, they found themselves face to face with Helephes, ranked second. By putting themselves in her shoes, they all felt like they were there to stir up trouble!

As the atmosphere grew increasingly tense, Helephes raised her hand, and all the gun turrets retracted.

She said, "Are you still planning to do business? Life is about movement, and for Sirens, it's all about fluidity. If you want to negotiate, don't stop exercising."

The Funeral members exchanged glances. Annan gave a slight nod, and they all put away their weapons, continuing their exercise with extreme caution.

"Let me take a guess," Helephes said, propping her chin on her hand. "I'm guessing the intelligence you seek is the whereabouts of the next Yisuo Empress, the princess set to become the First Gospel, correct?"

"Do you know where she is?" Annan asked.

"Yes, I do," Helephes replied.

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

Chapter 446: Doomsday Supporters

Snap!

The white-haired little girl fell flat on the ground, her legs tangled in the jump rope, tears welling up from the pain. Ashe stifled a laugh as he moved to help Lise to the side and tend to her injuries. "I've never seen anyone mess up a jump rope so badly before. Does it hurt that much?"

Lise silently nestled in his arms, her body trembling slightly. Ashe glanced at the Sea Witches, thinking that while these Sirens weren't exactly ugly, they didn't quite match the image of Mermaids. At least Mermaids shouldn't have serrated teeth and bloodshot pupils. It was natural for kids to be scared...

As it happened, Ashe didn't care much for exercise either, so he used the excuse of looking after the child to slack off. The Sea Witches glanced at the pair, thinking that although they knew the Demon Lord, Purple Moth, Rust Crow, and Ghost King would be present, they couldn't tell who was who. After all, everyone at the Funeral wore cloaks and masks, so the Sea Witches assumed the duo might just be the token mascots in the Doomsday crew.

Annan also shifted her gaze away from Ashe and Lise, looking at Helephes, and shook her head slowly. "Impossible."

"The Yisuo Princess has always been the Yisuo Royal Family's biggest secret, even more important than the Empress herself. This is the foundation upon which the Yisuo Dynasty has held the First Gospel for over five hundred years, and it is the Omniscient Weaver's greatest favoritism."

"Before the Empress transitions, no one outside can know anything about the Yisuo Princess-her appearance, age, size, hobbies, or even residence. If someone could obtain intelligence about the Yisuo Princess, there would undoubtedly be those who would try to 'replicate' a princess to seize the First Gospel and the Divine Sovereign's Wish."

"Exactly," Helephes nodded. "Throughout the year 1668 of the Gospel, every change of dynasty originated from the transfer of the First Gospel. Whether it was the flourishing Elven Dynasty, the five-generation Dragonborn Dynasty, or the Emberflame Dynasty with countless ruins... Every time a ruler diverged from the First Gospel, the downfall of their dynasty was inevitable. Conversely, only by aligning with the First Gospel could they hope for the dynasty's continuation."

"Although historical records are heavily fragmented, the traditions of the Mermaids tell us that past dynasties couldn't directly 'create' the First Gospel. Back then, the First Gospel might have been the daughter of a merchant, a noblewoman, the descendant of a spellcaster, or even a disabled beggar or a born slave... But regardless of her origin, once she became the First Gospel, her will determined the fate of the Gospel."

"When the First Gospel descends, all traitors must perish. Dynasties that tried to defy, rebel against, or abandon the First Gospel often fragmented swiftly, drowned in the river of history, unable to last until the next Weaving Festival."

"The Elven Saintess, the Contemporary Dragonborn, the Emberflame Succession... All the powerful dynasties left a supreme position for the First Gospel, even directly honoring the First Gospel as their ruler, willing to serve in subordination."

“But even with such concessions, dynasties still did not attain eternity,” the Sea Witch said. “More than one First Gospel held dual roles, serving as the supreme of the previous dynasty and becoming the Empress of the new dynasty. They would collude with the revolutionary forces, setting the old, crumbling wooden cabin of the dynasty ablaze, transforming it into the springtime of a new era.”

“But now, an eternal dynasty has been born. The Yisuo Dynasty, which has lasted nearly eight hundred years, with every Empress being the First Gospel, has already doubled the lifespan of the Elven Dynasty. If it weren’t for the sudden onset of Doomsday, I wouldn’t doubt that the Yisuo Dynasty would continue indefinitely...”

Helephes paused, “So, Purple Moth, you’re right-the Yisuo Royal Family would never intentionally leak any information about the Princess. Once her characteristics are known, the First Gospel would change hands, leading to a dynasty’s downfall.”

“Unless, of course, the Yisuo Royal Family doesn’t want us to know about the Princess,” Purple Moth immediately realized. “Could it be the palace leaking information on purpose?”

“On the night the ‘Art Ranking’ was announced, countless people came to us Mermaids, eager to find out if something had happened to the Princess,” Helephes smiled. “Throughout more than seven hundred years of Yisuo Dynasty’s rule over the Gospel, they have resisted invasions from the Virtual Realm, the Abyss Riot, the Meteor Firestorm, and other disasters. Each time, the Yisuo Empress neutralized these crises perfectly with the Gospel.”

“So in their view, the primary condition for Doomsday to arrive is that there will no longer be a Yisuo Empress in the future.”

The Sea Witch swayed in the water and mused, “When you think about it further, it’s evident that the accident happened to the current Princess, prompting the Gospel to weave such a future. What puzzles me is why, Purple Moth, you only now come to us with this crucial question.”

“Wait.” Igor, who had been listening intently, suddenly spoke up, “There’s a problem here—regardless of whether something has happened to the Princess, the First Gospel must eventually be chosen. The Princess’s fate doesn’t really matter, as long as the Yisuo Empress transfers the throne to the First Gospel, allowing her to govern the Kingdom. Wouldn’t this avert Doomsday?”

Harvey queried, “Could it be that the Yisuo Empress is unwilling?”

“Impossible,” Igor asserted. “According to what you’ve all said, the so-called ‘First Gospel’ isn’t a person but a deified entity. The real reason for the dynastic shifts is likely because the First Gospel identifies entrenched interest groups obstructing societal

progress, prompting a full reset through a dynastic change to start a new chapter in history.”

“The most straightforward evidence is that if the Yisuo Empress had any ‘self-interest,’ she wouldn’t relinquish the throne to an outsider, or even to the Princess, without resistance. However, historical records show no anomalies in the fifty-yearly transitions of rulers, and there are no negative rumors about the Empress. If it weren’t for your convincing statements, I would have thought the Yisuo Empress was a fictional religious symbol.”

“Rust Crow, the master of devious schemes,” Helephes looked at Igor with admiration. “You’re right. Although the ranking list doesn’t mention it, it’s widely believed that the First Gospel’s reward is the highest authority over the Gospel system—even the privilege of listening to the Gospel for free. But the catch is that she must always embody qualities like kindness, naivety, and compassion. Therefore, the First Gospel never covets power for its own sake but always considers the greater good of society.”

“The downfall of the Elf and Dragonborn Dynasties both included rumors of the First Gospel facing setbacks in pushing reforms, eventually leading to outright rebellion.”

“Exactly,” Igor affirmed. “In any other dynasty, entrenched interest groups might pose a problem. But the Yisuo Dynasty has always been under the control of the First Gospel. Even if the throne is handed to an outsider, there shouldn’t be any obstacles.”

“In other words, even if the Princess dies, the Gospel will still welcome her new Empress. The Doomsday envisioned in the Future Ranking already represents the best possible outcome that the next Empress could achieve.”

The Sea Witch stared blankly at Igor, while Annan gazed intently at the Con Artist. The previously jovial atmosphere in the meeting room suddenly became tense.

Although Ashe didn’t fully grasp the situation, he keenly sensed the Young Lady’s displeasure. To diffuse the tension, he started doing push-ups between the two—Ashe doing the push-ups, with Lise sitting on his back, playfully acting cute.

Igor and Annan glanced at Ashe, and the atmosphere lightened a bit. The Young Lady spoke, “Rust Crow, do you want to handle this negotiation?”

“I’m just trying to remind you, Young Lady, that your original negotiation plan is already outdated,” Igor explained. “From the moment the Mermaids knew we were coming, you couldn’t hide your true objective. Instead of beating around the bush, it’s better to be straightforward. Honesty is the most practical negotiating skill.”

“I never expected to hear something like that from Rust Crow,” Helephes laughed. “If even the Demon Lord claims he wants to save the world next, I won’t be surprised. So,

you're really aiming to kill the future First Gospel so that Purple Moth can obtain the Divine Sovereign's Wish?"

As expected, the Mermaids had figured it out!

Or rather, they knew Annan's target the moment they learned she had come to Nabistin to buy information. Annan was by no means the first to covet the Divine Sovereign's Wish. Countless factions before her had tried to seize this greatest reward of the Weaving Festival. Organizations like the Mermaids had long studied the rules of the Weaving Festival thoroughly. Annan was merely the latest in a long line of would-be thieves.

Now, the strange developments in the Weaving Festival had made Annan the sole seed player. As intelligence brokers, how could the Mermaids not deduce that Purple Moth was trying to play an underhanded game? S

Thinking back, Helephes's initial question, "Are you looking for information on the Princess?" was a blatant test of their intentions!

Annan extended her hand towards Igor, signaling a transfer of negotiating authority. Igor took over without hesitation and addressed the Sea Witch, "Exactly. And assassinating the Princess aligns with the future you desire."

"Why would you say that? I have no quarrel with the Yisuo Royal Family."

"But you do have a quarrel with societal stability." The Con Artist fixed his gaze on the First Sea Witch. "Isn't that right, 'Chaotic Witch' Helephes?"

"Just because I might train in the Chaos Sect in the future, you conclude that I am an anti-social element?" Helephes suddenly submerged into the pool, then emerged, her wet gaze seemingly piercing into Igor's eyes. "Isn't that a bit ridiculous?"

Igor's expression remained unchanged as he continued pedaling on the elliptical trainer. "You're not anti-social, but you are anti-land society. Or, to be more precise, the Sirens are a race that despises land society."

The faces of the Ten Sea Witches turned pale as if Igor's words had slapped them. As tension mounted again, Helephes raised her hand, glaring coldly at the Con Artist. "Oh?"

"Look around," Igor gestured to the opulent surroundings. "Luxurious carpets, bright lighting, exquisite columns, and lavish décor... If I didn't tell you, who would guess this is a sewer?"

“And look at you. An intelligence group spread throughout the Gospel, undisputed overlords of the Underworld, hailed as the Court of Shadows—the Mermaids... If I didn’t say it, who would guess you are just a group of Sirens forced to live in the sewer?”

“No matter how much wealth you amass or how much hidden knowledge you possess, you can never claim an equal standing.”

“So you’re the strongest supporters of Doomsday.” Igor stated, “Only in an era of chaos do you have the opportunity to leave these filthy sewers and establish your ideal marshland on land.”

“Wait a minute,” Harvey asked curiously. “If they don’t want to live in the sewers, why don’t they live in the sea or lakes?”

“Because we are intelligence brokers,” Helephes said calmly. “To trade intelligence, we must stay in the heart of the city; for secret transactions, we must stay in its shadows. Initially, it was a matter of necessity, but it eventually became an inescapable convention, making the sewers our only choice.”

Ashe couldn’t help but ask, “Can’t you just stop being intelligence brokers and make a living by developing lake and ocean resources? Isn’t that an advantage of your species?”

“Humanity’s advantage is farming. Does that make farming your ideal profession?” The Sea Witch sneered. “Sirens can effectively leverage the Gospel system’s prophecy abilities to generate huge profits by selling intelligence. There’s no reason for us to reject this gift, just as you won’t abandon the Gospel system. No one can defy their environment, especially one designed by the Divine Sovereign.”

“Rust Crow, you were right,” Helephes said, turning to Igor. “From the day the Art Ranking was announced, we’ve been eagerly awaiting Doomsday.”

Igor, though already suspecting the Sirens’ malicious intentions from various clues, found their cooperation suspicious. “Do you desire chaos so much? Aren’t you afraid that instead of rising with the tide, you’ll be swallowed by the Doomsday wave?”

Helephes laughed.

“Have you heard of the Ranking of the Unrelated?” she asked.

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

Chapter 447: The Princess is Still Here

Everyone at the Funeral was momentarily stunned. Igor hesitated and said, "You mean that anonymous ranking list that only the unfortunate can join?"

"Seems like you all don't know." Helephes responded with a nod, "That's right, Purple Moth only ran a small firm before, so it's normal not to be aware of this secret."

Annan frowned: "Besides the lack of rewards, what other secrets does this ranking list hold?"

"Wrong, wrong." Helephes wagged her finger, "The lack of rewards is just a facade... Don't just stand there, keep moving."

Once the land-dwellers resumed their huffing and puffing, the Sea Witch continued, "You might think that the individuals on the 'Ranking of the Unrelated' are probably some lonely, forsaken children, right? In reality, over the past century, the ranked individuals on this list are often direct descendants from consortium families like the Kaesrei, Mercury, and Roland families."

She paused, her voice becoming a bit somber, "My niece is also one of the ranked individuals. It's one of the few rankings that us Sirens can still join."

This time, Annan was genuinely surprised: "So the Gospel Ranking deliberately hides the rewards, and that's why you all still strive to get on it? Is there actually a significant benefit to being ranked?"

"Rather than hiding the rewards, it's more like they are indescribable." Helephes said calmly, "Moreover, there is indeed no benefit to being ranked. As the rumors go, once the ranked individual reaches adulthood, they suddenly vanish without a trace."

"Nevertheless, while it's not beneficial for the ranked individuals, it does benefit others."

Harvey said, "I can smell something bad going on."

"Though the unrelated are not needed, they are far from reaching the age of demise when they become adults." The Sea Witch explained, "So when the Gospel takes them, they still have a long fate ahead of them, and the Gospel would transfer their fate to the people they were once closest to."

"I wonder if fate comes in ice cream? Or is it mayonnaise?" Igor frowned, "Can fate really be transferred just like that?"

“Let me put it this way,” Helephes explained. “If there’s a child who still has 30 years to live, will learn carpentry, and will earn 20 gold coins over his lifetime, then... bam, all that fate gets added to yours.”

“You gain 30 more years of life, get the chance to learn carpentry, and earn an unexpected 20 gold coins. Just like that.”

Just like that.

The Sea Witch’s casual tone sent a chill down the Funeral members’ spines. Ashe found it hard to believe. “Why would the Gospel create such a ranking list?”

“The Gospel’s initial intention must have been good,” Igor replied calmly. “The condition for transferring fate is that you must have been the closest person to those unrelated individuals... meaning the Gospel wanted to reward those who cared for society’s disadvantaged.”

“But once the consortium families discovered this, they exploited it for other purposes.”

Annan said coldly, “Those families just need to find someone on the fringes—”

“No,” Helephes cut in immediately. “You forget that it’s the fate of the unrelated being added, so the more prosperous their fate, the stronger the added effect. Those families wouldn’t look for someone on the fringes; instead, they would look for...”

She paused. “If you observe carefully, you’ll see that in most consortium families, each generation of direct descendants has many siblings. Yet, after they come of age, one or two children never appear again.”

Everyone was stunned by this revelation. After a while, Igor asked sarcastically, “Did you become the chief Sea Witch because of your niece’s sacrifice?”

“Yes,” Helephes replied. “So my daughter is about to become one of the unrelated.”

Igor paused, and the Sea Witch said coldly, “How could anyone exploit the Gospel’s loophole without paying any price? Not just us, nearly every patriarch of those consortium families must contribute one or even several of their favorite children. This way, the fate of the unrelated is heavy enough, and the gains for others are significant enough. Whether intentional or not, the existence of the ‘Ranking of the Unrelated’ does effectively improve the quality of the descendants in every generation of those families.”

Although Ashe felt like berating them with a “How can you do this to your children?”, in the grand narrative of the millennium-long development of these families, such accusations seemed too naive. Moreover, Igor was currently engaged in a battle, so he held back from causing any setbacks to the Rust Crow.

“...How is this ranking list related to Doomsday?”

“Don’t you think the ‘Ranking of the Unrelated’ stands out too much among all the regular ranking lists?” Helephes replied. “On top of that, the Gospel secretly transfers the fate of the unrelated to others, almost as if... it’s an experiment.” R

“An experiment on Divine Intervention!”

“To the Omniscient Weaver, the unrelated are like little lab rats. He is researching how to perfectly extract fate from these lab rats, and our benefits are just insignificant byproducts!”

The Sea Witch’s eyes sparkled. “Ordinary spellcasters don’t have the ability to steal others’ fate. Don’t even mention stealing; we can barely touch the Fate Sect! But if the Omniscient Weaver uses ranking lists as a form to experiment or develop Divine Interventions, then our opportunity arises!”

“Although historical records of the Yisuo Dynasty have become quite obscure, through years of restoration, we’ve discovered that during the chaotic era, the Gospel introduced many ‘experimental ranking lists.’ Ordinary spellcasters could use these lists to indirectly invoke Divine Interventions and gain resources for themselves!”

“More importantly, ‘experimental ranking lists’ have no entry barriers. We, the Sirens, who have been blacklisted by regular ranking lists for exploiting Gospel loopholes, can also become the Omniscient Weaver’s lab rats!”

“This is the opportunity the Sirens need!” Helephes’s tone became passionate. “While you land-dwellers are caught off guard by Doomsday, we can hide in the seas and lakes, study and utilize the experimental ranking lists to develop rapidly. After Doomsday, we can establish the Mermaid Dynasty and turn the Gospel into a water kingdom!”

Oh right, the Sirens can hide in the sea to seek refuge!

The Sea Witch realized she might have said too much and took a sip of her blue-hued sweet wine, smiling. “My apologies, Rust Crow, if my words were too revealing.”

“No worries. I’m actually pleased that the Chaotic Witch has spoken her true thoughts. This way, we genuinely have common interests,” Igor said leisurely. “Honesty is indeed the most effective negotiation skill.”

“Well, can you provide information about the Princess now...”

“Hold on,” Helephes interrupted. “This is a transaction; we need to know what you intend to offer.”

“Money?” Annan’s lips curled into a smile. “I don’t mind the cost. After all, once we complete this job, I won’t need money anymore.”

“We don’t need money,” Helephes responded. “We plan to take our compensation directly from you—we want to make two prophecies about you.”

Everyone exchanged glances. Igor then asked, “State your terms.”

“First is the Ghost King,” Helephes said. “We want to know how you, as a mortal, will come to master a deity.”

“I have no idea,” Harvey said, somewhat baffled. “Isn’t that something that happens in the future?”

Helephes continued, “Golden Time Flow, fleeting moments, traces of the future are already present now. The future is but a delayed reflection of the present. We don’t need you to answer; we just need you to lie down on the table, and we will extract the intelligence ourselves.”

Harvey calmly walked over and lay down on the long table between the Sirens, looking like a prop for the necromancers. The others watched curiously as the Sirens began their prophecy ritual, though all they could see were bubbles rising as the Sirens submerged themselves in the pool.

After a short while, the Ten Sea Witches resurfaced.

“The prophecy is complete.”

Harvey sat up and asked, “Can you tell me what it is?”

“Of course, it’s your prophecy,” Helephes said. “In simple terms, you will embark on a series of adventures in the Time Continent, ultimately gaining a conceptual Incarnation related to the Necromancy Sect. This is the key to mastering a deity.”

“What is a conceptual Incarnation?” Harvey asked with curiosity.

Ashe froze for a moment, realizing he couldn’t stop the answer in time. Helephes responded, “According to the prophecy, a conceptual Incarnation should be a special entity that exists between a spirit and a deity.”

Huh?

Is there really such an explanation?

Wait, Ashe suddenly remembered that the essence of a conceptual Incarnation is certain abstract concepts from the Virtual Realm... but the essence of spirits is also

conceptual! The difference lies in that spirits are born of spellcasters themselves, whereas conceptual Incarnations are born of the Virtual Realm!

“The reason mortals can’t master deities is not due to the sheer enormity of the deity, but because the nature of the spiritual bodies is different,” Helephes explained. “Our souls are like wooden barrels, spirits are like water, but deities are like strong acid—they would corrode the barrel itself.”

“A conceptual Incarnation, however, isn’t water nor acid; it won’t harm the barrel and will form a buffer layer when it encounters the acid. Perhaps this analogy is hard to grasp—it’s more akin to taming a beast with a young cub or asking your future father-in-law for money while bringing along your girlfriend.”

Ashe blinked. So the scene in the Family Ranking where Harvey tames a deity effectively means he woos a conceptual Incarnation girlfriend and then milks her father’s resources?

“However, you’ve already missed your chance,” the Sea Witch added.

“Huh? Why?”

“Because you missed the initial Adventure,” Helephes said, looking puzzled. “By now, you should have had your first Adventure in the Virtual Realm, but for some reason, you didn’t, and thus missed out on all subsequent Adventures.”

Harvey was stunned and instinctively made eye contact with Igor—Death Arena!

Speaking of missed recent Adventures, it must be that one!

If it weren’t for the interference of those two female spellcasters, they would have killed the heroic soul commander and obtained the mysterious spoils.

“Well, that’s unfortunate.” Although he said this, Harvey didn’t seem too concerned, as if he had merely seen a plate of Lala Fatty fall to the ground.

After the necromancer settled back into his seat, Igor asked, “What’s the second requirement?”

“It’s quite simple,” Helephes said. “I just need the Demon Lord to answer one question.”

Ashe gestured for Lise to get off his back, stood up from his push-ups, and said, “What’s the question?”

The Sea Witch was stunned. She had thought the shorter, masked person who had been silent all this time was the Demon Lord. She hadn’t expected it to be the one taking care of the children!

Being gentle and caring with children yet ruthless to the world—to the extent of having Annan paint a Domsday portrait of him, then turning around to join forces with Annan's mother and aunts, and finally turning them into necromancers to eternally serve him... Yes, only such a twisted individual could be the Source of Calamity.

"Was Roger Dior's death related to you?"

"No," Ashe replied firmly.

The Sea Witches exchanged eye contact, their communication complete within the sounds of the flowing water: he wasn't lying.

This was expected; if there had been any connection, Helephes wouldn't dare to meet them.

"Nabistin Palace, the central island in Lake Yalan."

The Sea Witch answered straightforwardly, "The Princess resides in the tower on that island."

"Can you guarantee the accuracy of this information?" Annan asked. "I believe the information isn't fake, but its timeliness might already be outdated."

"Well, you might not know this, but over thirty days ago, there was a commotion on the surface of Nabistin," Helephes said. "Though the news was quickly sealed off, many noticed it and began asking us if something had happened to the Princess. It was then that we discovered a slight breach in the Miracle barrier of the palace, allowing us to obtain limited intelligence about the Princess. It seems the Yisuo Royal Family intentionally let this information slip to reassure everyone."

"Since then, we've been prophesying the Princess's whereabouts daily—she has remained in the tower without any changes." search the NovelFire(.)net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

As the meeting room door closed, the Sea Witches breathed a sigh of relief.

"Helephes, do you think they'll succeed?"

"I don't think they'll succeed, nor do I think they'll fail," Helephes said. "I just find it interesting."

"A Princess blessed by the Gospel, a Demon Lord favored by fate—I'm really curious about what it will look like when they meet, but unfortunately, prophecy cannot reveal it."

"More so than that, I'm surprised that Roger really wasn't killed by the Demon Lord."

“Wasn’t that clear a long time ago?” another Sea Witch asked. “Although prophecy couldn’t reveal it, it seemed obvious that the Yisuo Royal Family was framing him to maintain the Gospel’s credibility.”

“It just feels a bit... overly dramatic,” Helephes said. “And rather than preserving the Gospel’s credibility, it’s more like they’re establishing the Demon Lord’s prestige.”

“Not just now, actually. I’ve had a faint premonition since the beginning. If the Art Ranking might have been a coincidence, starting from the Family Ranking, the Gospel has consistently been bolstering the Demon Lord’s image. The Family Ranking and the Evil Arts Ranking are essentially the same; the latter is just more aggressive, as if something couldn’t wait.”

Helephes mused, “Between the Art Ranking and the Family Ranking, Ashe must have done something that drew the Gospel’s intense focus on him...”

“According to our investigation, he was in Senhaeser playing games during that time,” the Sea Witch said. “Prophecy suggests he might have been flirting with Qenna and Annan in a Dream.”

“I think you’re worrying too much, chief,” another Sea Witch commented. “Even if the Yisuo Royal Family intended to replicate and sustain their credibility, we’re not Roger. Even if they sent secret guards, they couldn’t murder the chief in the Mermaid Palace!”

The next morning, a dried-up Siren was found dead in the fountain at the square.

Just as the second rank on the Evil Arts Ranking had indicated.

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

Chapter 448: The Witches Golden Fish

June 10, middle level Nabistin, Belldate Wonderland World.

“Wow, Ashe, look! From above, Azura looks just like a blooming flower!”

“Hey? This foggy clock tower of Vamora, these carvings, this structure, this appearance... It’s definitely the creation of a necromancer. It might even be personally overseen by that Six Heraldry legendary necromancer!”

“I actually had some expectations for your taste, Harvey. That was clearly my mistake.”

“Has Hemera become this beautiful? The last time I was here was thirty years ago...”

“Young Lady, don’t hold on to me so tightly! Are you afraid of heights?”

“Me? How could I be afraid of heights? And this is just an illusion created by an illusion spellcaster. How could I possibly—Ah! Don’t push me out! You jerk!”

As “Flying Gospel” ended, Annan furiously punched Ashe on the shoulder. “Did you really just scare me earlier!?”

Ashe couldn’t help but laugh. “Didn’t you used to live hundreds of meters up in the Inverted Skyscraper? You would usually drive a hovercar through the air too. How can you be afraid of heights now?”

Annabelle angrily pummeled Ashe’s arm relentlessly. “That’s different! I knew I was safe in those situations. But this illusion removed the cable car, and we were directly flying over the city. I haven’t specifically trained for flying with virtual wings, so of course, I’d feel a bit uneasy!”

“Little Ashe!”

Just then, Lise came over and pulled Ashe by the hand. “Let’s go to the next attraction! Our reservation is about to come up!”

“Alright, alright...”

Though they wore cloaks to conceal their identities, the Funeral party naturally blended into the crowd. Other travelers were also dressed in diverse styles. The ‘Extreme Cutting Carp Overlord Lord’ and ‘Red Hat Bunny Girl’ who just passed by were much more eye-catching than they were.

They even saw someone dressed as ‘Ashe Heath’. With so many impersonators around, no one would think Ashe was the real deal even if he didn’t disguise himself.

Looking for the Mermaid was an event from the night before last. Yesterday, they had to switch hotels because Helephes drowned from dehydration at the central square. Then, Annan unexpectedly showed a rare kindness and suggested that they relax a bit before “Assassinate the Princess” by having a team-building outing to Belldate Wonderland World in the middle level Nabistin.

Yes, even the underground city of Nabistin has entertainment venues, actually more than ordinary cities. After all, the lower and middle levels were once the Imperial Capital, and the original site of this Wonderland World was the old imperial palace. Furthermore, many of the transient population in the underground city are ‘underground Na-drifters’. Their emotional needs are extremely high, and they desperately require various forms of entertainment to fill their mental void.

By the way, Vamora has the fewest entertainment facilities because the physiological desires of the Six Heraldry clansmen are satisfied by white mist, and their spiritual needs are met by Family Dream. Hence, Vamora has always produced more than it consumed, even to the extent of unilaterally dumping goods to other regions. Qenna's wealth is not without reason.

Some might wonder how the underground city can be so peaceful, given that 'underground city' conjures images of freedom and turmoil. Even before he came, Ashe thought it was an extremely chaotic slum where fresh flesh fed the Lala Fatty daily.

The underground city, though it doesn't have Red Hat, has already established a certain order due to the supervision and intervention of various consortium families. Unregulated by law, it is even more prosperous than many surface cities.

The biggest difference between an underground city and a surface city is that battle spellcasters are the highest-paid T0 profession here. This is because conflicts of interest in the underground city are resolved directly through "Spellcasting Blood Battles." The decision-making committee from the Nabistin lower level, mentioned by the Mermaid, is an organization responsible for hosting these "Spellcasting Blood Battles."

As the only bloody competition in all of Gospel where there are no rules, most battle spellcasters participate in "Spellcasting Blood Battles" to gain combat experience. It can even be said that every ranked individual on the current Battle Sect ranking list spent their youth as 'underground Na-drifters.'

Annan is so familiar with the underground city because she once fought in blood battles here for three months.

However, the stories of the underground city had nothing to do with Ashe and his companions. They were simply here to enjoy the amusement park before heading to the ground city to "Assassinate the Princess."

It was quite clear that this team-building suggestion was meant to accommodate Lise. Among Lise's sisters, only the Little Witch had a relatively young mental age. The other sisters well surpassed the mental age of a child, with the eldest, the White Queen, nearing 25. Consequently, their feelings towards Wonderland World...

...were something they could not resist at all!

"Lise" eagerly dragged Ashe to the entrance of the "Virtual Realm Thriller." The staff had just started admitting guests. Thanks to their reservation in the Gospel Book, they could directly board the exploration ship and even snagged the front seats!

“This attraction is very thrilling and exciting. Children need to be closely accompanied by a guardian. Little Ashe, hold my hand tight. This ride might splash water, so please take necessary precautions. Don’t worry, we have our cloaks on. This ride...”

Ashe listened to the long-winded instructions from “Lise” and obediently held her small hand. He couldn’t help but wonder if Lise really loved amusement parks this much. Her personality seemed to have completely changed.

For starters, Ashe’s designation shifted several times. When they first entered the amusement park, it was “Dad,” then it was “Ash,” and now it’s “Little Ashe.” Ashe thought he might need to discuss with Annan. If Lise called him “Little she” next, Annan would have to deal with Lise’s cheeky antics.

It wasn’t just the names that changed. Lise’s attitude towards him shifted constantly. Sometimes she acted like a little girl, sometimes a teenager, and now she suddenly behaved so maturely, as if she were his guardian.

The temperament of a little girl truly changes five times in a moment...

The exploration ship suddenly started moving, passing through a short tunnel and arriving at the dense white mist of the Sea of Knowledge. As Ashe tried to find the boundaries, a dozen or so ferocious Blade Fish Dragons suddenly darted out from the white mist. Instinctively, Ashe put his fingers in his mouth, ready to draw out the Honey Sword.

However, the Blade Fish Dragons merely passed over their exploration ship, sending countless splashes of water around them. Before the passengers could look back, a small island suddenly appeared ahead. On the island, Foxlamp Dragons summoned Foxfire Lamps to launch long-range attacks. As the flames chased after them, the exploration ship’s speed suddenly surged, causing Ashe and the others to tense up instinctively, as if they genuinely feared the fire would scorch their boat.

Spellcaster projections, Mud Fish Dragons, Swordfish Dragons, and other common sights of the Sea of Knowledge made their appearances. There were even classic attractions that Ashe had never seen before, like the “Great Road,” “Sea Waterfall,” and “Sky Bubble.”

Even though they were already two-wing spellcasters who had left the Sea of Knowledge, they were still awestruck, like players who had left the beginner village discovering countless hidden secrets upon returning.

As they sailed on, fleeing from endless knowledge creatures chasing them from behind, the exploration ship suddenly tilted and plunged into the sea, startling everyone. Lise held onto Ashe with both hands tightly.

They quickly realized they were imitating the “Whirlpool” journey. The exploration ship soon exited the “Whirlpool” tunnel and returned to the surface.

Just when the passengers thought the ride was about to end, their seats suddenly extended a pair of silver wings. The environment around them began to rapidly descend, making it look like they were flapping virtual wings to soar upwards!

“Flying upwards to reach the Time Continent?” Igor chuckled from behind. “The designer of this ride has quite the imagination.”

“Even a silver spellcaster with a flying spirit couldn’t fly that long,” Harvey noted. “Unless they had a pair of virtual wings.”

“A silver spellcaster with virtual wings wouldn’t be a silver spellcaster anymore,” Banjeet remarked.

“If two silver spellcasters with fully formed silver wings met in the Virtual Realm, they might meet the conditions,” Annan suggested. “Two spellcasters holding hands and flapping their virtual wings together... It sounds like something out of a fairy tale.”

While the passengers marveled at the creativity of this idea, the pair in the front row, a large one and a small one, were already caught in a storm of waves within their minds!

Ashe could never have imagined that someone would blatantly leak the Secret Toxin of the Golden Fish, and even more audaciously, incorporate it into an amusement ride, as if they were afraid others wouldn’t notice!

But that’s how strange the world can be. Even for top-tier two-wings spellcasters like Annan and Igor, who had experienced mechanisms, creatures, and environments in the Sea of Knowledge identical to the true Virtual Realm, it was hard to believe this whimsical flight segment could be the real method to locate the Golden Fish.

Ashe could somewhat understand their skepticism. For silver spellcasters, “flying” was an incredibly difficult feat to achieve. With such seemingly impossible goals, it wasn’t just a matter of them not believing-it was more that they refused to believe.

Wait a minute, following this logic, the method to find the Rainbow Tail should also be something completely unattainable for two-wings spellcasters...

“Little Ashe, come closer,” Lise suddenly called out. “And then close your eyes.”

Ashe complied, then felt his face being kissed rapidly four times.

“...Are you that happy?” Ashe wiped his face and cleared his throat. “While I’m glad you’re happy, let’s not do this outside. It’s a bit embarrassing for me... and I’d prefer not to, even at home. I’m not used to such affectionate gestures...”

"No, this is just what I owed you before. I'm just making up for it now," Lise replied.

"Huh? When did I ever owe you?"

"In any case, you just did, Little Ashe," Lise looked at him with eyes gleaming mysteriously, and then glanced down at the hand mirror showing her other four sisters.

Little Witch: "Ahhh, White Queen, give me back my body! I really want to play Virtual Realm Thriller too!"

White Queen: "Turns out, the Secret Toxin of the Golden Fish is real."

Black Butler: "Observer and Sword Princess must have discovered the Golden Fish by holding hands and flying through the Sea of Knowledge like this."

Scarlet Dead Apostles: "I've never doubted the authenticity of the Secret Toxin of the Golden Fish."

Secret Princess: "Back then, it wasn't that we didn't believe in the Golden Fish Secret Toxin; rather, we couldn't believe that there could be two spellcasters in this world who trust each other so deeply, willing to become each other's wings and leave the lonely sea together..."

"But now..."

Lise looked at Ashe and reversed her hand to grasp his. Ashe glanced at her, relaxed his palm, and let her squeeze as she pleased.

"We've found the Golden Fish as well."

Suddenly, a stream of information flowed into the minds of the witch sisters.

"Golden Fish Secret Toxin"

"Number of Secret Toxin Infections: 15"

"Secret Toxin Strength: 15%"

"Current Effects of the Secret Toxin: You can convert silver spellforce into golden spellforce at a ratio of 65:35. (Decreasing the strength to 10% provides significant enhancement; reaching 51% results in negative effects.)"

The Secret Toxin that the Observer and Sword Princess couldn't infect with, no matter how many times they tried, was successfully contracted by the witch in an amusement facility in Wonderland World!

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

Chapter 449: Farewell

Belldate Wonderland World, Statue Restaurant.

Here, you order at the counter, so after a quick game of rock-paper-scissors, Ashe and Banjeet ended up going to place the order. Losing to Igor was one thing, but Harvey had actually used the “Ghost King Shackles” to temporarily transform into the most efficient Mech-spirit, cheating his way to a flawless victory in a best-of-five game!

As Ashe recalled everyone’s orders and approached the counter to speak, the staff member placed two trays in front of him. “Lala Fatty’s Conquering the Abyss, black pepper steak, braised beef Lala Fatty, coconut tart... drinks are lemon water and bitter orange tea... here’s one pack of napkins and one pack of wet wipes. Enjoy your meal.”

While Ashe was still in a daze, Banjeet had already paid and was carrying the trays back. Observing his surroundings, Ashe noticed that the counter area was even quieter than inside the restaurant. When travelers arrived, the staff would promptly deliver their food, reducing the transaction time to within five seconds. The counter area looked like a seamless, silent, and precise assembly line.

Back at their table, Igor asked, “After the fireworks show, we should head back, right? Ashe, don’t tell me you have more things you want to do?”

“It depends on Lise and the Young Lady. As long as we can get back before 11 PM, I’m good,” Ashe replied. “Speaking of which, Igor, do you have any regrets?”

“Regret not kicking you off the ‘Rapid Spin’ ride earlier?”

“Regret not becoming Belldate’s son-in-law!” Ashe said while reaching for Harvey’s fries. “If you married Anfel, this amusement park would be yours! And not just this amusement park, half of Gospel’s entertainment venues would belong to Leia—your future daughter!”

From the name itself, it’s clear that the owner of this Wonderland World is the Belldate Family, led by Yvaren. In fact, the Belldate Family is Gospel’s top entertainment giant, dominating the sector from virtual games to physical entertainment venues. The Belldate Group has expanded its reach to the utmost, making an indomitable mark in

the entertainment industry. Even the virtual games Ashe used to play were a small business under Yvaren's empire.

After all, under the influence of the Dominance Sect, the Belldate family has a basic consumer base of millions of people, from children to the elderly, who will spend whatever it takes. This is not just a cash cow but also gives Belldate infinite opportunities to try and fail in the entertainment industry. After hundreds of years, they naturally outlasted all competitors.

"No regrets," Igor said flatly. "Yvaren and Anfel are much smarter than you. Even now, I can't say I can fully resist Yvaren's dominance. Moreover, the strongest dominance Miracle of Belldate is probably the fate-embedded curse in their bloodline... Thinking about it now, the reason Gospel believes I'll be a good father in the future is probably because they think I'll be inversely dominated by Leia."

"In general, we call this kind of bloodline dominance 'love,'" Ashe said, snatching Igor's popcorn. "Why don't you just go along with it? Look at you, you're not getting any younger. If it weren't for jail, you'd probably still be a street punk. Now you have the chance to live off a wealthy woman, isn't that appealing? I don't even have the chance to live the easy life!"

"No thanks."

"Tsk, listen, male Bewitcher, if you can keep your wife happy, you could help us if we fall on hard times. And if we hit it big, do you think we'd forget our cellmate who's been through thick and thin with us? No way. So, no matter how you look at it, living off a wealthy woman is the most cost-effective choice for you... Wait, is your struggle every 'Revelation' time because you're fighting against the correct option of living off a wealthy woman?"

"Not choosing that."

"But what about Leia? Don't you want a future daughter? Forget Harvey, he has to create a wife from scratch, but you could have a lovely and smart daughter who inherits all your good qualities if you'd just agree. Don't you—"

"Aren't you annoying!"

Busy with her kids' meal, Lise looked up and saw that the adults were in a strange mood. Her sisters wouldn't fight the Little Witch for food, but watching the fireworks later would be another story.

Banjeet looked surprised, Annan appeared thoughtful, Harvey remained indifferent, and Ashe wore a 'how dare you yell at me' expression.

The Con Artist took a deep breath, quickly calming his emotions and changing the subject. “You’re about to finish all my popcorn. If you want some, can’t you just buy another portion for yourself?”

“No way. Getting it for free tastes way better, and it’s not like I won’t pay you back.” Ashe picked up a fried shrimp and offered it. “Here, I’m giving you a shrimp in return. Ah~”

Igor stared at Ashe with wide eyes, his lips tightly shut. Ashe blinked, signaling Igor to open his mouth.

“I... don’t really like...” the Con Artist muttered through tight lips.

At that moment, Annan reached over and guided Ashe’s hand to her mouth, taking a bite of the shrimp.

“If he doesn’t eat it, I will,” the Purple Moth said with a snicker.

Igor shot a cold glance at Annan, looking both relieved and annoyed.

“Igor, you don’t like shrimp?” Ashe asked, puzzled. “I never noticed this back in prison...”

“Don’t act like you know me so well,” Igor snapped. “You don’t even know where I used to sleep at Fidrola—”

“The closet in your room, the couch outside, and the cabinet in the kitchen. Those are the only places, right?”

The Con Artist froze. “Huh?”

“Did you forget? I did the cleaning during the day,” Ashe explained. “Although everyone used the same shampoo, for some reason, your scent was always a bit different. Maybe it’s the chemical effect of your Bewitcher Lineage?”

“I’ve told you, there are no male Bewitchers; I’m human...” Igor mumbled in a small voice, avoiding eye contact with Ashe and turning back to his food.

After finishing their meal, they decided to take a park cart to the fireworks plaza. As soon as they stepped out of the restaurant, a six-seater park cart pulled up in front of them.

Setting off fireworks underground might sound odd; after all, fireworks are meant to illuminate the night sky, and the underground city is perpetually in darkness. It’s akin to longing for an unattainable crush—the underground will never see daylight, and after the brief burst of fireworks, only a void of unfulfilled desires remains.

But at the moment when the fireworks bloom, their dazzling colors make everyone forget they are underground.

The fireworks ignited the sky, as if a meteor shower was pouring down. The Funeral family sat on the grass of the fireworks plaza. Banjeet even took a coffin out of his suitcase, allowing Alice to accompany Harvey. The seven of them formed a small circle, basking in the brilliant display.

The fireworks bloomed before their eyes, filling them with awe and searing the moment into their memories.

“Lise,” Ashe said, patting her head, “are you having fun today?”

“Yes!” Lise nodded vigorously, clearly ecstatic—the Little Witch had snagged the last spot for the fireworks show for them. “I wish we could come here every month!”

Ashe laughed, pulling her into a hug. “There’ll be more opportunities, just not underground.”

There is a Wonderland World underground, and there are fireworks shows too. But what made this one so special was their yearning for the light of the outside world.

Lise felt a bit puzzled as this was the first time Ashe had shown her such affection without any particular reason.

“Of course, wherever Dad goes, I’ll follow. Let’s explore other Wonderland Worlds!”

Ashe lowered his gaze, glancing over at Annan. Annan noticed his look and glanced at Lise.

A wave of unspoken fear welled up in the sisters’ hearts.

But Annan didn’t speak to Lise; instead, she turned to the young butler beside her. “Banjeet.”

“Hmm?” Banjeet looked up from preparing drinks. “Miss, are you thirsty?”

“No,” Annan replied. “I’ve something to ask of you.”

Banjeet hesitated for a moment, the fireworks illuminating his slightly pale face.

Unlike Lise, he had an inkling of what was to come, maybe from the moment Annan suggested visiting Wonderland World, or when Ashe tried hard to persuade Igor to become a Belldate in-law.

“Take Lise back to Azura and take good care of her.”

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

Chapter 450: The Gospel Worker

Back at the inn, Annan closed the window and opened the Gospel Book, praying for a Silence Barrier Miracle to prevent eavesdropping.

After preparing jasmine tea for everyone, Banjeet slowly began, “Driving the hovercar on the sky highway, it would take me 18 hours to make a round trip from Nabistin to Vamora. As long as I say Lise is Mr. Ashe’s and Miss, your favorite child, Lady Qenna will take good care of her.”

From his tone, it was clear that he had carefully rehearsed these words countless times on his way back, making them sound reasonable and persuasive.

Lise, who was looking at her hand mirror, suddenly raised her head, just about to say something when Ashe stuffed a piece of chocolate into her mouth and rhythmically massaged her shoulders. Although she wanted to explode with anger, being so pampered by Ashe melted her mood just like the chocolate in her mouth.

The blue-haired butler placed a suitcase on the table, “The ‘Beauty’s Wardrobe’ is our only spatial tool. It holds various weapons, clothes, food, and emergency transportation, capable of handling any sudden situation... Harvey’s coffin also needs to be stored in it.”

“Alice doesn’t necessarily have to sleep in a coffin,” Harvey suddenly said. “He can disguise himself as a normal person, even possessing breathing, body temperature, and speaking abilities. If necessary, he can move with us...”

The young butler glanced at him, and the necromancer obediently shut his mouth, chewing on an unlit cigarette in a daze.

“Though it might sound conceited,” Banjeet said, “unless you suddenly ascend to the Sanctuary... even after you ascend to the Sanctuary, I remain the most powerful sorcerer in the Funeral Firm. Thanks to this ever-youthful body, I have never fallen from my peak.”

“I never doubt that,” Annan gently twirled her earring and smiled. “Banjeet, you’ve been third on the Two-Wings Ice Spell Ranking for eight consecutive years... When I ran away from home, if not for your several secret helps, I would have been bullied long ago.”

Reminiscing about the past, Banjeet's lips slightly curved upward. "No, Miss, even back then, you were full of leadership charm. Wherever you went, you found companions willing to help you or even like you, such as Miss Cleos, Miss Sirimoro, and Miss Yvaren... you were just a bit mischievous sometimes."

Ashe and the others were stunned by what they heard—after all, the Gospel Society was a highly lawful place with excellent public security. Causing trouble that necessitated Banjeet's intervention went beyond mere 'mischief.'

"I was a bit reckless when I was young," admitted Annan shamelessly. "But a big part of my daring came from knowing that if I got into trouble, Banjeet, you would definitely come to save me."

"Rather than saying I was young, it would be more accurate to say I was like a kindergarten kid," Purple Moth said, sitting on the bed with her legs crossed and swaying. Her eyes crinkled into a smile. "Every day, I caused trouble and then relied on my guardians to clean up the mess."

"Humans, once they become dependent, will always be kids who need an adult to pick them up."

Annan lowered her head, her hair covering her face, making it impossible to see her expression. "But I'm not a child anymore, and I can't be one."

After she finished, Purple Moth turned to the Con Artist, who opened the Gospel Book and said, "Based on the information from the Mermaid, combined with the intelligence I gathered yesterday, I've determined that our best and only chance to enter the palace is during the 'Court Banquet' held on the day the 'Gospel Ranking' is announced."

"On that day, all the key figures in the Gospel Society and representatives from consortium families will attend the banquet to await the birth of the new Empress. In such a high-profile event, surveillance will surely be extremely strict. However, with so many guests, the place will be a mix of all sorts of people, which will be our only possible loophole... Although the plan sounds as dangerous as volunteering to be Harvey's experimental subject, it's slightly more realistic than breaking into the palace."

"I'll find a way to 'borrow' a few guests' identities for that day," Annan said. "The points the Dolan Family has accumulated over the years in the Gospel are of no further use to us."

"Even if we manage to get into the palace, there's one critical issue," Igor said. "The banquet is meant to celebrate the announcement of the Gospel Ranking and witness the Empress's succession. This means that from the start to the end of the banquet, lasting only a few hours, the Gospel Ranking will be announced, and we must achieve our objective within that timeframe—assassinate the Princess who is to become the next Empress, under heavy Court protection."

“We only have that one chance, and just a few hours.”

Harvey commented, “It sounds like an outrageous plan.”

“Exactly,” the Con Artist spread his hands. “A plan so outrageous that even Harvey finds it unbelievable—there’s really no more fitting description. Not to mention what happens if we fail; even if we succeed, will the First Gospel indeed become nullified? Will the Divine Sovereign’s Wish be immediately granted to you, Young Lady? Will you even have the chance to make a wish? You only get one wish—can it really solve all our problems?”

Annan glanced at Igor. “If it were you, would you give up after coming this far?”

“...No.”

“Even though we grew up in different environments, have different genders, different personalities, and aside from some shared interests, almost nothing in common, you and I are the same type of person,” Annan said. “We’re the kind of people who hang on to life just to one day bet it all on the table.”

Igor responded, “I’m not like that anymore.”

“If it’s so dangerous, then it’s all the more reason I need to stay,” Banjeet said anxiously. “Whether it’s for support or combat, I can definitely help you—”

“Before we assassinate the Princess, we need to explore the layout of the ground city as temporary workers, even visually sketching the Court’s interior,” Annan didn’t directly respond to Banjeet but continued, “This means we’ll be working in the next few days.”

“Working again?” Harvey couldn’t help but complain. “Don’t tell me I’ll be hauling bricks again?”

“Don’t worry. Not only will you not be hauling bricks, but you also won’t have any memory of the job,” Igor said. “You’ll feel like you just clocked in and then immediately clocked out and got your pay.”

Ashe wondered, “Is there really such a thing?”

“Did you notice that when you were in Wonderland World, staff members would always anticipate your needs and provide service before you even asked?” Igor said. “And it’s not just in Wonderland World. Anywhere in the underground city, any staff member you encounter can ‘anticipate’ your needs and act accordingly.”

Ashe and the others were momentarily taken aback. They quickly recalled that over the past few days, they really hadn’t had to speak much—whether shopping or doing

anything else, hotel staff would appear before they could ask for help. This had left Ashe with little opportunity to practice with his Substitute over the past couple of days.

They weren't without curiosity, but it's reasonable to question poor service, whereas questioning overly attentive service seems odd. So, they let it go—after all, they were merely passing through the underground city and didn't care about its stories.

But now, it seemed they were becoming a part of one of those stories.

Igor continued, "This is because during their work hours, they are always in a state of 'Revelation.'"

Ashe and Lise tilted their heads in confusion. "Wait, I remember 'Revelation' can only be maintained for 5 minutes per hour, right? They can't be only working for 5 minutes every hour, can they?"

"'Personal Revelation' lasts for 5 minutes each hour, but 'Work Revelation' is different," Igor explained. "The work system in Nabistin is entirely different from elsewhere. Simply put, once you meet the basic conditions for a job, you can sign a work Pact. During work hours, you'll remain in a state of 'Work Revelation,' requiring no conscious thought, and you can intuitively complete all tasks efficiently along with your colleagues."

"I've never experienced Revelation, so I don't really get it," Ashe admitted.

"In your games, you have guides, right?" Igor said. "'Work Revelation' is like having a constant game guide showing you what to do every single moment. The entire world becomes composed of very specific tasks, and you don't need any personal initiative. You just function like a cog in the machine."

"Is it really that easy?"

"Not easy at all," Igor said seriously. "Since you have to be fully immersed in your work, 'Work Revelation' is said to be a very unpleasant experience. It's like you're no longer yourself but just a tool translating the Revelation."

Ashe was surprised. "Then why would anyone accept 'Work Revelation'?"

"Because they can delete the memory."

"Huh?" Search* The novelFire.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Didn't I mention it earlier? If we take on jobs, it'll feel like we clocked in one second and clocked out the next, with money in hand," Igor explained. "Because 'Work Revelation' completely dominates our thoughts, 'work experience' doesn't exist in Nabistin. The

memories from our work hours are meaningless to us, so a brand-new work approach quickly became mainstream in Nabistin—”

“As long as the working memory is deleted, it feels like workers earned their wages merely by blinking. This system, known as the ‘Gospel Worker System,’ enables the prosperity of the underground city’s order of production, entertainment services, and even public safety, rivaling other top-tier cities supported by Royal Families.”

“What a genius system. Just this alone makes Nabistin worthy of being the Imperial Capital,” the Con Artist remarked with what seemed like genuine admiration. “In Vamora, they use the white mist to deceive citizens’ senses, making them mistake physical pleasure for work enthusiasm; in Mephila, they dominate the subconscious to force citizens into working overtime, essentially using a Miracle to erode their laziness.”

“Even top-tier cities like Vamora and Mephila, which have the highest productivity, can only reduce the citizens’ dislike for work as much as possible. After all, without using drugs or brainwashing, who would willingly subject themselves to working?”

Ashe nodded repeatedly, resonating deeply with the sentiment, while Lise patted his head affectionately.

“But in Nabistin, it’s entirely different; everyone willingly, even eagerly, wants to work. For them, work is just the movement of the clock, and then they get paid—it’s almost like the money is free.”

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

Chapter 451: Take Me Away

“But isn’t this really bad?”

Harvey, biting on a catnip cigarette, said, “If all jobs delete our memories, how are we supposed to gather intelligence in the ground city?”

“I can double as a Memory Extractor and recover your deleted memories,” Igor said. “But as the Intelligence indicated, these ‘Work Revelation’ memories are harmful. Many have already tested this for us—the sorcerers who tried to exploit the ‘Work Revelation’ to discover an ‘Infinite Revelation’ loophole were numerous, but the outcome for both them and their test subjects was always soul annihilation and complete decay.”

“Decay?” Harvey frowned. “Their souls aged to death?”

“More or less. Those working memories act like poison, accelerating the soul’s aging process,” Igor said. “However, retrieving memories once or twice occasionally won’t be a problem, as we’re still young. But...”

Ashe was slightly startled and then looked at the pale-faced Banjeet.

Don’t be deceived by Banjeet’s appearance as a youthful, charming boy with blue hair. He was actually over sixty now. Becoming a sorcerer might enhance the soul’s quality, but it does not extend its lifespan—just as having a stronger body won’t stop aging, only fight off disease.

“...Not everyone needs to go scouting,” Banjeet stood up and said. “I can stay in the underground city and wait for you all. On the day of the action, I will join you to infiltrate the Royal Palace. You only need to show the way, and I can provide the strongest support!”

“But we don’t need support,” Igor said calmly. “In the Royal Palace, we can only afford one battle at most—that will be against the Tower guards. Any other fights would mean the mission’s failure. Once an alarm is triggered, the Royal Palace won’t give us any further chances.”

“She’s right,” Annan looked seriously at the butler who had taken care of her for so many years. “Banjeet, you’re no longer needed here.”

The blue-haired butler sat down in a daze. His spirits were so low that even the color seemed to drain from his body, turning him gray.

However, the Purple Moth continued, “As for Ashe, he’s the core of the assassination plan. Igor and Harvey are ranked individuals and competitors for the Divine Sovereign’s Wish, so I must keep them close. The only ones dispensable to the plan are you and Lise.”

“Annan...” Ashe couldn’t help but call out.

“And,” Annan paused, “you mentioned sending Lise to Lady Qenna. This plan is completely infeasible—do you think Qenna wouldn’t dare to use Lise to threaten Ashe, or that Vamora’s white mist wouldn’t corrupt Lise into the Six Heraldry?”

“For someone who is neither her clansman nor of interest to her, do you not know how cruel and ruthless Qenna can be? Moreover, both Ashe and I are crucial to the continuation of the Senhaeser Family... Perhaps just as you hand Lise over, we would see photos of her battered and bruised, and Ashe would end up in Qenna’s dark room the very next day.”

“Lady Qenna wouldn’t...” Banjeet said hesitantly, losing confidence in his own words. “Then maybe Miss Cleos or Miss Yvaren—”

Annan shook her head. “Yvaren is a domination sorcerer even Igor can’t fully withstand, and Cleos is a staunch supporter of the Yisuo Royal Family’s Red Hat. Lise knows all our plans. Are you hoping for our failure before it even starts?”

“The only safe option for Lise, both for her and us, is for you to take care of her. If you’re unwilling to, we might have no choice but to let Lise die.”

Igor’s eyes shone brightly, Harvey instinctively examined Lise, and Ashe swiftly pulled Lise behind him, shouting, “Young Lady, Lise and I have a Pact!”

“Oh right, Ashe must protect Lise,” Annan pretended as if she had just remembered. “Which means we must handle Ashe and Lise together, but Ashe is the core of the assassination... Banjeet, what do you suggest?”

Banjeet almost begged, “Lise and I can stay in the underground city and wait to support...”

“We never intended to come back once we decided to enter the Royal Palace,” the Purple Moth adjusted her earring. “Whether you stay in the underground city or return to Azura doesn’t make much of a difference, except that in the latter case, we’d be more at ease.”

“Let’s just consider it a way to put my mind at rest,” Annan said with a smile. “Banjeet, allow me to be selfish one last time.”

It was as if these words were a spell; Banjeet seemed to lose the last bit of his resolve. His gaze fell to the ground as he turned his head slightly, looking to Lise with hopeful eyes.

Lise was dumbfounded—she had been counting on Banjeet to persuade Annan, but now he was relying on her?

Lise had previously conferred with her sisters while looking into her hand mirror, trying to come up with legitimate reasons to stay.

In the end, they concluded: there were none!

This was certainly not a spur-of-the-moment idea from Annan. She had likely been planning to send Banjeet and Lise away together since the day the Happiness Ranking was released. Truth be told, Annan didn’t care much for Lise; she was primarily concerned about the future of Banjeet, who was like a father or an elder brother to her.

Banjeet was the biggest obstacle on her path to death.

Annan knew perfectly well that she was Banjeet's sole reason for living. If the plan failed and everyone perished, Banjeet would be left mentally devastated, possibly to the point of following her through hell and into the Virtual Realm.

Therefore, Annan had to find a new reason for Banjeet to live.

If Banjeet lost a daughter, she'd give him another.

Perhaps even when adopting Lise, this Purple Moth had already foreseen today.

Excuses like "Banjeet can't become a Blasphemy Gospel worker," "There's no escape from the Royal Palace," and "Lise isn't safe in foster care" were trivial. The reasons to keep Banjeet were a hundred times more compelling than to send him away. At the core, Annan simply wanted Banjeet to leave, so Lise had to go as well.

In this way, even if Annan were to be gone, Banjeet would find a new purpose in caring for Lise, just as he had done with Annan.

Unlike Banjeet, however, the reasons for Lise to leave outweighed those for her to stay by a hundredfold. In fact, she never had any good reason to join this dangerous Blasphemy Gospel plan from the start.

"Ashe, Annan, Harvey, and Igor must have discussed this among themselves. Even Ashe agreed that Lise couldn't stay here, and the others would be even more supportive. Lise even suspected that Ashe had talked it over with Annan long ago—thinking back, Ashe had indeed been much kinder to her ever since the plan to Assassinate the Princess was formulated.

The tighter Ashe held her now, the more determined he was to make her leave.

The Witch sisters hadn't expected that their greatest adversary in staying here would be the very person who valued them the most.

A prison stronger than the Tower is love.

Previously, it was Banjeet acting as the protective tower for Annan, and Lise serving as Ashe's emotional prison. But now, the roles had reversed.

"What should we do, what should we do now..."

"The key is Little Ashe, we must convince him!"

"You can't even break free from his embrace, who can you convince?"

Just then, everyone's Gospel Book suddenly sprang open. They were momentarily stunned, and then their faces turned pale—the Weaving Festival had released the sixth ranking list in less than three days!

The weaving was accelerating!

Amid their shock, Lise suddenly said, “Dad, take me with you!”

Before Ashe could even process her words, he was already pulling Lise out of the room. Igor immediately stood up to follow, but a necromancer placed a hand on his shoulder, stopping him.

“Let go.”

“Igor, you really don't understand the human heart.”

“Oh?” The Con Artist laughed in anger. “A necromancer lecturing a mental sorcerer on the human heart?”

Harvey remarked, “Even Alice knows that a single coffin can hold at most two people. It's not because the coffin isn't big enough, but because sometimes, only two people are allowed to face each other.”

“Let them resolve it themselves.”

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

Chapter 452: Armored Sanctification and the Gospel Ranking

So fast.

Pedestrians rushed by on either side, neon lights turned into streaks, and the wind roared as it covered them. Lise leaned on Ashe's shoulder, like a little girl holding onto her doll.

The speed was so fast, it felt like falling.

Lise hadn't really thought things through; she just realized she had to find an opportunity to spend some time alone with Ashe, so she ordered him to take her away. But when

Ashe picked her up, all her thoughts disappeared, and her mood became as fizzy as a newly opened soda—sweet and effervescent, like a child who loves relying on adults, feeling confident even after causing trouble.

When they stopped, she heard Ashe say, “Two, please... oh, here you go, Lise!”

Lise turned her head and saw that they had run to an ice cream shop. The server had already prepared a plain ice cream cone and a milk-flavored cone with honeydew, chocolate, vanilla, and pineapple flavors for them in advance. She carefully took the super-sized cone and ate only the chocolate ice cream ball.

“Do you want to walk by yourself?” Ashe asked as he accepted the plain cone, “To be honest, you’re not exactly light...”

“No, I’ve been walking in Wonderland World all day and I’m really tired!”

“All right then.”

Lise enjoyed the sweetness of the chocolate, but soon her mood sank—Ashe was only being so nice to her because he was about to take her home.

At any other time, if she made such a request, Ashe, even if he wouldn’t refuse, would probably just summon his Substitute to carry her.

Ashe didn’t walk far, bringing them to a nearby underground river where many locals strolled around without any disguises. These people had perhaps lived here all their lives, rarely seeing the sky. But it didn’t matter, not everyone needed to live in the light.

Ashe and Lise sat on a bench, facing the underground river while eating their ice cream cones. Although the river in the underground city sounded like it might be a sewer, this underground river was not only odorless but didn’t even have a hint of mustiness. The air was so fresh it felt like a gentle massage for the nose. Though there was no night sky, the bioluminescent fungi on the ceiling provided a worthy substitute. The river gleamed with a phosphorescent glow, and the ripples reflected the gradually quieting underground city, as if everyone’s dreams were flowing within it.

Lise initially waited for Ashe to speak, but he remained silent and in a daze, making it difficult for her to start a conversation.

However, their relationship had long reached the point where they felt comfortable just being together, even without speaking. Although Ashe was like that with everyone, Lise felt only this natural when she was with him. So, Lise pulled her legs up and squatted on the bench, looking down at her hand mirror.

Her elder sisters had been urging her for a while now.

Black Butler: "How about acting spoiled? Ashe seems like he'd be easy to sway..."

White Queen: "He's simple, but he's not dumb. Acting spoiled might make him indulge us in minor things, but it definitely won't influence his critical decisions."

Black Butler: "If the effort is enough, there might be a miracle. Let me try..."

White Queen: "Not even I would be able to, and acting spoiled is a weak move, like ice cream... ah, my vanilla is already melting... Usually, ice cream can melt his heart, but when faced with danger, his first reaction is to protect the ice cream! The more we act spoiled and weak, the less he is willing to let us stay!"

Scarlet Dead Apostles: "Then let's be more assertive. I'll grab him by the collar and say, 'If you dare to leave me, I'll hate you forever.'"

White Queen: "Isn't that still acting spoiled!?"

Deya: "We can't conquer Ashe, so why not change tactics? How about we try to convince Banjeet? Banjeet wouldn't want to see Annan in danger. If we persuade him to go back before the last day, Ashe and Annan will have no choice but to accept it..."

White Queen: "But won't that make Little Ashe angry?"

Scarlet Dead Apostles: "Yeah, exactly."

Black Butler: "And Annan could also ask us to stay in the underground city, preventing us from taking part in the action."

Deya: "Ugh..."

As her elder sisters continued discussing and eating their ice cream cones, Lise couldn't help but voice her own confusion: "Why do we have to join the action at all? It's so dangerous. Shouldn't we be figuring out a way to stop Dad from participating instead?"

The discussion halted abruptly. After a brief silence, Deya responded, "Come to think of it, Little Witch, we never really told you why we need to join the Weaving Festival or why we need the Divine Sovereign's Wish."

"Because those stories happened before you were 'born.'"

A long time ago, there were two little babies. The first moment they opened their eyes in the incubator, they saw each other. There was no need for bonding time; they would cry if separated, but holding each other's hand brought immediate calm. They had identical appearances, their every expression mirroring the other, as close as the last two little monsters of an extinct species.

There were many other children like them, but most never had the chance to be born. They were already so outstanding that they didn't need any backups. At the age of three, they memorized each other's names: Lise Deya and Nikki Nalu.

On a quiet afternoon, they were playing and chasing each other in the garden, just as they always did. Then a court maid came and told them they would be taken to new rooms. In their confusion, they were separated as pristine and cleanly as a piece of white paper being torn in half.

They never saw each other again.

Lise Deya was confined to a tower on an island in the middle of a lake, while Nikki Nalu was imprisoned in the most secret basement of the Royal Palace.

There were tantrums, resistance, and tears, but the maid who looked after Lise Deya was her loving grandmother. So no matter how much she resisted, Lise Deya eventually listened, ate, and slept. Being naturally kind and obedient, she believed the maid when she said Princess Nina was doing well. She never doubted it, although whenever she stood by the window, she would try to spot Nina in the distant garden.

Maybe it was the monotonous days that passed quickly, or perhaps it was the power of a Miracle, but Lise Deya soon grew into a beautiful princess. Still, to her, it felt as if her separation from Nina had just happened yesterday.

It wasn't until she eavesdropped on the maid's conversation with the Emperor outside the door, and until she overheard her grandmother's late-night mutterings about the truth of Armored Sanctification, that the 'Mask' spirit was born in her heart. She then completely bid farewell to her past and became a Virtual Realm sorcerer.

After meeting the Bronze Dragon on the Time Continent, she didn't hesitate to accept the Bronze Dragon's Trial, just for a chance to escape the Tower.

Lise asked, "Why was Nina imprisoned in the basement? It sounds so sad... But Deya, you and the others being locked in the Tower is also pitiful. I was lucky to have met Dad as soon as I was born."

Deya explained, "Because Armored Sanctification has to do with the two ranking lists. One is, of course, the Gospel Ranking, and the other is the one you heard about a few days ago... the Ranking of the Unrelated."

"The Yisuo Royal Family's Armored Sanctification essentially means gaining the power of a deity through the ranking lists."

When she had introduced Armored Sanctification to the Observer Sword Princess, Deya had omitted the most crucial detail. After all, it wasn't just her secret; it was also a painful truth she found hard to speak of.

“Becoming number one on the Gospel Ranking grants one the qualification to wield the deity ‘Gospel.’ They can even become the Gospel Incarnation. Though they can’t fully harness the power of ‘Gospel,’ it’s enough to control human affairs and turn the tides. This is why any dynasty that rebels against the First Gospel ends up in ruin, and any dynasty that the First Gospel supports continues to thrive.”

“And to become number one on the Gospel Ranking, besides character, appearance is most important: all past Yisuo Empresses look exactly like us. We didn’t know why before, but after seeing the original Gospel Incarnation on the Time Continent, I realized that this might be a loophole in the Gospel Ranking—those who closely resemble the original Gospel are more likely to be chosen as the First Gospel.”

“But even that alone isn’t enough, because a mortal body can’t wield a deity...”

The White Queen suddenly spoke up, “Let me tell the next part.”

“No, it has to be me,” Deya interjected, “and it must be me because this is my... original sin.”

“A mortal body cannot wield a deity. The deity constantly corrodes the soul of its incarnation every second. That’s why past First Gospels often had only ten years to live, which led to many dynasties eventually collapsing. Forty years is enough for a dynasty to decline from its peak. If we want to establish an eternal kingdom, the First Gospel must hold power for at least fifty years, covering the interval between two Weaving Festivals.” Search the [NôvelFire\(.\)net](http://NôvelFire(.)net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Then our ancestors came up with a rather ingenious idea.”

“Since the lifespan is insufficient, why not find a way to extend it? Not just the lifespan, but every aspect of fate.”

At this moment, Lise recalled the traits of the Ranking of the Unrelated, “So Nina was imprisoned to place her on the Ranking of the Unrelated and transfer her lifespan and everything else to us?”

Deya affirmed, “That’s right.”

Lise pondered, “But $1+1$ only equals 2. If we can only live for ten years after wielding the deity ‘Gospel,’ even adding Nina’s lifespan only gives us twenty years!”

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

Chapter 453: You Cant Even Convince Me

Lise Deya: “We don’t really understand it either; we can only speculate. Perhaps it is because Nina and I were born with... well, using the Observer’s words, we have an extremely deep Bond. The stronger the Bond, the more empowered the fate transfer becomes. If an ordinary person can only receive 100% of an Unrelated’s fate, then maybe we can get 1000% of Nina’s.”

“Even now, if I close my eyes, I can still recall Nina’s childhood look, covered in mud. Perhaps it is precisely because of our Bond that we were chosen by the Sorceress as the First Gospel and the Unrelated.”

“This is why we have to escape the Tower-not just to break free from the fate of the First Gospel, but to save Nina! She is probably already at the top of the Ranking of the Unrelated, and if we don’t rescue her, she will undoubtedly die as an Unrelated!”

“But we have no power to resist the Sorceress, nor can we invade the Royal Palace to save Nina. Our original plan was to somehow capture the Divine Sovereign’s Wish and then wish to abolish the Ranking of the Unrelated. That way, not only can Nina be saved, but there will never again be sisters as sorrowful as us!”

From birth, Lise Deya and Nikki Nalu were twins immersed in sin and pain. Nina bore all the pain, while Deya bore all the guilt.

Since the day they were separated, she lived on another girl’s grief.

From the start, it was destined that on the day Lise Deya became queen, the gem in the crown would be the last drop of Nikki Nalu’s blood.

So, upon learning the truth, Deya couldn’t bear the torment of her conscience. Crushed by the pressure, in her desperation she summoned the Masked spirit, urgently splitting into the White Queen, Black Butler, Scarlet Dead Apostles and the like to share the pain, like fish struggling to breathe air can only console each other by being close.

And because of this, although Deya constantly called her grandmother an old witch, she did not resent her grandmother. Because she knew that fifty years ago, her grandmother went through the same ordeal as she did; the only difference being that her grandmother never knew the truth from beginning to end.

The true mistake lies within the cruel and twisted succession tradition of the Yisuo Royal Family.

This is why Deya wants to obtain the Divine Sovereign’s Wish—once the Ranking of the Unrelated is abolished, all problems can be resolved. Nina wouldn’t need to sacrifice herself, and the Yisuo Royal Family wouldn’t need to create sinful twins in the future.

“...Deya and Nina are indeed pitiful,” Lise said after a moment of silence. “But the person most likely to obtain the Divine Sovereign’s Wish now is Aunt Annan. We have no chance.”

“Although we can’t abolish the Ranking of the Unrelated, we still have a chance to save Nina,” Deya said, “because there is still a princess in the Tower within the Royal Palace.”

“After our discussion, we believe there are two possibilities: this princess might be an ‘alternate’ we don’t know, and the Sorceress might use the deity’s ‘Gospel’ power to transfer Nina’s fate to the alternate.”

“But I have never heard of another princess apart from Nina and me, so there is another possibility: this princess is Nina.”

“Since we disappeared, the Yisuo Royal Family still needs a future emperor. So, the Sorceress might have taken Nina out of the Ranking of the Unrelated on the night we left, but the price would be Nina becoming the new First Gospel.”

The Little Witch quickly realized: “But without a sacrificial offering, Nina can only live for ten years!”

Deya: “Exactly. The Sorceress won’t have time to cultivate a new Unrelated one, but this also gives us an opportunity—Nina wasn’t originally raised as the First Gospel. The Sorceress has her in the Tower, certainly to make her follow my past trail, thus causing the Gospel Ranking to misjudge her.”

“If we can bring her out of the Tower, and then let one of our sisters enter her body to temporarily replace her personality—given the Bond between Nina and me, I’m sure we sisters can freely come and go—then we can definitely help her escape the fate of the First Gospel!”

“Although we can’t completely abolish the Ranking of the Unrelated, at least both Nina and I can survive. So, we must follow Ashe and the others into the Royal Palace. We cannot let him assassinate Nina! On the contrary, we have to find a way to save Nina!”

Lise: “...You all have been through so much hardship...”

Deya: “It’s my responsibility.”

White Queen: “It’s our responsibility. Nina is our sister too.”

Black Butler: “Actually, when it comes down to it, there’s only one way left for us to stay.”

Scarlet Dead Apostles: “Complete honesty.”

Deya: "I've been thinking about this too—should we come clean to Ashe, tell him that I'm actually Princess Lise Deya, and then ask for his help in saving Nina... but..."

Black Butler: "You're afraid to reveal the secret, even to Ashe. Not because the secret is immensely important, but because you're scared he will resent you for hiding it."

White Queen: "But we don't have any other options now. No matter what we try, Little Ashe will never bring us into the Royal Palace. If we don't tell the truth, we don't have enough reason for him to risk his life for us. He'll just throw us out of the palace!"

Scarlet Dead Apostles: "Honesty is the best negotiation skill."

As the sisters passionately discussed the feasibility of full disclosure, a young but firm voice echoed in their minds: "No."

Lise sat down, took off her glove, and looked at her arm, avoiding all reflective surfaces. She spoke in her mind:

"Deya, White Queen, Black Butler, Scarlet Dead Apostles, I sympathize with Nina, and I understand your determination to save her. I also understand the sense of justice in your hearts."

"Princess Lise Deya knows Nikki Nalu, but Lise does not."

"Lise doesn't want to save anyone, nor does she need strangers to applaud for her."

"I just want Dad's affection and my sisters' love. There are only a few people I like, and only a few people who like me. Aside from you and Dad, no one else cares about me... Uncle Harvey doesn't care about me, Aunt Bukin just tolerates me because of Dad, Aunt Annan treats me as a tool, and Uncle Banjeet only cares about Annan. So, I don't want to lose any of you."

"I won't risk you and Dad to save someone I don't know. Absolutely not."

"Elder sister, if you want to achieve something as great as you plan, you should have a younger sister with a great personality."

"But I'm just the Little Witch: immature, timid, easily satisfied, and selfish."

"You won't convince Dad, and you can't even convince me."

Having poured out her heart, Lise made up her mind and turned to Ashe, who was flipping through the Gospel Book:

"Dad, let's run away. Don't join the assassination plan. Let's hide together until the Weaving Festival is over, alright?"

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

Chapter 454: I Am Yisuo Princess

Being spoiled indicates the possibility of being favored, while being sensible suggests the awareness of being abandoned.

Therefore, at this moment, Lise was both being spoiled and appearing very sensible. She completely ignored the voices of her elder sisters and looked straight at Ashe with wide eyes.

Her world was very small, so small that losing anyone would leave an enormous void. She was willing to betray everything for anyone, even forgoing principles and justice.

Ashe looked at her, rummaged through his pockets, but couldn't find a handkerchief or tissues. He had to use his sleeve to wipe the milk off her face, smiling as he said, "Have you forgotten? I have a pact with you, and I have a pact with the Young Lady too."

"But Aunt Annan likes you!" Lise said anxiously. "She definitely can't bear to—"

"She can." Ashe replied, "Perhaps Annan has a fondness for me, maybe she even likes me a bit. But liking isn't as all-powerful as you imagine. In fairy tales, liking can move mountains, twist fate, and level all obstacles. But in reality, it amounts to nothing. The fleeting joy it brings can hardly match Harvey's candy."

"Her fondness for me might be that of a friend, maybe like that of a pet, and perhaps a bit as an opposite sex. But it is by no means above her own life. For the Divine Sovereign's Wish, she is willing to stake her own life. What am I compared to that?"

Ashe ruffled Lise's hair, "One day you will understand that whether it is affection or resentment, they are merely emotions generated by hormones, phantoms born from life. You can pursue or even indulge in these phantoms, but they cannot fill your life. Only ideals, living, and meaning can help you grow into an outstanding woman."

For some reason, hearing Ashe speak to her so earnestly made Lise's nose twinge, and her vision became watery and blurred. She pouted and said, "Dad, do you really have the right to say that? You don't seem to have any ideals yourself."

"As a shallow adult, I'm sorry to be a bad role model for you," Ashe said while awkwardly scratching his face. "Of course, even though I very much hope you will grow up to be an

outstanding, beautiful woman, I would also be happy if you turn out to be just as ordinary as I am. Sometimes, living a few decades of ordinary life, just like in the stories, is already a great happiness."

"I will definitely grow up to be a super cute beauty!" Lise sniffled hard. "But Dad, why are you talking as if you won't be there to see it? The more you say things like this, the more scared I get! If it's so dangerous, why not oppose the bad woman Annan? Why go along with her to certain death?"

"Besides, Aunt Bukin and Uncle Harvey surely won't just comply. Let's discuss it with them and rise up against Annan's tyranny, freedom belongs to us—"

"They won't go along with you."

Lise was stunned. "Why?"

"Because Annan offered something more valuable than freedom," Ashe said with a smile. "The Divine Sovereign's Wish."

"But isn't the Divine Sovereign's Wish something only one person can obtain?"

"Annan proposed another possibility," Ashe said. "The Divine Sovereign's Wish probably can't grant everything, so logically, it must have a 'wish capacity.' As long as the wishes fit within this capacity, any number of wishes can be granted."

"Annan said her wish, while only the Omniscient Weaver can realize it, is not very grand or significant, and is even quite trivial. So if there's still 'wish capacity' left, she would be happy to fulfill our wishes."

Lise tried hard to find a counterargument. "But, but that's just Annan's word. The Omniscient Weaver might not be so accommodating and could only grant Annan's wish. Then you'll all be busy for nothing!"

"But at least there's hope, right?" Ashe smiled. "Although hopes without results are poison, we... Igor and Harvey have already lived such lives. How could they resist having a sweet dream?"

"Lise, you have to understand, Igor, Harvey, and I are all homeless wanderers. Sometimes I think, isn't it just moving to a new city? How hard can it be? But when I think about only being able to recall the past from memory and severing ties with over twenty years of life, even though we are cold-hearted, our blood is still warm."

"When Harvey looks outside while smoking, what is he really seeing? When Igor takes a bath, what is he really contemplating?"

Lise asked, "Dad, do you miss your homeland too?"

Ashe smiled, pulled Lise into his arms, and asked, “Do you smell anything?”

Lise sniffed hard in his embrace. “The smell of water, clothes, and a bit of shampoo... Wait, haven’t we been in Wonderland World all day? When did you wash your hair, Dad?”

“Oh well, being around a bunch of either cute or beautiful people, I have to make an effort with my appearance too. Otherwise, I’d end up at Harvey’s level,” Ashe shrugged. “So, is this a familiar scent for you?”

“Uh-huh.”

“That’s the scent of home.”

Lise asked nervously, “So, Dad, do you all want to return to your homeland?”

“At least Igor and Harvey don’t,” Ashe said. “Some things are best left in memory to be reminisced. Missing home only proves that we haven’t found peace in our lives, and thus, we dig up memories like stray dogs scavenging for bones to stave off hunger. That’s why Igor and Harvey are willing to take risks with Annan—they want the power to grasp happiness.”

“But aren’t they already very strong? Aunt Bukin will become Rust Crow, and Uncle Harvey could become a legendary sorcerer who commands deities one day,” Lise said. “How much more power do they need to hold onto their happiness?”

“That’s a great question. Perhaps they are also hoping the Omniscient Weaver can give them an answer,” Ashe said, spreading his hands. “In any case, you can’t count on them.”

“And what about you, Dad?” Lise asked. “What’s your wish?”

“Me?” Ashe was slightly taken aback. After thinking for a moment, he said, “My true wish is something even the Omniscient Weaver can’t fulfill, and I wouldn’t dare ask Her to.”

If he wished to return to his homeland through the Omniscient Weaver, setting aside whether She could actually grant it, it would be terrifying if She did. If the Divine Sovereign turned His gaze to that clear blue planet, Ashe would become an unpardonable traitor.

“As for my secondary wish...” He paused. “I want to see someone.”

“Who?”

“Someone very important to me,” Ashe said, squeezing Lise’s cheeks gently. “Someone as important as you. But I both want to see her and am afraid to see her.”

“Why?” Lise was a bit jealous at first, but now she was curious. “Does she not want to see you?”

“I don’t know. Let’s assume she does want to see me. It’s just...” Ashe hesitated. “If I see her in reality, I might have to give up my true wish.”

“Why? Do the two wishes conflict?”

“Technically, they don’t conflict. But it’s like a stray dog being adopted; it loses the motivation to scavenge for food and can only enjoy the happiness of being a pet. Or like a balloon you bought today; once you hold its string, it can’t freely float into the sky.”

Lise was only half-understanding. “So, Dad, is your wish to see that person?”

“No,” Ashe replied. “First, I haven’t really made up my mind; half-hearted determination won’t do. Second, she has her own life and isn’t ready to meet me. Third, it’s unnecessary. Meeting her is something that will happen eventually; there’s no need to waste a wish on it.”

“Then what is your wish, Dad?”

“I was hoping to discuss that with you.”

“Huh?” Lise was puzzled and then pondered. “Dad, since you’re not very popular in the Kingdom of Gospel right now, why not wish for everyone to like you? Or keep it simple and wish for the power of a legendary sorcerer? Wait, the wish capacity required for a legendary sorcerer might be too high. Maybe wish for something that the Omniscient Weaver can easily grant but would significantly benefit you—something with a high cost-performance ratio.”

While Lise was thinking about what wish to make, Ashe shook his head.

“I’m not asking you to think about my wish; I’m asking you what your wish is.”

“Huh?” Lise looked up, bewildered, at Ashe.

“In the Underground Hall of the Four Pillars Cult, although Annan tried to scare you, you’re a smart kid. If you didn’t want to join the Funeral Firm, all you had to do was firmly refuse. Annan and Cleos wouldn’t have harmed you just because you’re a ‘foreigner.’ They’re not cruel enough to kill a little girl for that reason,” Ashe said. “Plus, you connivingly pushed me to plot against Annan that very night. I knew it had to be because of some wish that you ended up joining the Funeral Firm.”

Lise opened her mouth, but no words came out. She couldn't refute him.

The Trial of the Bronze Dragon allowed her to receive various coincidences that helped her get closer to her goal. This effect was still in play—it had landed her in the hands of the Four Pillars Cult, got her into the Funeral Firm, and eventually brought her to Nabistin. She was now just a step away from her goal.

“No matter how much you have to maneuver among adults or how hard you have to struggle alone, what is the wish that drives you to go through all this?” Ashe asked. “Can you tell me?”

“I...” Lise faltered. “Do you want to make my wish come true, Dad?”

“Depends. If what you want is a fairytale romance with a prince or princess, then I can only get you a nice pillow so you can dream better,” Ashe shrugged. “But if your wish is really important to you...”

As he spoke, Ashe's lips curved up slightly. “Someone once told me that, even though I have no dreams of my own, I can protect others' dreams. So let me borrow that line—though I may not have any notable wishes, I can help you fulfill yours.”

“But why?”

Lise grabbed Ashe's sleeve and shook her head vigorously. “I don't understand... I'm not your family! We have no relation! We're just strangers... I don't like it... I don't want you to be so nice to me... I don't want...”

As she spoke, her voice became more and more choked up, increasingly incoherent. The tears welling up in her eyes overflowed, streaming down her cheeks uncontrollably.

“Hey, didn't we agree that after the Weaving Festival we'd be family?” Ashe smiled. “But your doubt is understandable. Who in their right mind would give up an opportunity like this? If Igor heard, he'd probably accuse me of using rhetoric to deceive an innocent little girl.”

“That's not what I meant—”

“Do you remember the first time we met?” Ashe said. “It was in the Underground Hall. You were covered in dirt, being forced to sign a Pact by Annan. Then you looked around and clung to me, calling me something I could hardly handle at my age...”

“Dad.” Lise couldn't help but smile through her tears, and guiltily admitted, “Actually, back then, I just thought that among everyone around, you... would be the easiest to fool...”

“Igor told me that right after,” Ashe said. “But I still trusted my own judgment.”

“When you clung to my leg, I could see fear, uncertainty, and anxiety in your eyes, as if my leg was the only thread you could hold onto while falling.”

“It was just like me back then.”

Lise rubbed her eyes. “Like you?”

“Yeah, back then, I was just like you—dominated by fear, devoured by anxiety, unable to escape loneliness no matter where I went,” Ashe nodded. “Then I was saved by someone.”

“Is it the person you want to see?”

“Yeah, so I couldn’t just leave you alone.” Ashe turned to look at the river, the glow of the underground river reflected in his eyes. “I know others don’t really like you, but don’t worry about them. As long as I like you, the world will like you too.”

At that moment, Lise wished the streetlights around them were a bit brighter, that the glow of the underground river shone more vividly. That way, she could clearly see the flickering light in Ashe’s eyes and figure out how much of it was affection and how much was fondness.

“Wait,” Lise suddenly sniffled hard, considering a terrible possibility. “Are you agreeing to stay with Annan just to fulfill my wish?”

“No, no, you don’t have to think I’m that noble.” Ashe laughed and cried at the same time. “The main reason is that Annan was never going to let me leave. Otherwise, I would have definitely gone with you and Igor. Since Annan insists on keeping me here, I might as well enjoy it and think about how to take advantage of the situation.”

“If you didn’t have any other wish, I would have asked Annan to grant it.”

Wait, let Ashe make a wish?

Even though he hadn’t made up his mind yet, what if he had no other wishes and ended up wishing to see that very important person?

Lise hurriedly wiped her tear-streaked face with Ashe’s sleeve, put on her mirror gloves again, and glanced at the reflection.

Then she looked up and stared at Ashe seriously.

“Ashe, I am the Yisuo Princess.”

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

Chapter 455: Assassination Ranking

The underground river quietly flowed, while the city gradually came to life. Since there was no distinction between day and night, people from different time zones filled the city. Some might just be starting their day.

“So, you’re the princess who escaped from the Royal Palace, wanting to save your elder sister from the Tower, with the wish to abolish the ‘Ranking of the Unrelated’?”

Ashe summarized after listening to Lise’s confession while they sat on a bench by the river.

“Yes!” Lise nodded vigorously. “My sister doesn’t want to be the First Gospel either. If you take me to see her and let me touch her, then we leave the Tower together, she definitely won’t become the First Gospel. You wouldn’t have to assassinate her at all!”

“Hmm...” Ashe stared at Lise, “You really are a princess...”

“What’s wrong? Do I not look like one?”

“Nothing, it’s just that being called ‘Dad’ by a princess gives me a weird sense of accomplishment. Can you call me that once?”

The white-haired little girl opened her mouth, turned her head to the side, and huffed, “Stupid Ashe!”

Right now, it wasn’t Lise inside her, but Deya. There’s no way she’d call him that!

After discussing with her sisters, Deya decided to reveal most of her secrets but still hid the details about her multiple personalities, her body becoming younger, and her original identity as the First Gospel. Explaining why her body had shrunk was too complicated. The Bronze Dragon’s Trial, the identity of the First Gospel, the Armored Sanctification... Moreover, these details were unrelated to the assassination mission. Even if Deya confessed she was the original First Gospel, Ashe and his group would still aim to assassinate the princess.

Most importantly, Deya didn’t want to be known by Ashe in this form.

It’s like anonymous chatting. Ashe had always treated her as a little girl. If she suddenly revealed that she was nearly twenty, this sudden exposure filled her with fear and anxiety.

What if he hated her? What if he thought she was deliberately deceiving him? What if... That mix of feelings, wrapped in anxiety, rose and fell repeatedly.

The White Queen pointed out a very crucial detail: the scariest outcome wouldn't be Ashe getting angry, but Ashe acknowledging their existence. If he were to accept that Lise = Deya = White Queen = Black Butler = Scarlet Dead Apostles = Daughter, it would be catastrophic.

Relationships, once formed, are like mirrors: they can either turn yellow and dusty, shatter and crack, or remain unchanged.

To Ashe, his daughter is Lise, and only Lise.

They didn't want to be Ashe's daughters for the rest of their lives.

So, after the Weaving Festival ends, after the Bronze Dragon's Trial finishes, and when she returns to her original form, she will muster the courage to recognize him.

[Hello, I am Lise Deya.]

The thought of that moment filled Deya with hope, making every cell in her body want to dance with excitement.

Moreover, this secrecy would weaken their connection to Nina. She hadn't even mentioned that her urge to save Nina stemmed from an overwhelming sense of guilt, making the rescue seem less... necessary.

Or rather, making Ashe mistakenly believe that Nina wasn't that important to her, thus lowering the odds of him agreeing.

Because they hadn't convinced Lise; instead, they had been convinced by Lise.

Deya didn't want to give up the chance to save Nina, but she was even more unwilling for Ashe to lose his life in the attempt. This complex intertwining of emotions left her with no choice but to present this flawed plan, waiting for Ashe's critique.

Undoubtedly, this was a shameless act, unable to make a decision herself, and praying for someone else to do it for her. In this regard, Deya felt she wasn't much different from Lise, still a child relying on adults.

If Ashe found this approach too difficult and insisted on the original plan to assassinate Nina himself to ensure Annan's victory, Deya might feel disappointed or sad, but she would also be glad for anything that increased Ashe's chances of survival.

"Well," the white-haired little girl asked nervously, "Ashe, what do you think...?"

“No problem.”

“Or rather, this is great.” Ashe smiled. “To ask me to kill a stranger, a girl living in the Tower, I’d need several sessions with Igor to cope with the guilt. Lise, thank you. You’ve given me a second option.” *Ra*

Ashe’s quick agreement made her feel a bit unreal: “Don’t you think it will become more difficult?”

“Well, bringing you along does add some difficulty, but not much. Besides, you might actually help me during the action... However, you’re indeed too weak with no means of self-defense.”

Ashe scrutinized ‘Lise’: “Although it might be better than nothing... I can make you a sorcerer, at least you’ll have an additional spirit to assist you.”

‘Lise’ was stunned: “Make me a sorcerer?”

“Exactly,” Ashe said with a grin. “During my recent Adventure on the Time Continent, I acquired a Miracle that allows me to [transfer one of my spirits to any person]. As you’re not a sorcerer, you might not understand the value of this Miracle...”

Deya certainly understood.

Or rather, anyone who is a sorcerer or aspires to be one would know the immense power of this Miracle!

At first glance, “transferring” seems like merely relocating a spirit, akin to buying and selling spirits. But this can only be done from oneself to another person. If it were about seizing a spirit from someone else, it would be slightly different.

Among sorcerers, “transferring” holds no significant meaning, but between a sorcerer and an ordinary person, the value is immeasurable. If Ashe decided to auction this opportunity, he could instantly become wealthy, with countless people clamoring to pay him!

Ordinary people cannot possess any spirits, as dominating any spirit requires spellforce, which can only be gained by entering the Virtual Realm. For ordinary people, this is akin to the paradoxical requirement of ‘three years of work experience for an entry-level job.’

So no matter if you are a poor village girl or a rich young master, the first step to becoming a sorcerer involves diligently honing your craft day and night, summoning your first spirit from scratch to knock on the doors of the Virtual Realm.

The true value of the “transferring” Miracle lies in this-although only an originally summoned spirit can open the Gate of Truth, and the second-hand spirit gifted by Ashe

cannot allow a person to enter the Virtual Realm, the presence of a spirit means anyone could then improve their skills. It's like answering questions with a guide; as long as one is willing to work hard, they can undoubtedly step into the silver realm!

And this "transferring" Miracle was Ashe's reward for enduring the "no toilet paper" curse.

Back then, they bought both a blessing and a curse from the Chaotic Shopping Book. The blessing was "mortal danger sense," and the cost was that they had to constantly stare at each other. Meanwhile, Ashe purchased the "no toilet paper" curse separately. Although he did not gain any insights about the Fate Sect from that unfortunate period, he did get a consolation prize.

Initially, Ashe had mistaken "transferring" for junk. But after consulting the Gospel Book, he realized it had enormous potential.

However, opportunities should be seized when they arise. Originally, Ashe had planned to save this reward for the future to give to Igor's daughter Leia, choosing a super powerful spirit for her. But if Lise was going to join him in the Royal Palace, then naturally, Lise needed to be equipped first.

What did Deya think about this?

She definitely couldn't accept it!

She was already a sorcerer and unable to use spirits in reality because of the Bronze Dragon's Trial. Even if Ashe gifted her a spirit, it would be useless and might even expose more of her secrets!

Thus, 'Lise' quickly shook her head and swiftly changed the topic: "By the way, although you've agreed, Annan will surely insist on having Banjeet leave, right? As a reason for Banjeet's departure, I would also have to go... Do you have a way to convince Annan?"

"It's Uncle Banjeet and Sister Annan." Ashe gave 'Lise' a flick on the forehead: "It's fine to call me by my name, but show some respect to others."

He paused: "As for the problem, don't worry, it's already been solved. Annan won't be letting Banjeet leave."

"Solved?" 'Lise' was puzzled: "How was it solved?"

"The Gospel helped us settle it."

'Lise' blinked, then realized something and summoned her Gospel Book, flipping to the bookmarked page.

Due to the latest ranking list coming at an inopportune—or perhaps opportune—time, Little Lise had taken the chance to run off with Ashe. They hadn't yet seen the contents of the latest Future Ranking.

“Assassination Ranking”

“10th Place: Assassinate Rust Crow. Assassin: Cicero Scott... will be executed by Ashe Heath.”

“7th Place: Assassinate Ghost King. Assassin: Anrock... will be executed by Ashe Heath.”

“5th Place: Assassinate Leia Bukin. Assassin... will be executed by Ashe Heath.”

“3rd Place: Assassinate Ashe Heath. Assassin... will be executed by Ashe Heath.”

“2nd Place: Assassinate the Empress. Assassin: Banjeet Dolan.”

“Will be executed by Ashe Heath.”

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

Chapter 456: Is the Spellforce Reserve Sufficient?

Stars Kingdom, 10 PM, Galaxia National Sports Arena.

Within the arena resembling a town alleyway, a two-story building suddenly collapsed. As Sonya retreated, she abruptly noticed time slowing down. The debris suspended in mid-air moved lethargically past her ears, and the announcer's enthusiastic voice stretched into an electronic echo. The entire world seemed motionless. She immediately realized she had triggered her passive blessing—“Mortal Danger Sense!”

This dual blessing, combining prophecy and the Time Sect, warned her of imminent peril by slowing time!

“Mortal Danger Sense” only activates at the moment before a lethal attack, which means that before she can deploy a Defensive Miracle, the village girl would be struck down and the Death-Prevention miracle would be triggered, resulting in her defeat!

But even now, she had no idea where the danger was coming from!

If her guess was correct, the attack she hadn't seen but could kill her instantly was likely another contestant's Gunmanship miracle. At that moment, the lethal bullet had already left the barrel, cutting through the thick air with a supersonic path. Was it aiming for her head, heart, or throat?

The only thing Sonya could do at this moment seemed to be to alter her trajectory, trying to avoid critical injuries.

However...

"Sword Princess, I specifically selected the Mortal Danger Sense blessing for you."

"Huh? Is that some sort of riddle? Or are you referencing something? Can you give me a hint?"

"What are you talking about? I mean, this blessing will really help you in combat."

"It's helpful in the Witch's battles too..."

"No, no, no. Just as the Witch excels in creating personality doubles, you actually have a special ability called 'Dark Insight.'"

"That doesn't sound like a good thing... How come I don't know about it?"

"Because 'Dark Insight' allows you to preemptively eliminate threats before they fully materialize. But your life has been so fulfilling lately that you've only been bullying others, and no one has bullied you. Of course you wouldn't notice it."

"I don't bully others. I'm not that kind of girl!"

"It's good that you haven't had to use that ability, but one can't win all the time. Everyone gets beaten up once in a while, so I chose this blessing specifically for you. In a Mortal Danger Sense situation, if you find yourself at a loss, you can choose to trust your heart."

"Does it really work?"

"I hope it will."

Sonya closed her eyes, gripping the sword's hilt tightly with her right hand. Oddly, despite every cell in her body sounding the alarm, her thoughts wandered back to someone not present in the arena, and she then seemed to truly sense the incoming malice.

Miracle: Evil Light Slash!

Clang! Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She swung her wooden sword upwards, sending out a killing intent-infused Evil Light Slash. There was a sharp sound in the air, and the resulting shockwave demolished the wall behind her, showcasing its immense destructive power!

While Sonya's thoughts felt stretched, in reality, it all happened in an instant. The announcer, who had just declared Miss Therave to be in danger, now stood up in astonishment: "Therave has actually slashed through Hubert's miracle bullet!? What kind of miracle power is this?"

Many in the audience hadn't quite grasped what just happened until the announcer mentioned that Sonya had cut through the bullet. Adelle then led the Swordflower students in a cheer!

"Sword Princess! Sword Princess!"

"Stretch Paw Club is number one!"

"She didn't just slice a bullet; she sliced my heart!"

"Sword Princess, I want to be your dog!"

Amidst the chaotic clamoring, the Sanctuary sorcerers narrowed their eyes one by one.

"A Reflection Miracle similar to the Nunchaku Sect's One-Arm Domain?"

"No, Reflection Miracles require active casting. Hubert timed his strike perfectly. Therave had just been dodging the collapsing building, and her body and mind were in a hurried evasive state. She didn't have any chance to cast a miracle; she should've been out of the competition." R

"Pure talent?... Truth College has indeed encountered a formidable opponent this year."

No wonder even the Sanctuary sorcerers were astounded. After all, the contestant who had just taken a shot at the village girl was a fourth-year student from Truth College, a two-wings Gunmanship sorcerer!

The Gunmanship Sect has made a remarkable ascent within just a century, becoming the largest and most prominent battle sect. This success is primarily due to its near-dominance in causing massive destruction at the low-level sorcerer realm. A well-timed shot can almost instantly incapacitate any low-level sorcerer, while only Sanctuary sorcerers can reliably counteract assassination gunshots due to their Sanctuary's absolute protection.

Except for a few rare cases, most two-wings Defensive Miracles cannot withstand the penetrating force of a two-wings Gunmanship miracle. This means that if a gun sorcerer lands a hit, victory is almost certain. Consequently, low-level sorcerers have only two strategies against gun sorcerers: dodge or counterattack!

The majority of sorcerers can only choose to dodge since counterattacks are feasible only for certain sects that have developed corresponding Reflection Miracles. For instance, the Nunchaku Sect's One-Arm Domain allows sorcerers to instantly deflect all bullets entering their attack range. The pinnacle of counterattack mastery is to send the bullet back to the gun sorcerer from whence it came.

Throughout the entire match so far, Sonya had been using the complex terrain of the town to dodge the gunfire. This, however, made it difficult for her to approach the gunman. Facing a seemingly unavoidable deadly predicament, she suddenly executed a counterattack, which, to the knowledgeable audience, was an absolute spectacle.

Even more terrifying was that she didn't rely on a miracle to counterattack, but rather seemed to rely on a Flash of Insight... 'Rhythm Sword Saint' Nidhogg couldn't help but ask Trozan next to him, "Did you teach her?"

"Not exactly," Trozan replied casually, "Sparring with me often might naturally lead to such reflexes."

However, even Trozan was deeply puzzled internally.

Forget about two-wings golden level; even she couldn't slash a bullet in a natural state!

Dodging is one thing since Sanctuary sorcerers can perceive the bullet's trajectory. However, counterattacking operates on an entirely different level. Facing a miracle bullet, simply placing the sword in its path would result in the miracle bullet shattering the sword blade effortlessly. Even if the sword was reinforced, the shattered bullet fragments could easily harm the sorcerer. Thus, true counterattacking demands that the sorcerer must strike the bullet precisely and with full force, requiring reflexes in the supersonic realm—in short, achievable only through a miracle.

Therefore, to ordinary people and low-level sorcerers alike, it seemed like Sonya was performing a miracle.

However, Sanctuary sorcerers were all pondering why Sonya hadn't used a miracle. Could this be a true miracle?

The external astonishment and accolades didn't affect the contestants' mindsets. After successfully executing the counterattack, Sonya continued to move between the buildings, never exposing herself in the open.

Unlike her, a so-called “newbie,” the other contestants had at least three years of virtual realm exploration experience. Some had honed their skills multiple times in the Abyss. Their spirit compositions and miracle functionalities far exceeded hers. For instance, Sonya currently only mastered Offensive Miracles, whereas the other contestants had balanced their capabilities across offensive, defensive, mobility, healing, and reconnaissance miracles—they had to wander the virtual realm alone, unlike Sonya, who treated it like returning home.

But this also meant that in a prolonged battle, the odds would swing in favor of the other sorcerers. When only three contestants remained, Sonya found it nearly impossible to approach the gun sorcerer Hubert, who could pinpoint her location, indicating he possessed a Reconnaissance Miracle. Even though she kept running, she still narrowly avoided his ambush sniper shots.

Sonya’s counterattack was awe-inspiring but didn’t improve her predicament.

In fact, before the contestant list was announced, most people didn’t have high expectations for Sonya. Adelle even prepared a “Swordflower’s First Loss” PR plan in advance. If Sonya lost, Adelle would lead the Stretch Paw Club to flood the school forum with posts emphasizing Sonya’s status as a freshman, her brave participation, her glorious three-match winning streak, and the opportunity she still had in the Revival Match.

Even if she lost, Sonya would only garner encouragement and sympathy, possibly increasing her fan base!

Honestly, as a first-year student, Sonya’s achievements had already broken Swordflower’s College League records. In the future, she could proudly claim, “Swordflower College should be proud of me,” not to mention that she still had three more potential College League participations, marking her as someone with great potential.

But she didn’t want to lose!

Because her supportive classmates were watching her, and the pesky Little Trumpets who disliked her were watching too;

Because Galaxia was watching her, and the entire Stars realm was watching her.

Because her mother was watching her, and those Little Trumpets who used to look down on her and her mother were watching her;

Because she wanted the Observer to watch her;

Most importantly, because she didn’t want to lose!

Suffering has no inherent meaning; otherwise, every homeless person would be considered a great person. Failure does not breed success—it often leads to depression. Sonya didn't want to hear others try to comfort her; she only wanted praise, envy, and love!

No one can win forever? But I have been losing since the day I was born. I've endured enough suffering and contempt. Having finally spent all my luck meeting you, from now on, I want to win for the rest of my life—whether it's in competitions, battles, life, study, career, or love!

Suddenly, the distant sound of gunfire roared, and the host's voice pierced through the arena: "Contestant Nob is leveling all the buildings in a straight line, using a Movement Miracle to charge directly at contestant Hubert... Hubert reacts quickly, trying to create distance with a Movement Miracle but it's ineffective, Nob catches up, and a Defensive Miracle is useless! Nob's sword strike triggers 'Death-Prevention'—Hubert is out!"

The audience erupted in chaos, and the expressions on the faces of Truth College's supporters were grim—Hubert was considered one of their top three contestants this year, aiming for a top-three finish, but now he had lost in the Top Eight Tournament!

Though the Revival Match offers another chance, the rules mean that Hubert will have to battle another contestant from Truth College. Ultimately, Truth College will struggle to secure a top-three position!

With the gun sorcerer eliminated, Sonya no longer needed to hide. She walked to the open ground in the center of the arena. This area hadn't been open ground initially, but the buildings had been leveled in the ensuing battles.

A towering sorcerer, standing over two meters tall, emerged from the ruins. He held a greatsword as tall as himself, wearing a modest yet imposing black combat attire. This was Nob, a fourth-year student at Berserk College and the favorite to win this year's tournament.

Although both were swordcerers, Nob and Sonya practiced entirely different spellcasting styles. Nob followed the greatsword path, which favored brute strength over skillful precision. Greatswordcerers were a distinctive sect of Berserk College. Compared to spellcasting tournaments, greatswordcerers were highly advantageous in the Abyss or Virtual Realm. After all, greatswords were designed to slay large monsters rather than humanoid creatures.

However, this didn't mean greatswordcerers were ill-suited for spellcasting tournaments. On the contrary, their win rate in these competitions was among the highest.

The number of greatswordcerers was relatively low primarily because most people had to first train in the Physical Sect to build the strength needed to wield a greatsword. While learning spellcasting feels like a challenge to human nature, undergoing Physical

Sect training is downright grueling. With the comfort and ease of life under the Stars, normal people simply cannot endure the rigorous demands of the Physical Sect.

Thus, every greatswordcerer's physical conditioning far surpassed their peers, and this strength could be transformed into devastating destructive power—

Boom!

Suddenly, Nob performed a sweeping slash, sending a grey-white sword light slicing through the air towards Sonya! The sword light was thick, sharp, and wide-ranging, beyond the resistance of ordinary Miracles. The village girl had no choice but to unleash her strongest single-target Miracle—

Blood Moon, Shattered Lake!

The red sword light and the grey sword light clashed, grinding against each other and neutralizing one another. The impact generated a massive shockwave, sending debris flying and clearing the battleground for the two competitors!

“Sorry, the greatsword isn't adept at close combat, so I'll just use the ‘Wind of Ash Erosion’ to crush you,” Nob said, his steady voice laced with a hint of apology. “Please don't blame me for being ruthless.”

Indeed, greatswordcerers weren't suited for close combat. Their long reach due to their arm length plus the sword's length made mid-range their optimal attack distance. Once engaged up close by a close combat sorcerer, they were little more than punching bags.

Thus, in spellcasting tournaments, the way greatswordcerers fought was the most straightforward—using sword energy directly!

They would use thicker, longer, and harder sword energy to forcibly crush all enemies!

Though it might seem simplistic, it was incredibly effective. The energy of the ‘sword energy’ spirit originated from the sorcerer's own strength. This meant that the greater the sorcerer's strength, the stronger the sword energy, perfectly aligning with the qualifications for a greatswordcerer!

At the beginning of the Top Eight's Meteor Trial, a sorcerer's Defensive Miracle was brutally shattered by Nob's sword energy. His power was undeniable!

By rights, Sonya's best strategy was to enter Nob's close combat range, forcing him to defend where he was less effective. However, she nodded and said, “No problem, I want to finish quickly too... I have something to do tonight.”

“Good!” Nob roared and swung the Greatsword once more!

Blood and grey clashed fiercely on the battlefield, sending waves of energy rippling outward!

“Daring to compete in Miracles against Nob—Therave is being overly impulsive,” commented Arsenault, the host. He couldn’t help but offer his perspective, “According to the player profiles, Nob entered the Time Continent back in his third year, meaning he has spent a year exploring it. Despite multiple deaths along the way, his Golden Wings must be halfway to completion.”

“Nob’s ‘Wind of Ash Erosion’ is a mid-tier Radiant Golden Miracle, known for its high damage and large area of effect, but it doesn’t consume much spellforce. Since the damage of ‘Wind of Ash Erosion’ scales with the sorcerer’s strength, it’s essentially Nob’s go-to Miracle, allowing him to use it repeatedly.”

“This extravagant Miracle duel has become a contest of spellforce. The one with more spellforce reserves will emerge victorious. However, Therave has been in the Time Continent for less than a month, and although her new Miracle, ‘Blood Moon, Shattered Lake,’ isn’t yet listed in the Star Miracles Directory, it clearly consumes a significant amount of spellforce...”

“Does she really have enough spellforce reserves to sustain this battle?”

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

Chapter 457: Fitting into the Role

Virtual Realm, Time Continent.

As soon as Sonya opened her eyes, she eagerly turned her head and said, “Tonight, I—”

She immediately closed her mouth.

She saw the Observer sitting in the back seat, the Witch straddling him, and the two of them almost hugging each other.

“Huh? Why is it like this again tonight? Observer, the White Queen asked me to check if you’re doing this on purpose.”

"It's definitely a teleportation error. It might be because we all squeezed through the Gate of Truth together. If you don't believe me, ask the Sword Princess. Nothing like this ever happened when I was in the Sea of Knowledge with her!"

The Witch turned to look at Sonya. "Really, Sword Princess?"

Sonya said, "Witch, can you get off the Observer first?"

"Oh, oh!"

These days, when they enter the Virtual Realm, situations like this occasionally occur: the Observer's and the Witch's bodies overlap. Sometimes the Witch clings to him, sometimes she's lying on his lap, in various odd positions.

Actually, Sonya could understand these occurrences. After all, teleporting three sorcerers together could result in minor errors, and two people overlapping isn't really considered a failure.

But the problem was, why was she always the one watching from the side?

Shouldn't the errors be more equitable?

"Sword Princess, what were you going to say?" Ashe moved back to the front seat and asked, "I remember you have a Meteor Trial tonight, right?"

"Yeah," Sonya nodded, suddenly feeling a bit disinterested. "I won the Top Eight Tournament. The final contestant was supposed to face me in a trial of miracles, but they only had golden half-winged level spellforce."

Deya chuckled, "So, Sword Princess, weren't you just bullying them?"

Due to the absorption speed bonuses from the Sports car and the Alchemy Throne, Ashe and the others were close to attaining full-winged Golden Wings. Plus, they had the Golden Fish's Secret Toxin, which converted silver spellforce into golden spellforce, making their mana bar significantly longer than that of ordinary sorcerers.

"Witch, how did you suddenly obtain the Golden Fish's Secret Toxin?" Ashe flipped through the operator directory. "Did you get it today?"

"Yes!" Deya nodded enthusiastically. "A lot happened today, and I suddenly believe you really saw the Golden Fish. By the way, Sword Princess, can you teach me how to flirt with men?"

The Stretch Paw Club President blinked, meeting Deya's sincere gaze with curiosity. "Can't you ask your sisters?"

"They just think differently from me, but we have the same amount of knowledge. What I know, they know as well, and vice versa," Deya explained. "Little Black told me that, Sword Princess, you seem like you really know how to play with men's hearts. She said I should learn from you!"

Sonya glanced at Ashe, who was driving, and shook her head. "No, I've never been in a relationship."

Ashe looked up at the sky where the Reverse Golden Rain fell. "Tonight's golden rain is even more dazzling than before, just like a certain someone."

Sonya continued, "But I can teach you some communication tips that might make it easier for the other person to like you. What kind of person are they?"

(">▽<") Hmm~" Deya pondered. "Kind, handsome, responsible, funny, cheerful, gentle, considerate, adored by everyone..."

"I get it. Basically, someone you're head over heels for," Sonya rolled her eyes and pulled Deya aside to share some secrets.

Initially, she wanted to brag about her Meteor Trial in the Top Eight Tournament tonight. But then she thought, she hadn't won first place, and although the trial was the toughest she'd ever had, they couldn't see it, and words alone wouldn't convey how spectacularly she performed.

Moreover, the Observer wouldn't praise her anyway...

Noticing the Sword Princess's gaze, Ashe added, "A few days ago, I had a small cake dipped in cream and honey. It was so sweet it melted my heart and made me think of someone."

Eat, eat, eat! All he thinks about is food!

After sharing a few flirting tips, Sonya looked at Deya's slightly upturned hair and couldn't help but laugh. "Are you very happy today?"

"Yes!"

"Did something good happen?"

Deya blinked and shook her head. "Not exactly a good thing."

"So, what's making you happy is the person you like?" Sonya smiled and asked, "The person you get to kiss and hug every day?"

“Hehe ($\geq \nabla \leq$).” Deya blushed a little and hugged Sonya coquettishly. “The person I kiss and hug every day is you, Sword Princess.”

The Witch was indeed very happy. Due to the Assassination Ranking, Annan didn’t dare let Banjeet leave alone. After all, there were precedents—Roger and Helephes had both been targeted by the Yisuo Royal Family’s assassins to fulfill the futures seen in the Weaving Festival. If Banjeet dared to act solo, Annan feared he would end up in the obituaries.

Since Banjeet couldn’t leave, there was no reason for Lise to go either. In the end, apart from Ashe, no one really cared about her fate. Ashe suggested Lise stay, and although Igor seemed to have some concerns, Annan agreed immediately.

The rest was straightforward: on the day of the action, she and Ashe would go to the Tower to rescue Nina. When the Weaving Festival concluded, she’d undergo the Bronze Dragon’s Trial to return to her true form. Then... she’d be with Ashe...

Sonya watched Deya, whose blissful smile seemed to radiate from every hair strand, and couldn’t help but feel her own spirits lift.

Ashe, trying to make conversation, said, “I once saw a river filled with starlight, like the night sky flowing through the water. It was both brilliant and dreamy, as if everyone’s dreams were drifting there.”

Is the Observer trying to join our conversation? Sonya glanced at him curiously. However, remembering the scene she had walked in on earlier, she wasn’t keen on engaging him much.

A moment later, the sports car stopped at the entrance to a mine cave. Ashe said, “There’s a group of Blade Fish Dragons inside, and possibly an overlord creature, the Raging Slashing Dragon. We need to lure them out first...”

“Let me!” Deya eagerly jumped out of the sports car, impatient to share her joy with the Blade Fish Dragons, running into the rain curtain like an excited child.

As soon as the Witch left, Sonya’s expression turned sour, and she got out of the car slowly without so much as a glance at Ashe. Perplexed, Ashe asked, “Why the sudden mood change?”

“None of your business.”

“I did what you asked; you can’t take it out on me.”

“What request?” The Stretch Paw Club President shot him a look.

“Praising you!” Ashe said. “As soon as I heard you won the Top Eight Tournament, I praised you immediately.”

“No, you didn’t!” Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Yes, I did. It’s just that with the Witch around, I had to be more indirect.”

“Indirect?”

“Yes, exactly.” Ashe nodded repeatedly. “The dazzling Reverse Golden Rain, the cake dipped in cream and honey, the river filled with starlight...”

“I used the most beautiful things in the world to describe you. You have to catch on and understand the compliment.”

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

Chapter 458: The Witches Skills

Could there be a Kingdom where the Four Pillars Cult successfully subverts the order and dominates the region? In that place, the Cult Leader holds both religious and secular power; in that place, those who do not believe in the Four Pillars Cult are imprisoned; in that place, everyone is bombarded day and night by incessant spam messages from the Four Pillars Cult without any way to opt out...

Such a place indeed exists.

Ashe flipped through the in his hands. They had bumped into and killed a sorcerer projection while on the road. The Witch glanced through the handbook and discovered it contained information about the Four Pillars Cult that everyone was interested in, so she handed it to him to look over—mainly because the White Queen and her sisters did not allow Deya to read such intelligence about the Dark God.

Ashe, on the other hand, had no such reservations. If the Four Pillars Cult could indeed corrupt someone, then the Cult Leader’s originals would be completely rotten, devoid of any ‘human’ elements, not to mention the Eternal Presence curse still hung over him. Worrying about being corrupted by the Four Pillars Cult to Ashe was like Lala Fatty worrying about becoming food—there was no way for them to control such outcomes.

The handbook's owner was a Temple sorcerer affiliated with a religious sect, adept in fire spell and gunmanship, who had earned the title 'Blast Knight'. Let's call him Blast for now.

The handbook was a rather conventional record of combat experiences, detailing nine significant battles from birth to death. It might seem few in number, but that was because Blast omitted all battles he could win easily. Therefore, these nine battles were either evenly matched or heavily imbalanced, with nearly every battle fought to the brink of death with all his efforts. S

In these nine battles, Blast fought against the Four Pillars Cult in five of them. Through Blast's impressions of his enemies, Ashe and his companions could almost see the rapid rise of the Four Pillars Cult: at first, they were merely "insignificant heretics," later, "a bit troublesome thieves," then "competitors to the Temple," and finally, they became "formidable adversaries" and "inescapable nightmares"!

Initially, they fought 'extermination battles' to suppress the Four Pillars Cult, which later turned into retreat battles as they suffered successive defeats. In the end, it came down to desperate defensive battles to protect the Temple, showing how the Temple was almost shattered by the Four Pillars Cult's relentless attacks.

Moreover, it almost seemed like another timeline where Ashe overthrew Gerard and dominated Kaimon City, eventually reigning over the Blood Moon—how could the Four Pillars Cult in this Kingdom gain power so easily?

What stood out in the last battle was that Blast didn't actually believe the Temple would lose. Phrases like "As long as the Temple deploys the ultimate weapon, these heretics will definitely be annihilated" appeared multiple times. Given that Blast was a two-wings sorcerer, his confidence was far from arrogance; yet, the Temple's base was still obliterated.

The reason was "that woman actually controlled the weapon and turned it against us, she defected to the Four Pillars Cult."

This perplexed Ashe and his companions: the strongest combat force of a sorcerer organization was not a sorcerer themselves, but an externally controlled object?

It wasn't that they were filled with the 'arrogance of sorcerers'. On the contrary, they all knew it was normal for sorcerers to be weaker than artificial constructs. The destructive power of most two-wings sorcerers might not even surpass that of a gun, their reconnaissance abilities were generally inferior to drones, and their mobility was even less than that—after all, even Sanctuary sorcerers prefer to ride in vehicles.

But guns rust, drones can be shot down, and hovercars can turn into moving coffins in an instant. The true power of a sorcerer lies in their miracles that transcend ordinary rules: teleportation, gun explosions, mental shock, time manipulation... Artificial

constructs pale in comparison to these miracles; only a sorcerer can counter another sorcerer.

The Temple Blast belonged to must have had Sanctuary sorcerers, possibly even legendary sorcerers, yet their strongest combat power was still an external object. Did that Kingdom manage to create an object with near Angel-level power?

Ashe pondered further, considering that the Four Pillars Cult there had somehow enlisted Angel-level power?

Although Ashe had no fondness for the Four Pillars Cult, he felt some bitterness in realizing his starting point was a survival game, whereas others began with a strategy game.

Luckily, the Eternal Presence curse provided some comfort, otherwise, Ashe might've considered himself the most unfortunate regional manager of the Four Pillars Cult.

"However," Ashe remarked while examining the details of the final battle, "the traitorous 'that woman'... Why does this description seem so familiar?"

"It does seem a bit familiar." Sonya and Deya nodded in agreement.

But news from other Kingdoms was ultimately just irrelevant entertainment. After finishing the , Ashe gained a new skill called "Cavalry Mastery". Although it was called cavalry, Blast was actually riding a motorcycle, making him a high-speed moving spellcasting shooter, which sounded both bloody and exciting.

Still, it was more practical than something like "Fishing Mastery"—recently, all modes of transportation in Nabistin were motorcycles. With this "Cavalry Mastery," Ashe could even race with Annan.

With that in mind, Ashe couldn't help but glance at Deya, "Witch, how many skills have you mastered?"

Ever since arriving at the Time Continent, all collected s were given to the Witch first. Plus, with three to four sorcerer projections crashing into them each night, Ashe suddenly realized that the Witch's reading volume might be off the charts.

"Huh?" Deya was startled and thought for a moment: "Most of the skills are actually pretty useless, but White Queen and the others think slightly useful ones include things like 'Financial Analysis', 'Political Tactics', 'Human Structure Analysis', 'Social Ecology Research', 'Expression Management', 'Hydraulic Engineering Research', 'Cryptography', and 'Love

Deya casually listed over a dozen skill names before continuing, "...and a few dozen other skills. They're not really useful because I've never systematically studied any of this; I can only rely on reading s to acquire various knowledge..."

However, the Cult Leader and the village girl were already dumbfounded at this point. They never expected that the most knowledgeable person here would be the seemingly dim-witted Witch.

Illiterate—it's me!

"Even if you became an emperor, you'd be more than capable," Sonya said, somewhat envious. "Having so many practical skills must be very helpful in your daily life, right?"

"Huh?" Deya blinked, recalling how Lise's hair needed Aunt Bukin to style, how she needed Ashe to sleep beside her, and how after a bit of study, she could indulge in food and play, "Maybe... I guess?"

Though envious, the village girl wasn't resentful, as most of the high-value spirits collected by the team were handled by her, and those could be exchanged for tangible silver.

Thanks to such financial stability, she could even send money back home, giving her the privilege to be selective about opportunities without having to undersell herself prematurely for money.

For example, during the Meteor Trial, merchants offered her endorsement deals that varied by as much as twenty times in value, proving her commercial worth still had room for appreciation, even if she couldn't match the top-tier performers.

If she could clinch the top spot in the College League, she could seamlessly transition into film and music, quickly becoming a star on par with Delarose. Even if she wasn't of nobility, she'd become part of high society!

Once this was achieved, she'd have the considerable financial backing to support even a legendary sorcerer!

This was Sonya's small goal: to earn enough to support a legendary sorcerer!

After all, even if Observer was highly skilled before his rebirth, he was probably just a legendary sorcerer, right?

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

Chapter 459: Borrowing the Gospel

After a brief rest, Ashe continued driving towards the unknown area to the left of the white bull. Since the white bull generally moved counterclockwise, its left side led to the interior of Time Continent, the area most likely to house the main city.

Since the Oasis war, Ashe and his team had passed through the Blood Tomb, Spider Tower Area, and Star Shrine Area. There wasn't much to say about the Spider Tower Area; although the Empress's commander was probably still out fighting, Ashe's team prioritized safety, collecting spellforce at high speed, and logging off as soon as time was up, never working overtime.

They had maps for the Blood Tomb and Star Shrine Area. Since it was the first round of the war and various factions needed time to consolidate their resources, they hurried to scavenge at the mapped resource points. Despite taking quick action and excelling at looting, they found that two out of every five resource points were already empty.

As time went on, the likelihood of finding resources at these points would further decrease.

That night, they left the Star Shrine Area and entered a territory unknown to them without any maps, making it impossible to scavenge even scraps. Thus, a plan they had formulated days earlier came back into play—to locate the main city of another region, guide the Spider Tower forces there to spark a conflict, and then profit by collecting soul summoning spirits, commander handbooks, and maps!

If they could gather maps of the entire Time Continent, they might uncover the truth about the Rainbow Tail and unlock the grand prize—a shortcut to the third layer of the Virtual Realm!

But the question was, where was the main city in the other regions?

The main cities of the Star Shrine and Blood Tomb regions were near the interior of Time Continent, so Ashe drove towards the interior area hoping to get lucky. He didn't necessarily need to find the main city outright because, based on past experience, there would definitely be patrols by the heroic soul legion around the main city. Finding these patrols would naturally lead them to the main city.

In theory, given the exploration efficiency of a sports car, running into the heroic soul legion several times in one night would be normal. However, Ashe and his team had been wandering the interior area for almost two hours without finding a single heroic soul legion patrol. When they didn't want to encounter them, the patrols followed them like stalkers; now that they were looking for them, they were nowhere to be found.

Since “no toilet paper” was no longer an excuse, Ashe couldn’t shift the blame and had to admit this time that it was his decision-making error—

“Observer, you’re exposed.”

“Huh?” Ashe instinctively glanced down at his pants.

“I mean, your soul summoning spirit is exposed,” Sonya said, pointing to the spirit on Ashe’s shoulder, which was emitting a purple glow, smudging the space around it like watercolor.

Ashe noticed the soul summoning spirit and then looked down at the virtual realm map—there really were no heroic soul legion patrols or main city information nearby!

But the spirit’s reaction clearly indicated a stress response from Secret Incarnation entering a main city area, like a cat feeling territorial aggression.

Not around, not on the ground, only one possibility remained.

The three of them looked up at the sky, but the Rain Curtain of Reverse Golden Rain obscured everything, its dazzling golden light the perfect camouflage. After a moment of thought, Ashe said, “Get ready.”

The sword Princess and Witch immediately went into combat mode. The sports car extended its Evil Blade and sprayed Toxic Mist, drawing circle after circle on the ground like a donut. The soul summoning spirit painted the space as well, tearing purple holes through the golden rain curtain.

“You actually found the Garden’s main city. I thought you’d hit Blood Tomb or Star Shrine first~”

Even though they had anticipated this outcome and it was exactly what they hoped for, hearing the Empress’s lazy voice still made Ashe and the others tense up. When they turned around, they saw Danzel and the Eight-eyed Weaver Spider emerging from the spiderweb. She was still in her form as The Girl of Secret Gaze, the spiderweb Eyepatch covering her eyes, and white bandages barely concealing her graceful curves, lounging lazily atop the Eight-eyed Weaver Spider.

“But the Garden is best at defense,” Danzel said, looking up at the sky. “Fighting here is the most troublesome... Hey, don’t leave. Since you’re here in another main city, you must want to cooperate, right?”

“That’s right,” Ashe replied, eyes locked on the virtual realm map, his focus unwavering. If any heroic soul legion got close, he would bolt immediately. “But I don’t trust you.”

"In this world, profit is more reliable than trust," Danzel said with a smile. "My paramour, what is it you want? As sorcerers, you probably desire things like commander handbooks, virtual realm maps, and soul summoning spirits obtained from commanders. These are of no use to us; we can give them to you."

As she spoke, more and more heroic soul legion members emerged from the spiderweb, and thunderous footsteps echoed from behind the Rain Curtain. Ashe and his companions had to move farther away. "I don't trust you," Ashe said. R

"So, what do you suggest?" Danzel propped her chin with her left hand, still smiling. "I know you wouldn't agree to sign a Pact, and even if we collect the spoils first and then give them to you, it's negotiable. After all, we can't exactly seize your Secret Incarnation, and you have superior mobility. Cooperation is my only option—"

"Then tear up the Pact," Ashe suddenly said.

"Hm? What Pact?" Danzel tilted her head. "You mean the one where you promised undying passion in the Cabin?"

"The forced Pact you made with us," Ashe said calmly. "Since you claim you're not planning to take the Secret Incarnation, cancel the Pact. Otherwise, it shows you're still scheming against us."

After a moment of silence, Danzel shook her head. "I don't have the power to tear up the Pact—"

"Goodbye!"

Ashe left without hesitation. Though the Empress commander's offer was tempting, he knew it was full of traps!

If they followed the Empress commander's lead, trying to craft a seemingly 'safe' agreement through clever negotiation, they would definitely fall into her hands a third time. The Empress had already proven that she was highly skilled in dealing with smart, especially overly clever and greedy people!

More importantly, the Empress had an uncanny insight into human nature. Last time, she nearly caused their team to split, and Witch to become alienated. Ashe couldn't risk further dialogue with her. If they kept talking, she might provoke the sword Princess into becoming more jealous, suspicious, and clingy.

Therefore, Ashe would rather risk scavenging at the battlefield's edge than collude with the Empress. This woman was like a Toxic Widow; staying away from her web was the smart move.

Watching the sports car streak away with a purple trail and disappear into the Rain Curtain, Danzel chuckled. “He’s actually gotten a bit smarter...”

“They weren’t bait you released?” a voice nearby asked. “Is it possible for a sorcerer to seize a conceptual Incarnation from the Toxic Widow?”

“Laugh if you want. I won’t kill an ally,” Danzel said, turning to look behind her. “At least, not yet.”

More heroic soul legion members emerged from the spiderweb, but this group was entirely different from the Spider Tower legion. Their armor was predominantly black and green, thick and menacing, and most troops bore shackles on their necks or limbs, resembling floating nightmares. While the Spider Tower was mysterious and dangerous, this legion was wild and violent, like prison escapees who wanted to smash everything apart.

The person speaking to Danzel was entirely encased in black and green armor. He wielded a Greatsword in one hand and a short knife in the other, and behind his faceplate, only a pair of dark green eyes were visible.

But Danzel knew him well; a thousand years of war had made it impossible not to. He was The Roamer, the chief commander of the Oasis!

Both having participated in the inaugural Great Appointment of the Six Nations, Danzel and The Roamer were undoubtedly some of the oldest heroic souls. Over the millennia, numerous battles had erupted between their forces due to shifting territorial boundaries. There was even a time when Danzel had killed The Roamer, only for him to be resurrected again.

“The soul fragment I retrieved doesn’t support a laughing function.”

“Are you ready then?” Danzel asked coolly. “According to the Pact, the Oasis is responsible for the second wave of the Vanguard attack. But before that, we need to take down the Garden. The spiderweb isn’t suited for this kind of task; you can deploy the Silent Spiral, right?”

“No problem,” The Roamer replied. “But before that, we need to discuss a cooperation—in reality.”

“Reality?” Danzel raised an eyebrow. “What does reality have to do with us?”

“Our subordinate Kingdom has encountered some issues recently, and we hope to borrow some people from your Kingdom.”

“What does trouble in your subordinate Kingdom have to do with you? And if there’s a problem within the Kingdom, why not have the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo—”

Danzel paused, suddenly realizing something. “No way...?”

“Forget descending into reality, the Sovereign’s situation is so dire that he can’t even contact the Weaver directly, which is why he entrusted me to reach out to you,” The Roamer stated openly, knowing there was no point in hiding the weakness of his Divine Sovereign given the desperation to borrow help from other Kingdoms. “As payment for the support, the Oasis is willing to fully assist the Spider Tower in achieving victory in the Appointment War.”

“Aren’t you afraid that the Weaver will take this opportunity to infiltrate your Kingdom?” Danzel couldn’t help but ask.

“The virtual realm passage has opened numerous times over the millennia; mutual infiltration has happened countless times before. One more instance won’t make a difference. Moreover, compared to the Weaver’s infiltration, the internal malady within our Kingdom is far more intolerable.”

“What exactly has happened in your Kingdom?”

“The Four Pillars.” The Roamer was succinct.

Danzel’s expression grew more serious. “Is the Sovereign’s condition also related to the Four Pillars?”

The Roamer shook his head, leaving it unclear whether he was denying it or simply unsure.

“So, what kind of support do you need?” Danzel asked. “A few legendary sorcerers? Or perhaps a legion?”

“The Sovereign’s intention is to resolve all troubles in one go since we’re already borrowing people,” The Roamer explained. “We want to borrow the most precious treasure of your Kingdom.”

“The Gospel.”

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

Chapter 460: Secrecy Power

In the hotel, Ashe opened his eyes, feeling a chill down his back and an icy sensation on his arm—the dampness of the underground floor was indeed heavy.

Wait, how did I end up on the floor?

Ashe sat up and saw Lise, dressed in a seal-print robe, sprawled out in a starfish shape, occupying the entire single bed. Clearly, he had been kicked off.

Looking at her little feet tugging at the blanket, Ashe could almost picture how he had been slowly pushed out of bed by this little seal.

He gently covered her with the blanket, sat down on a nearby chair, and without turning on the light, summoned the “Secret Toxin Diary” and began documenting the night’s events and discoveries from the back—while the front contained adventures recorded chronologically, the back was for immediately noteworthy life events. The sorcerer who had found his diary copy seemed to enjoy reading it, and its readership was steadily growing.

Although it was a diary meant for himself alone, Ashe wrote in great detail. His writing skills might be lacking, but his attitude was certainly serious.

“...Spiral flames pierced the sky like a spear, scattering the entire area’s Reverse Golden Rain. Under the glow of the flames, the ground quickly sprouted giant vines and trees. Even though we were already far away, our Sports car was flipped over, and we were all thrown out by the inertia. I used my sword body barrier to protect the Witch and could only hold onto the Sword Princess while rolling...”

“This is likely the Divine Intervention controlled by the Oasis, different from the spatial transfer of the spiderweb. Its regular effect seems to target the main city. And then, something happened that I may never, or at least rarely, see again in my life—the entire main city was plummeting towards the ground, and we were right beneath it. It’s worth mentioning that the Sword Princess, in fear, curled up and sang softly in my ear. I can tease her about this in the future.”

“Of course, the main city didn’t crash directly, or they would have been pulverized as well. The main city eventually hovered tens of meters above ground, and when we looked up, we could see this astonishing inverted city, filled with shining orange sunflowers; the Garden was aptly named. The entire main city blended so well with the hue of the Reverse Golden Rain that it was completely invisible from the ground...”

“Unlike other main cities, perhaps as a price for existing in the sky, the Garden main city doesn’t possess defensive capabilities. A joint salvo from the Spider Tower and Oasis took out a tenth of the flowers in one strike. The flowers are clearly a crucial resource for the Garden main city, and the battlefield initiative thus shifted to the invaders. The Garden legion had to descend to the ground to battle Spider Tower and Oasis... This makes sense, actually. If the Garden could both float and defend itself, other legions would have to fly up to invade it, giving Garden far too great an advantage, almost making it unbeatable.”

“Although this world doesn’t have a balance mechanism, the Divine Sovereign isn’t above flipping the table. If you’re not fair, he will ensure fairness.”

“Thanks to the chaos, we managed to snatch three commander handbooks, four soul summoning spirits, and maps of both the Garden and the Spider Tower, allowing us to retreat smoothly before the Refracting Wall shattered. The soul summoning spirits were three from Garden and one from Spider Tower. My soul summoning spirit activated both orange and purple, and my special troop type, Tri-tone Anchor, advanced to Five-tone Anchor... It’s a pity we didn’t get the Oasis map. I’m still two maps short of lighting up the entire Time Continent.”

“We each get one commander handbook. Actually, I wanted to give two to the Sword Princess and one to the Witch, since I’m pretty laid-back about Sect Realm improvements. But I worry the Witch might feel it’s unfair. Maybe she wouldn’t care, but I do. It’s like raising two daughters; you have to constantly ensure the scales are balanced... Though at least they won’t kick me out of the car.”

“Thinking back, I feel like I said some very embarrassing things to the Sword Princess tonight. But I won’t write that down; you probably wouldn’t be interested anyway.”

Closing the Secret Toxin Diary, Ashe fell into deep thought.

There was one thing he hadn’t written in the diary: on the battlefield, they had taken down a Spider Tower commander. To pull this off, both the Sword Princess and the Witch had geared up with the Sixth-level Troop Type “Starburst Warrior.” Under the effect of the ‘Mysterious Power’ from the Secret Incarnation, they were perceived as neutral units by Spider Tower and managed to sneak up on and ambush the commander.

Otherwise, given the overwhelming assault on Garden by both Spider Tower and Oasis, there was no way a Spider Tower commander could have died unless the Garden used a Divine Intervention.

Ashe and his team took such a risky venture to unlock the second power of the Secret Incarnation. There was no better opportunity for an assassination than on a battlefield. Fortunately, Ashe temporarily upgraded the Refracting Wall to Level 11; otherwise, they wouldn’t have made it out alive.

But the power they unlocked after all that effort was somewhat... delicate:

“Secrecy Power: You keep your lips sealed; no one can know the secrets deepest in your heart, but secrets also guard your soul. You can’t reveal your most valued secrets, and the more you want to confide, the stronger the confidentiality effect becomes.”

“Secrecy (Confide Degree 13%): Your mental resistance increases by 13%, and your soul’s adaptability to deities of similar sects increases by 13%.”

Ashe immediately recalled the intelligence they had received from the Mermaid. Harvey's future ability to control deities hinged on obtaining a related Conceptual Incarnation on the Time Continent, allowing him to house a deity.

At that time, Ashe wondered if the Secret Incarnation would have a similar effect. He certainly didn't expect it to be unlocked this way.

The Secrecy Power was indeed formidable. Increasing adaptability to wield a deity was a celestial ladder, the path of an Angel. However, it was meaningless to Ashe and his team—as two-wings golden sorcerers, even if they were three-wings Sanctuary, they were still far from becoming deities!

It's like a low-level player in an MMORPG being able to wield god-tier gear—the problem is, where's the god-tier gear!?

Thinking about this, Ashe couldn't help but feel that the Divine Sovereigns were truly insidious. The ones who most needed a Conceptual Incarnation were undoubtedly the four-wings legendary sorcerers. Yet Conceptual Incarnations seemed to only appear on the Time Continent, in a time where even legendary sorcerers were just weaklings who had to flee at the sight of a heroic soul legion. It was truly a case of “meeting the best when I have nothing,” and missing out meant no second chances.

What bothered Ashe more was—what secret did the Secrecy Power seal for him?

Time travel? The ? The perverse fetish that even Bewitchers found twisted? Or perhaps his true feelings...

The Sword Princess and the Witch were keen on helping him figure it out, but Ashe quickly saw through their intentions; they just wanted to dig up his embarrassing history. Naturally, he made a swift exit.

But with a confide degree of only 13%, it meant he had no intention of saying it out loud anyway. Thinking about it more was pointless. The Secrecy Power's design was truly twisted: the more you value or want to confide it, the less it allows you to speak, and the stronger the attribute boosts it provides. It seems only an assassin or someone with a deep crush could truly utilize this power to its fullest.

Realizing this, Ashe summoned the Gospel Book and flipped to “Aurora's Sorcerer Handbook” – “Supply Purchase.”

After uploading the inexpensive spirits the Sword Princess didn't need from tonight, Ashe's points finally surpassed the 328 mark!

This meant he could now purchase something worth 328 points and trigger the double bonus on the first purchase—a “box of Source Crystals”!

However, Ashe wasn't really interested in card draws. After all, the "Dance of Swords and Dragons Limited Search" had long since ended, and he had no chance to pull the Limited Outfit "Bridal Sword Princess."

In truth, he didn't particularly want it; he mainly wanted to buy clothes to reward the Sword Princess.

Even though Ashe could strengthen his "intentions" using the Gospel Book, enabling him to draw needed items even from the standard pool, the problem was he didn't have a specific item he currently wanted—the Bridal Sword Princess was unattainable anyway.

Infiltrating the Royal Palace to assassinate the princess was certainly dangerous, but there were no items in the standard pool that could quickly boost his combat strength. As for new operators... Honestly, these days were not suitable for recruiting new operators. At least not until the Weaving Festival ended, when he would take Lise as Igor's dowry maid to live as a parasite at Belldate's house. Only then would he have the energy to deal with more complex relationships.

It would be best if a new limited pool came out. Only then would Ashe feel a compelling urge to make an in-game purchase. Even without the Bridal Sword Princess, swimsuits, qipaos, clergy outfits, Bewitchers, maids—everything would be on the table!

So Ashe continued to save these points, waiting for the urge to draw cards to come back.

Without the impulse to draw cards, how could he possibly get anything good!?

At that moment, Lise stirred on the bed, clawing at the air without grabbing anything before she sat up, rubbing her eyes, and sleepily scanned the room until she saw Ashe. Yawning, she lay back down and patted the bed a few times, sounding a soft, nasal "hmm hm" to prompt him.

"What?"

"Come to bed..."

"I'm already awake."

"Then I won't sleep either," Lise said as she came over and sat on the chair next to him.

"Little kids who don't get enough sleep won't grow up properly!"

"I'm not scared!"

“Speaking of which, something just crossed my mind,” Ashe said. “After the Weaving Festival ends, can you go back to being a princess?”

“Huh?”

“Regardless of whether our mission succeeds or fails, you won’t have a reason to stay out here. Plus, you’re the last bloodline of the Yisuo Royal Family. They wouldn’t let you roam around as a commoner, right? Wouldn’t you go back to the Royal Palace and continue being a princess?”

In the darkness, Lise widened her eyes and stared at Ashe. “Dad, are you trying to get rid of me?”

“No, not at all—”

“Then why are you asking this! You said we would live together after the Weaving Festival!”

“Here’s the problem,” Ashe explained. “Where would we live?”

“Eh?” Lise was stumped; to her, this question was a bit complex.

“After leaving the Funeral, I don’t have any connections, real estate, or even a job. It feels like our quality of life is going to take a nosedive. And ‘Princess of Yisuo’ sounds way more impressive than ‘Ashe’s daughter’—”

“Who says so! The latter is way more super-duper awesome!”

“Well, it’s a bit troublesome then,” Ashe scratched his head. “If it were just me, I wouldn’t mind sleeping under a bridge in a cardboard box, but with you, I’d have to put in some effort. For a happy life, I have roughly three proposals—” [search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“First, I sell my charm and beg Annan to take care of us.”

Lise swung her legs and looked down, “I don’t want a stepmom right now...”

“Second, we beg Igor to sell his charm and let Belldate take care of us.”

“That sounds good,” Lise said, “but Aunt Bukin never seems to be willing.”

“Then we can only go with the third plan,” Ashe said. “Let the Substitute go out to work and earn money.”

“But the Substitute can’t earn much, right?” Lise thought for a moment, “But whatever, as long as I’m with you, Dad, Lise doesn’t mind being a little poor—”

“No way! No matter how tough things get, they shouldn’t be tough on the kids. For your happiness, I’ll do my best!” Ashe declared firmly.

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