

Sorcerer's Handbook

- Chapter 481: The Last Color of the Rainbow Tail

Virtual Realm, Time Continent.

"From the left side, charge through the left flank. Let me try one more time!"

"No, we already missed our chance. The car is going to explode!"

On the chaotic battlefield, a rundown sports car hastily escaped from an area smeared with purple, blue, and green. A colossal Shadow Evil Drake glanced at the fleeing tiny insect before shifting its gaze back to the two commanders in the distance.

"The Roamer, Toxic Widow." The Shadow Evil Drake's eyes gleamed with menace, "Withdraw now, and I'll let bygones be bygones. Otherwise, when the Dark Hollow ascends the Enshrouded Forest, you will all be shattered like the setting sun, like blood diluting in water, dissipated in an instant, your true names obliterated!"

"We are here to force you to activate the Enshrouded Forest," Danzel sneered arrogantly, "The Silent Spiral has already ignited, and the Sky Garden has fallen. Do you think the Dark Hollow can stay uninvolved? Come now, the fragmented Spider Tower that incited the Appointment War won't have a perfect ending!"

"The Oasis is an ally of the Spider Tower," The Roamer said calmly.

"Stubborn fools!"

The Shadow Evil Drake let out a piercing roar before falling abruptly silent. A sinister voice, like a feather brushing against the ears of all intelligent creatures, filled the air: "Pass through the forest, reflect the Enshrouded."

Roar!

Countless sharp, ear-piercing roars shook the entire Time Continent. Even Ashe and his group, who had escaped the battlefield, were affected, their eardrums instantly bursting. The intense noise sent them into momentary dizziness, only recovering as their soul energy automatically repaired their bodies.

Ashe gasped heavily, "Thank goodness we escaped just in time."

Sonya glanced back, seeing such dense monstrosities on the battlefield that even the golden Rain Curtain couldn't fully conceal them. A sense of dread filled her heart.

Next to her, Deya was so frightened that her hair turned slightly dirty, and she clung to Sonya for support.

To ascend to the Sanctuary and find the Rainbow Tail, they naturally needed to actively seek out the main cities of other factions, provoking the Spider Tower and Oasis to invade, enabling them to hunt down the commanders amid the chaos.

So far, they had encountered five Virtual Realm factions: the Star Shrine, Blood Tomb, Spider Tower, Oasis, and Garden. Today happened to be the exclusive turn of the final Virtual Realm faction.

Unlike the Garden, this faction's main city wasn't hard to find. Ashe and his team located it within an hour.

The Spider Tower and Oasis arrived precisely on schedule, swiftly transforming the main city from a picture of tranquility into a cesspool of chaos. However, when Ashe and his team attempted to hunt down commanders and seize opportunities, they realized this time was particularly challenging.

The Dark Hollow's main city was unlike any other. It didn't have a "city" at all. From the outside, it appeared to be a bottomless pit in the ground, resembling an Abyss. Apart from the main pit, the entire main city area was filled with smaller pits from which the heroic soul legion could emerge at any time. It was like a network of tunnels, making it a poor combat environment for their sports car.

More importantly, Dark Hollow's troops were not humanoid.

While the troop types of the other five factions varied, they were all fundamentally humanoid. Even virtual realm creatures, when incorporated into these factions' forces, would be transformed into humanoid troop types. This wasn't because humanoid forms had any particular advantage; it was likely because the Divine Sovereigns who created these troops were humanoid themselves and preferred such forms.

But Dark Hollow's troops were different. Once armed, the virtual realm creatures were enhanced into more savage and massive beast-like forms. Although this seemed to result in the loss of armor and troop skills, their individual combat prowess far exceeded that of humanoid troops, allowing them to single-handedly repel the assaults from two factions' forces.

Dark Hollow's strength was undoubtedly troublesome for the Spider Tower and Oasis, but their troubles didn't concern Ashe. The issue was that Dark Hollow's commanders also armed themselves as massive beasts!

The Shadow Evil Drake that dominated the battlefield earlier was the main commander of Dark Hollow's city!

As for the other commanders, they were equally formidable, turning into rampaging Thunder Drakes or towering Storm Drakes!

Even though Ashe and his team were protected by secrecy power, allowing them to sneak up on commanders for an ambush, killing humanoid commanders was entirely different from instantly killing a massive beast.

Moreover, the battlefield was rife with area-of-effect attacks. The chaos far exceeded their previous encounters. If Ashe hadn't invested all his resources in upgrading the Refracting Wall these past days, they would have been obliterated by unknown area-of-effect attacks while traversing the battlefield.

After several near-death attempts that bore no fruit, it was finally the Sword Princess who turned the tide. During a stealth attack, her Innate Talent "Phantom of the Resentful Dragon" suddenly activated, manifesting a dragon-like creature burning with vengeful blood flames behind her. This tenfold enhanced her Swordsmanship Miracle's power, adding burning and piercing effects, allowing her to slay the Dark Hollow commander with a single strike. They seized the commander's handbook, spirit for soul summoning, and a map.

Initially, they also needed to kill the Oasis commander to obtain an Oasis map, completing their collection. However, both the Spider Tower and Oasis were aware of their commander-hunting strategy. Every commander was now surrounded by dozens of soldiers, leaving no openings for the Sword Princess and the Witch to exploit. Even attempting a forced ambush ended in swift repulsion.

Returning to the battlefield was out of the question. Since Dark Hollow had used Divine Intervention, the Spider Tower and Oasis would naturally retaliate in kind. The battleground had transformed into a deadly zone of Divine Interventions clashing.

The Refracting Wall's durability had been exhausted. Even if the sports car was in mint condition, it would likely be blown to pieces within a minute in that hellish battlefield.

Ashe drove them to a safer location, stopping by the Golden Flow River. This way, even if the heroic soul legion pursued them, they could cross the river to escape.

"It's been a tough night for you all," Ashe sighed in relief, smiling. "Watching you cross the battlefield had my heart racing."

"But we're still missing a part of the map," Sonya slammed the seat in frustration. "Just one piece short..."

“Let’s divide the spoils first,” Ashe suggested, taking out a commander’s handbook.
“Who wants it?”

“Sword Princess should have it!” Deya immediately said. “She worked the hardest and if it weren’t for her single strike killing the commander, we wouldn’t have gained anything.”

Ashe handed the handbook to Sonya, whose cheeks reddened slightly. “It was so dangerous, I had to give it my all.”

Deya muttered, “If you didn’t push so hard, maybe it wouldn’t have been so dangerous...”

While the Sword Princess and the Witch playfully bickered, Ashe summoned another part of their loot—a soul summoning spirit with six faces, each gleaming in different colors.

While Ashe hadn’t unlocked all the Advanced troop types, he could arm himself with the troop types from any faction: the blue troops from the Star Shrine, the red troops from the Blood Tomb, the purple troops from the Spider Tower, the orange troops from the Garden, the green troops from the Oasis, and the cyan troops from Dark Hollow...

He had even upgraded special mixed-colored troops to the ‘Six-tone Anchor.’

“Six-tone Anchor: 6 layers of armor, 100% anchoring, 6 soul power consumption per unit.”

The 100% anchoring meant that once a troop was armed with this, neither Ashe nor his team would suffer any external damage. However, it also meant they couldn’t affect the outside world either.

This would be perfect for crossing the Golden Flow River, but it fell short for scavenging the battlefield. The heroic soul legion was adept at looting, and if they didn’t immediately claim the commander’s spoils, those items would quickly be taken by other legions.

As Ashe gazed at the spirit emitting six colorful lights, a strange thought crossed his mind, but he quickly dismissed it—it was six-tone, not seven-tone.

After stowing away the spirit, Ashe unfolded the virtual realm map and said, “Though we’re missing one piece of the map, we already have five-sixths of it. If there’s any crucial Intelligence, we should be able to discern it.”

Sonya and Deya nodded, eagerly awaiting Ashe’s findings. Ashe carefully studied the map, and soon his furrowed brows relaxed, a small smile playing on his lips.

“Did you find anything?” Sonya asked cautiously, hope lighting up her eyes.

Ashe looked at her and shook his head with a smile. "Nothing!"

"Then why do you look so relaxed!?"

"Should I be wearing a look of deep anguish instead?" Ashe spread his hands. "If the Rainbow Tail were so easy to find, there wouldn't be so many two-wing sorcerers trapped on the Time Continent."

"Not finding a clue is normal. After all, the Fate Questioning only said we need to 'obtain the Complete Realm Map of the Time Continent,' but it didn't guarantee that this would lead us directly to the Rainbow Tail. At best, it might provide some aid, and not even direct aid," Ashe explained. "Ultimately, ascending to the Sanctuary using the Rainbow Tail isn't exactly the traditional path. While we can have high hopes, we shouldn't pin all our hopes on it."

"Everyone's tired tonight. Why don't we call it a night here? After all, our mission for the Golden Wings has already progressed, so there's no need to linger on the Time Continent—"

"No."

Sonya grabbed Ashe's hand firmly and said, "We can't give up yet."

Ashe glanced at her and nodded with a smile, "Alright, let's keep searching for the Rainbow Tail. Sword Princess, you will achieve Sanctuary."

"We will all become Sanctuary sorcerers." Sonya looked at Deya. "Witch, do you remember those hypotheses about the Rainbow Tail?"

"Of course, I remember. I never forget anything I've read in the ," Deya replied. "The White Bull Hypothesis and the Seven Sorcerers Hypothesis."

"The White Bull Hypothesis proposes that the white bull's four legs act as a conduit for the Rainbow Tail. When white light enters a triangular prism, it refracts into a rainbow. So, when a sorcerer's soul enters the white bull's four legs, it refracts into the Rainbow Tail."

"The Seven Sorcerers Hypothesis states that as long as seven pairs of Golden Wings are gathered, the sorcerer will transform into seven drops of rain. These seven drops, along with the Reverse Golden Rain, will ascend to the Distant Sky Domain. The so-called Rainbow Tail actually refers to seven sorcerers."

Sonya continued, "We can cross-reference the 'Complete Realm Map of the Time Continent' clue given by the virtual realm with these two hypotheses to see if we can find any similarities."

After pondering for a moment, the Witch quickly gave up. "I can't make any connection whatsoever. How does obtaining the Complete Realm Map bring us closer to the Rainbow Tail?"

"Since I couldn't find any clues on the map, let's consider it a red herring from the virtual realm," Ashe suggested. "The map itself might be meaningless, but the process of searching for it could bring us closer to the Rainbow Tail."

"The only way to obtain the virtual realm map is by killing commanders," Sonya mused. "Does killing commanders bring us closer to the Rainbow Tail?"

"The commanders' spoils include a commander's handbook, a map, and a soul summoning spirit," Deya explained. "The map is the bait from the virtual realm, and the commander's handbook has no such clues. So that means..."

Under the watchful eyes of Sonya and Deya, Ashe summoned the soul summoning spirit. The crystal hexagon radiated a different color of light from each of its six faces.

"I was just wondering if this thing has anything to do with the Rainbow Tail," Ashe said. "But... it only has six colors, and the Virtual Realm also only has six factions."

Deya suddenly came up with a possibility: "Could there be a seventh faction in the Virtual Realm that we can only find by collecting all the maps?"

"Or maybe the last color is hidden within the white bull's four legs?" Sonya suggested.

"Do the black and white from the static domain count as colors?" Deya pondered. "Are we supposed to take the soul summoning spirit into the static domain?"

With just one color missing, various possibilities flooded the Sword Princess and the Witch's minds. However, Ashe shook his head after hearing their ideas and said, "Do you remember the Golden Fish?"

"Although one example might not be entirely convincing, I believe that the Rainbow Tail is probably similar to the Golden Fish. What limits your ability to find them isn't geographical location, but rather, your abilities, the number of people, and your imagination. No matter where you are in the Sea of Knowledge, you can find the Golden Fish as long as you fly upward. The Rainbow Tail is likely the same way. No matter where you are on the Time Continent, you'll find it if you know how to look."

Honestly, Ashe's point might not make much logical sense, but having seen the Golden Fish herself, Sonya instantly accepted it. It's like reading two books by the same author: if you encounter an amazing narrative twist in the first, you'll struggle to believe they'd write a cliché story devoid of any clever reasoning in the second.

But this way of thinking led to a dead end. Deya held her head and muttered, "Find it anywhere... the Rainbow Tail..."

Sonya, biting her nails, scanned the surroundings: "Resource point? Special building? Miracle Wonderland? Where exactly is the last color?"

Meanwhile, Ashe was relaxed, lying back in his seat and staring at the sky drenched by the Reverse Golden Rain. "Don't worry. You all will reach Sanctuary sooner or later. Don't waste too much energy on the Rainbow Tail."

Sonya grumbled, "But I want to reach Sanctuary now!"

Ashe smiled and said softly, "Thank you."

He looked at the sky and suddenly realized that he had been rushing through his time on the Time Continent, not taking a moment to appreciate the scenery around him. Only now, after completing their journey on the Time Continent, did his belated curiosity emerge. "Sword Princess, why does the rain on the Time Continent flow upwards?"

"Because it's rain from the Golden Flow."

"And why does rain from the Golden Flow upwards?"

"It's always been that way," Sonya replied, clicking her tongue. "Stop pondering about the rain and focus on figuring out where the Rainbow Tail is."

"I'm thinking, I'm thinking," Ashe said dismissively, but his mind was still preoccupied with why the rain flowed upwards. He was always like this; when faced with a difficult problem he didn't want to deal with, his mind would start wandering to random thoughts to avoid reality.

Because time itself flows upwards? That doesn't make sense.

Because the golden rain is actually a gas? But it doesn't feel like it.

What could it be...

Suddenly, a recent memory surfaced in Ashe's mind:

"...I was engulfed and swept away by a river composed of rainbow-colored streams, and by the time I came to my senses, I had arrived at the Distant Sky Domain..."

Ashe abruptly sat up and muttered, "Yeah, why does the rain flow upwards?"

Sonya was genuinely angry this time. "We're seriously thinking about the Rainbow Tail, and you can't—"

“That’s the answer to the Rainbow Tail!”

Ashe stood up and pushed the Sword Princess and the Witch back into their seats. His face was lit up with a realization, and he asked excitedly, “Why does the rain flow upwards?” Sëarch the NôvelFire(.)net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Because the rain is meant to flow upwards, because the sky isn’t the sky, and the ground isn’t the ground!”

“Because the entire world is upside down. The Time Continent is actually above, and the sky is below! The golden rain hasn’t reversed its course; we are the ones who are upside down!”

“The Rainbow Tail isn’t above us; it’s beneath us!”

“The Golden Flow is the last color we need to find!”

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

Chapter 482: Only Leftovers on the Virtual Realm Table

No sorcerer would ever doubt the existence of the Reverse Golden Rain, just like Ashe wouldn’t question why there are spirits and Lala Fatty in this world—these are foundational elements of the world, and those living within it can only choose to accept them.

Moreover, there are too many peculiar things in the Virtual Realm: the white mist in the Sea of Knowledge that never disperses, the Whirlpool that covers a thousand miles in an instant, the never-setting great nautical route... Compared to these unique spectacles, rain that flows in reverse seems perfectly ordinary, especially when considering the Golden Flow on the Time Continent, which can influence time.

This month, besides training, Sonya has been in the Forest Library and the Flower Library during the day, reading works about the Time Continent. These include studies on Rainbow Tail, the Golden Flow, Fate Questioning, and knowledge creatures, and there are even some on the heroic soul legion. However, very few people have explored the direction of the rain’s flow.

It’s like no one questions why apples fall.

Maybe some have researched it, but due to the lack of results, no records were made.

When Ashe mentioned this, Sonya's first reaction was to deny it: "How could that be... What about the white bull then? Has the white bull been turned upside down too?"

"Turned upside down!" Ashe asserted confidently. "We are not at the white bull's feet; we are on its belly."

"This is absurd—"

"But has anyone ever seen the white bull's belly?" Deya suddenly said. "Some masters once tried to fly up in search of the Rainbow Tail. Although they were attacked and killed by knowledge creatures while in the air, when they looked up, they only saw a golden sky, not the white bull's belly."

"In fairy tale books, such upside-down schemes are not uncommon either." The Witch quickly accepted Ashe's hypothesis. "Think carefully. Is the Golden Flow really a river of time emanating from the white bull's four legs? If we are on the white bull's belly, then the Golden Flow has nothing to do with the four legs. It is fixed on the belly, and the belly moves along the Time Continent. Combined with the constant movement of the legs, this creates the illusion that the Golden Flow is connected to the legs."

"What do you mean?" Sonya's eyes widened. "Is the white bull's original form overlapped with the Time Continent? Does it not have a physical body?"

"Sword Princess," Ashe chuckled, "does the Golden Fish have a physical form? Is it really a fish?"

Sonya was taken aback.

"The white bull is indeed walking on the Time Continent, but it's walking upside down!" Ashe's thoughts grew clearer as he continued. "As for what's below the white bull... damn it, why didn't I notice this before!?"

Ashe cursed and smacked his forehead. "I've seen the Golden Fish with my own eyes; why didn't I make the connection? Sword Princess, do you remember what the Golden Fish's original form is?"

"The Golden Fish's original form is a golden sea. It appears as a fish because it reflects our virtual wings' feathers, which make it look like scales. The vast golden sea becomes the belly of the Golden Fish—" Sonya paused as she realized, "A golden sea!"

"If others haven't seen it, fine, but we've seen it with our own eyes!"

Ashe rubbed his forehead. “A golden sea, a golden rain! The Reverse Golden Rain all converges into the golden sea, so right above us is the Golden Fish, the Sea of Knowledge!”

“If someone in the Sea of Knowledge looked up and their vision could pierce through the white mist, the golden sea, and the golden rain, they would see us suspended upside down on the Time Continent. The Time Continent and the Sea of Knowledge aren’t two separate layers; they’re the floor and ceiling of the same space, with the Golden Fish in between. The white bull steps on the Golden Fish and moves upside down on the Time Continent!”

“I remember now,” Sonya murmured. “When we passed through the Golden Fish, it didn’t feel like ‘emerging from below upwards’; it felt like ‘falling down from above’... but I was too excited to notice at the time.”

“We overlooked so many things,” Ashe muttered. “There have been many clues right in front of us, like the reverse-flowing rain, the Golden Fish, and... but the Time Continent has so many novel attractions that distract us—the heroic soul legion, the Legend Museum, the Miracle Wonderland, the white bull’s four legs. We’re more inclined to focus on these rare wonders, thus ignoring the Divine Interventions that have always been in our view.”

“Well, if that’s the case,” Deya remarked, “then the so-called Rainbow Tail isn’t above us; it’s below.”

“The Golden Flow.”

Ashe nodded. “The only passageway down from the Time Continent is the Golden Flow.”

Both the Sword Princess and the Witch pondered this and found themselves unable to refute it. The Golden Flow fit Ashe’s previous description perfectly: omnipresent and accessible without any geographical restrictions. Even an ordinary sorcerer could easily find a wild Golden Flow by walking in a straight line for a short while.

But no one had ever attempted to explore the Golden Flow.

It wasn’t just fear of death but also fear of aging.

The inevitability of aging, illness, and death holds great dread, but regular sorcerers have largely transcended ‘aging’ and ‘illness,’ leaving only death as an unavoidable fate. The Golden Flow, however, could make a sorcerer feel the weight of time in mere seconds—sluggish reactions, rusty thoughts, withering souls, and a sedated consciousness. Those who had never experienced it found it hard to grasp the profound fear that sorcerers held toward the Golden Flow. People like Ashe and his companions

avoided collecting spirits from the Golden Flow not just because it wasn't cost-effective but because they were terrified and unwilling to go there.

The helpless feeling of being crushed by time, where your entire body turns brittle like dried leaves, scattering at a touch, was unbearable. Except for those studying the Time Sect, no one bathed in the Golden Flow, let alone submerged in it. Normally, a sorcerer would dissolve into the Golden Flow within seconds, completely disintegrating.

"But we have the Six-tone Anchor," Ashe pointed out. "The 100% anchoring effect can make us immune to any harm, including the temporal corrosion of the Golden Flow."

"But wouldn't that make it extremely difficult?" Deya expressed her concern. "Finding the Golden Fish might be tough, but that's a mental challenge. As long as you see through the Golden Fish's scheme, you could easily convince another sorcerer to help you cross it."

"Moreover, Observer," the Witch continued, "you had to loot spirits from six different factions to obtain the Six-tone Anchor. Typically, this is an achievement that requires defeating a heroic soul commander. Can other sorcerers truly meet this prerequisite? If no one before has met this condition, how did the legend of the Rainbow Tail spread?"

"There are two possibilities," Sonya replied. "First, there might have been a time when heroic soul commanders were considerably weaker. During that period, even ordinary sorcerers would have had a chance to defeat them. This isn't far-fetched—after their wars concluded, their forces would have been severely depleted, making them much easier to defeat than they are now."

"And the second possibility," she hesitated, "is that the legend of the Rainbow Tail might have existed long before the appearance of the heroic soul commanders."

Both Ashe and Deya looked puzzled. Deya asked, "But without heroic soul commanders, how would one obtain the spirits used for soul summoning? And without those spirits, how could anyone acquire the Six-tone Anchor?"

"Do you remember the Chaotic Shopping Book?" Sonya said. "I did some research on the Dramatic Poet and found that many sorcerers have encountered the poet's legacies. After thorough investigation, it's been suggested that the Dramatic Poet didn't create new Virtual Realm Buildings out of thin air but rather modified existing ones to suit his needs."

"Modified?"

"The poet's buildings may have originally been resource points, Miracle Wonderland, windmills, the Arena, or the Amnesia Cabin," Sonya explained. "Because the poet's buildings were repurposed from existing structures within the Virtual Realm, they have

been maintained by the realm itself. Even after the Dramatic Poet disappeared, his buildings have remained intact and rejuvenated over time.”

Ashe started to understand. “Are you saying the six colors of the Six-tone Anchor...”

“Each of the six Divine Sovereigns claimed a color,” Sonya elaborated, holding onto Ashe’s sleeve and speaking calmly. “They developed their main cities and heroic soul legions using those colors as a foundation. Thus, to obtain these colors, we must defeat heroic soul commanders. However, in the distant past, before the emergence of the heroic soul factions, these six colors might have been a ubiquitous special mechanism on the Time Continent.”

The Era Calendar only dates back to the year 1668, so Sonya didn’t believe that the Divine Sovereigns have been around since the beginning of time. However, imagining a time before their existence was still challenging for her, inducing a strange sense of existential dread.

“Ah,” the Witch said, “I once read a children’s picture book that described a very unique concept. It mentioned a Zero-Purple Monument, which would display a person’s past in purple text the moment they stood before it. Everyone but the individual would forget those memories, but they could imprint the purple text onto their body. Each letter would transform into golden sand...”

“In the world of sorcerers, gold often signifies Golden Feathers,” Sonya remarked. “If it’s really a mechanism from the virtual realm, then this implies that one could trade their past to rapidly gain golden spellforce... similar to the effect of a Whirlpool!”

“Come to think of it, I’ve always found it odd that there’s no mechanism similar to the Whirlpool on the Time Continent,” Ashe said. “If the Divine Sovereigns did steal these mechanisms, it all makes sense. Compared to them, the Dramatic Poet’s actions pale in comparison. The poet left legacies for future generations, while the Divine Sovereigns established eternal wars that have persisted for thousands of years and may continue indefinitely in the virtual realm!”

“The Golden Flow, the Zero-Purple Monument...” Ashe couldn’t help but laugh, his eyes sparkling with curiosity. “What we see now on the Time Continent is merely a fragmented version of its past. Indeed, the virtual realm is like a lavish buffet; how could it remain untouched?”

“In other words, long ago, the Time Continent had six mechanisms similar to the Golden Flow.” Deya summarized, “Back then, sorcerers only needed to gather the six colors and then dive into the Golden Flow to find the Rainbow Tail. Then the Divine Sovereigns arrived, and the Time Continent became what it is today.”

“This is the most reasonable explanation,” Sonya agreed. “It’s also the best one we have at the moment.”

“So then...”

Ashe stepped off the carriage, waved at them, and said, “Let’s go.”

The delicate, translucent Six-tone Armor draped lightly over them, making them appear even more stunning and radiant. On the other hand, Ashe looked quite odd wearing the same Six-tone Armor, resembling a Cult Leader with a penchant for flashy, colorful cloaks.

The three of them passed through the Rain Curtain and approached the Golden Flow. The time spirits swimming in the river curiously eyed them, but as if repelled by the brilliance of their armor, they quietly drifted away along the river.

Ashe had initially considered snagging a few time spirits, but seeing their uncharacteristic retreat, he lost the inclination to chase them. Without looking back at his companions, he walked straight to the edge of the Golden Flow. Observing that his Six-tone Armor was still flowing normally and feeling no unusual sensations, he let out a small sigh of relief. He then lightly touched the lake’s surface with his toe, causing ripples before stepping into the Golden Flow.

As he fully submerged into the Golden Flow, the river also became ‘contaminated’ by the six colors emanating from his armor. Like a painter’s brushstroke, the entire Golden Flow gradually transformed into a vibrant, multi-colored spectacle. Upon closer inspection...

It resembled a Rainbow Tail.

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

Chapter 483: The White Giant Bull and the Rainbow Tail

When Sonya and Deya stepped into the Golden Flow Water, they understood why Ashe hesitated.

While time hadn’t directly harmed them, it didn’t mean time couldn’t capture them.

Knowledge.

Every drop of the Golden Flow Water contained the essence of a mortal's life. Just witnessing the river itself could rapidly enhance one's Time Sect experience, otherwise, sorcerers wouldn't endure the trials of aging to bathe in it in hopes of gaining entry into the Time Sect.

But this knowledge was now redundant noise for Ashe and his companions, much like looking at a hundred elementary arithmetic problems would no longer advance one's mathematical realm. With a Golden level in the Time Sect, they could no longer draw any nourishment from it.

"Follow me," Ashe simply said before diving headfirst into the Golden Flow Water, swimming downward.

The resistance was immense!

It wasn't just the pressure from the water, but there was also an upward force pushing against him, making Ashe feel like he was swimming up a waterfall instead.

Indeed, the rain was Reverse Rain, so naturally, the river flowed in reverse as well.

Soon, the resistance reached a point where Ashe's limited swimming skills couldn't carry him forward. Apart from the physical resistance, the knowledge penetrating the Golden Flow Water also made Ashe incredibly uncomfortable. His mind was overwhelmed with these external pieces of information, making it impossible for him to think about anything else!

Suddenly, two streaks of color swam past him. Ashe looked closely and saw that the Witch and the Sword Princess had unfurled their golden and silver Twin Wings to swim, realizing with a start that he needed to do the same with his virtual wings.

Swimming in the air wasn't much different from swimming in water; of course, the virtual wings could come in handy. Indeed, Ashe easily dove deeper, as the virtual wings consumed nearly no physical or mental energy, greatly diminishing the impact of the time knowledge.

But soon, a different, more powerful emotion, one of grandeur, loneliness, and profound pain overwhelmed Ashe's mind.

Insignificance.

Faced with an immense river forged over millennia and eons of unimaginable time, Ashe felt as though he was not diving into the Golden Flow; he felt like a mere drop of water merging into the vast expanse. His past twenty-plus years were but a fleeting instant here, and everything he cherished or loathed would soon be washed away without a trace by this great river.

Give up.

In the face of the great river, so insignificant was he that it rendered his life meaningless. Every struggle and effort seemed insignificant, not even a ripple, and he felt it would be easier to just let himself be carried along, to merge into the greatness...

No.

A faint purple flickered in Ashe's eyes, and he snapped out of the nihilistic void just in time to grab the nearly lost Sword Princess. The moment they touched, the six-colored armor on their bodies seemed to connect, and a faint golden light shone between their hands.

With their Golden level in the Time Sect, they gained a brief moment of clarity—

To resist the erosion of time's great river, one must possess a length of life that is long enough. If one's lifespan isn't sufficient, then multiple lifespans could be joined together.

Ashe swam forward vigorously, grabbing the struggling Witch. The three of them connected, and Sonya and Deya's consciousness gradually returned. Deya used the Water-born Thread to tie their hands together, and they swam even deeper with renewed effort.

Their ages were insufficient, their numbers inadequate.

Ashe then realized that, like the Golden Fish, the Rainbow Tail also required a certain number of people.

If they were two seasoned older sorcerers in their sixties, they could easily resist the erosion of time by holding hands.

However, aside from Ashe's relatively rich experiences, the Sword Princess was practically a college girl fresh out of the ivory tower, and the Witch was an innocent girl who hadn't received a proper education aside from fairy tale picture books. Their lifespans were too short; a brush with time left them as nothing but foam.

If only they had more operators, if only they were a bit older, if only Ashe had gone through a dozen more thunderous and fiery Prison Breaks... then they could easily grasp the Rainbow Tail.

But there were no ifs.

Seeing that they were on the verge of giving up, Ashe shook them awake. He wanted to speak, but sound couldn't travel through the water, and trying to communicate through eye contact wasn't effective either. Thinking quickly, he decided to write in the palms of their hands.

"Demilo."

The two of them were startled for a moment, recalling their first arduous battle on the Time Continent. Although Demilo was just a logistics commander, he had brought them immense pressure, and they had narrowly defeated this formidable enemy through a series of close calls and calculated risks.

“Legendary Library.”

Deya’s face flushed. That time, she had gotten too greedy and ventured up to the fourth floor, leaving empty-handed.

“Amnesia Cabin.”

Not only Deya, but even Sonya would blush when she recalled her own behavior in the Amnesia Cabin.

“Conceptual Incarnation, Empress Heroic Soul.”

The beginning of all their misfortunes in the Virtual Realm.

“Arena.”

The Witch and the Sword Princess remembered the two male sorcerers they had beaten up, and couldn’t help but smile with satisfaction.

“Chaotic Shopping Book.”

Although they had accidentally entered the main city area of the Oasis later and prematurely triggered a war in the Virtual Realm, all of this had started because they had simultaneously fallen under the curse of needing to “make eye contact” with others...

“Fate Questioning.”

“Garden Battleground.”

“Dark Phantasound Miracle Park.” Sonya gave Ashe’s hand a slightly harder pinch here.

Under Ashe’s guidance, they gradually remembered their adventures on the Time Continent—the setbacks and triumphs, the perils and rewards, the formidable enemies and hardships. All of these had become their nourishment, making them anchors for each other.

Ashe vaguely guessed what the other six color mechanisms altered by the Divine Sovereigns might be. They were likely meant to ensure that sorcerers could stay alert and continue to pursue time through their “anchors” despite the grand narrative of long epochs.

Unfortunately, the colors had been stolen by the Divine Sovereigns. To obtain an anchor for their souls, they not only had to face life-threatening battles against commanders but also forge their own anchors of willpower.

Curse the Divine Sovereigns! The sorcerers' grievances were endless.

With everyone's combined will, they ultimately withstood the erosion of the long span of time. They continued diving deeper and deeper, as if trying to transform into dragons from mere Rainbow Fish.

Suddenly, Ashe and his companions saw a white light appearing from the depths of the Golden Flow. The three of them tightened their grip on each other's hands, and their virtual wings flapped vigorously, leaving traces of the Rainbow Tail in the Golden Flow as they broke free from the shackles of time!

The moment they emerged from the Golden Flow, they felt an odd sensation of being flipped upside down and nearly fell back into the river. Fortunately, their mutual support allowed them to steady themselves instantly.

They had exited the Golden Flow.

This was a world of pure white and transparency.

Ashe looked down and saw four enormous pillars walking across the golden ocean, originating from their location at the tail's tip. From his vantage point, he could see that the tail was snugly attached to the belly of a giant beast, with each tail hair extending out into a golden river.

The Golden Flow they had painstakingly dived into had now transformed into a suspended river waterfall.

As they swam upward wearing the "Six-tone Anchor," their colors quickly spread, staining the entire tail. While the tail hairs at the end were less affected, the closer to the top, the more intensely colorful the tail became.

It wasn't just the tail; they themselves were also stained with the colors of the Golden Flow, creating a splendid and dazzling array of hues.

The Rainbow Tail of the White Giant Bull.

The Golden Fish were not in the sea but in the sky, and the Rainbow Tail was not just above but within the river.

This was the true form of the Celestial Bull and the true essence of the Rainbow Tail!

"There," Deya suddenly pointed out.

Ashe looked in the direction she indicated and saw the source of the Golden Flow not far away—a colossal door made up of purple stone tablets, green vines, red soil, blue ores, orange fruits, and cyan bones. At the base of the door, a continuous stream of Golden Flow Water was pouring out.

They walked up to the huge door. Although the other side seemed blank, they all knew that what awaited them wasn't emptiness but a rainbow.

Sonya suddenly stepped forward and took their hands. No words were needed; a single glance between the three of them was enough. Together, they passed through the giant door within the White Bull's body.

In the next second, they were disintegrated.

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

Chapter 484: Distant Land: Ruby Mountain

Virtual Realm, Sea of Knowledge.

A lone boat floated quietly on the water. Inside, a Bewitcher wearing an off-shoulder sweater lay lazily. She stared blankly at the sky shrouded in white mist, seemingly lost in thought, until a little bat landed on her shoulder to urge her on. Only then did she slowly start rowing away.

But soon, the boat stopped again. It was clear that the boat's master had no interest in working. If she didn't have to avoid staying in the same spot in the Sea of Knowledge for too long, she would have gladly slack off there until the end of the day.

"Sigh~" Freya hugged the little bat tightly to her chest and said gloomily, "Why hasn't any sorcerer found me yet...? Ugh, why does it take two sorcerers to fly up into the sky to find the Golden Fish?"

At this point, the Bewitcher grew angry for the ninety-third time — she had been furious the entire night after reading Chapter 119, barely calming down after envisioning herself as the Sword Princess unleashing a Miracle water spell with incantations. She pursed her lips and hugged the little bat even tighter. "Why is the one soaring through the sky with Ashe that random woman from who-knows-where? That's supposed to be my place, it's supposed to be mine... Thief, bad woman, shameless vixen, boohoo

The little bat, struggling desperately to escape her oppressive grip, rolled its eyes — if we go by the timeline, aren't you actually the third party here? Even I've been around

longer than you... If we really wanted to be literal about it, forget eating or drinking, you barely get a lick of the sauce.

However, there was no reasoning with a woman blinded by love.

Anger came and went quickly for Freya. Fantasizing about flying with the silver wings, her face lit up with longing. "But that silly woman is so stupid. If it were me, holding hands wouldn't be enough; at the very least, we'd be embracing. And at the moment we broke through the white mist and saw the Golden Fish, it would be like the entire Virtual Realm was witnessing our love! Nothing is more fitting for such a scene than a romantic kiss..."

While the Bewitcher was lost in her reverie, hugging tighter and rubbing her legs together, she suddenly noticed that the little bat had gone completely silent. Looking down, she realized she had accidentally squeezed it unconscious.

"Sorry, sorry," Freya quickly loosened her grip. The little bat lay motionless on the boat for a while, then suddenly twitched and woke up, swiftly flying to the stern and staring at the Bewitcher in terror.

The Bewitcher gave an awkward, apologetic smile. Whether it was a complaint or an explanation, she gently lifted the two culprits that nearly suffocated the little bat and helplessly said, "I don't know why they've gotten bigger again lately. My shoulders are so sore during the day. I'm already twenty, way past the growth phase..."

So it's true that a Bewitcher grows again when she has a crush, thought the little bat. However, the direction of her growth often aligns with her beloved's preferences, which means...

"When will I ever encounter another sorcerer?" The Bewitcher stretched and complained, "I thought convincing other sorcerers would be hard; I didn't expect even meeting them to be this difficult..."

Freya had never doubted the authenticity of the Golden Fish's Secret Toxin. After fully condensing her silver wings, she thought about finding other sorcerers every day to smuggle her to the Time Continent. But she was too lazy to search herself. In the vast white mist over the Sea of Knowledge, searching was akin to waiting for a rabbit by a stump, so she lay in the boat, touching fish and waiting for someone to find her.

As for why she didn't follow the proper route and work hard to cultivate her Mental Sect to the Golden level — first of all, greed is a sorcerer's instinct. Utilizing resources is a mental sorcerer's professional ethic. Indulging in pleasure and avoiding hard work are Bewitcher's excellent traits. More importantly, Freya yearned to be close to Ashe.

Doing the same things, walking the same paths, admiring the same scenery... It was as if by recreating his past, she could make up for the missed moments between them.

When Freya confided these thoughts to the little bat, it couldn't help but think how childish she was.

How nice it is to be so childish.

The little bat suddenly had the urge to tease her and flapped its wings, making two calls. Freya immediately understood and shook her head. "Of course not! I'm not willing to hold hands with another male sorcerer!"

She paused, "Yes, that's right. As long as I find a female sorcerer, it'll be fine. The ratio of males to females among sorcerers is about equal. I'm sure I'll meet one."

The Bewitcher looked up at the sky and encouraged herself, "Ashe, you wait for me. I will catch up to you soon!"

The little bat landed on her shoulder, a hint of hesitation flickering in its eyes.

The moment Ashe opened his eyes, he immediately collapsed in pain, convulsing on the ground.

Suffocation!

It felt as if he were being squeezed into a rubber tube!

He couldn't even scream. The intense feeling of suffocation robbed him of any ability to express himself. His breathing became abnormally heavy; the low growl he managed to produce was the loudest cry his soul could muster from its deepest recesses! ❖

The Sword Princess and the Witch fared no better. Gripped by despair, they simultaneously grabbed one of his arms and bit down. The Witch nearly tore a chunk of flesh off him, the dirt-colored hue of her hair slowly receding. Though the Sword Princess stopped halfway, her nails embedded themselves deeply into his flesh.

At this point, Ashe almost wished he could feel the pain inflicted by the Witch and the Sword Princess, for at least it would distract him from the mental suffocation he was experiencing. Unfortunately, a soul has no nerves. No matter how severe the injury, it wouldn't hurt. Even if he shattered his silver teeth from clenching, it would be useless!

He didn't know how long it had been, but when Ashe exhaled a deep breath, it was as if someone had pressed a switch. The three of them were finally freed from what felt like eternal torment. The Sword Princess and the Witch, now devoid of any sense of decorum, lay on the ground, greedily gasping for air. They were all reduced to a state of complete exhaustion; they had lost all will to fight. Even if a Blade Fish Dragon attacked them now, they would have no desire to resist.

After dozens of breaths, Ashe, like a student forced to wake up on a winter morning, struggled to sit up and leaned against the wall, tiredly saying, “R-Rainbow Tail...”

“It’s not a Rainbow Tail.”

Sonya lay on the ground, her chest heaving continuously, barely able to maintain rational thought. “That was... spatial teleportation.”

Ashe looked behind him and saw an ordinary wooden door frame standing there. It seemed they had emerged from it. He then realized they were in a small alley, with bustling streets at both ends. The lively noise from the busy streets made him feel as if he were back in reality.

“Where is this place?” Ashe asked her excitedly, “Have we been teleported back to reality!?”

Sonya hadn’t yet caught her breath when Deya suddenly looked up at the sky and said, “No, we’re still in the Virtual Realm. Look.”

Ashe glanced up at the sliver of sky visible through the alley and soon noticed a streak of crimson on the horizon at the center of his field of vision. Curious, he asked, “What’s that red dot?”

Deya didn’t answer but pointed to another part of the sky. “Look over there.”

Following her finger, Ashe saw another streak of crimson appear in the center of his view. He was puzzled, “Why is it showing up again?”

“As long as you look at the horizon in any direction, you’ll see it,” Deya replied with a weak smile. “The fairy tale book *The Dream That Can Never Be Touched* introduces the Distant Sky Domain. The protagonist just needs to observe the sky to know if they’re still in the Distant Sky Domain. I never thought it would actually work.”

“The crimson you see is the fourth layer of the Virtual Realm,” Sonya added. “This is also the defining feature of the Distant Sky Domain. No matter where the sorcerer is, they can always see their ultimate goal—the Ruby Mountain—when they look at the horizon.”

Ashe was astonished, “The fourth layer of the Virtual Realm is inside the third layer?”

“That’s what it says, but just as no one can find the Golden Fish or the Rainbow Tail, no one in the Distant Sky Domain has ever found the Ruby Mountain,” Sonya said, grabbing Ashe’s hand and struggling to sit up. “I didn’t expect to become a Sanctuary sorcerer so quickly and haven’t really studied the related books... but my elder sister, the professor, once told me that the Ruby Mountain is a kind of torment for Sanctuary sorcerers.”

“You can always see it, but you can never reach it,” she said, clutching Ashe’s sleeve. “The ‘Distant’ in Distant Sky Domain refers to the ‘Distant Land’ of the Ruby Mountain.”

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

Chapter 485: Golden Blessing

Ashe, who had experienced the settings of the Sea of Knowledge, the white bull, and the Reverse Golden Rain, could now calmly accept this new setting.

“So, where is this place?” Ashe glanced at the alley entrance. The little blonde girl who had been peeking quickly hid herself but soon cautiously peeked out again, curiously staring at them.

“Dream Phantom,” Sonya said, “In other words, a dream.”

“Whose dream?”

“A sorcerer’s dream.”

“A sorcerer’s dream?” Ashe was stunned, as confused as if he had just been punched by Lala Fatty. “Sorcerers can dream?”

Although Ashe occasionally lounged with Lise on the carpet for a nap, he was definitely an outlier among sorcerers. Most sorcerers got enough rest in the Virtual Realm, returning to reality full of energy and not needing any rest at all—to rest, they would go back to the Virtual Realm.

What proper sorcerer would sleep!

“I know it’s strange, but that’s how it was explained in the books I read. I’ll investigate further when I get back,” Sonya said, helplessly. “It’s said that the Distant Sky Domain consists of countless dreams, and for sorcerers to form a Rainbow Tail, they must time travel through dreams, one by one. The most common way to travel between dreams isn’t flying but through spatial teleportation via a space gate.”

“You could even say that space gates are the most commonly used exploration method for Sanctuary sorcerers.” The village girl wryly smiled. “I should have realized when I saw that the source of the Rainbow Tail was a gate... The passage between the Time Continent and the Distant Sky Domain is actually a space gate. We were directly teleported into a dream within the Distant Sky Domain!”

“So, if we try to go back now—”

“We’ll just be teleported to another dream within the Distant Sky Domain, not back to the Time Continent. The Virtual Realm allows only forward movement, not backward. Besides...” Sonya’s lips curved up, as she looked at Ashe with amusement. “Would you dare cross a space gate now?”

“What was that feeling just now?” Deya still seemed uneasy, her black hair streaked with white and red. Clinging to the sword Princess for comfort, she asked with lingering fear, “I almost thought the Virtual Realm was punishing us for smuggling into the third layer.”

“That was spatial teleportation,” Sonya explained. “We’ll experience it dozens of times every night in the future.” S

“Dozens of times!? I can’t handle even one more!” Deya shook her head repeatedly. “Are Sanctuary sorcerers all masochistic lunatics!?”

“Of course, Sanctuary sorcerers aren’t masochistic lunatics,” Sonya shrugged. “But the problem is, we aren’t Sanctuary sorcerers yet.”

Ashe’s eyes widened slightly, a hint of realization showing. “Sanctuary?”

“That’s right,” Sonya affirmed. “The reason time traveling through space gates is so painful is because we... Hmm, I don’t remember exactly, but it’s something like being unable to protect ourselves in the turbulent currents of space. We’re essentially being disintegrated into countless particles on one side and then reassembled on the other, naturally causing excruciating discomfort. But if we could extend the Sanctuary to protect ourselves, we could safely traverse the spatial turbulence to the other end.”

“This is one of the reasons why Sanctuary sorcerers must master the Sanctuary,” Sonya gently patted the Witch’s silly hair. “Without a Sanctuary, it’s nearly impossible to progress in the Distant Sky Domain.”

Dreams, space gates, Sanctuary... As Ashe tried to digest this intelligence, a crisp ‘tick’ sounded. Suddenly, their Golden Wings unfurled on their own, radiating a dazzling golden light!

The three of them lit up with excitement. “Golden Blessing!”

Every time a sorcerer ascends to a new layer in the Virtual Realm, they receive a blessing from the Virtual Realm! This Virtual Realm blessing is often custom-made for the sorcerer, almost always boosting their combat power by 20% to 100%!

As the sword Princess Witch focused on sensing her new strength, Ashe quietly opened the operator interface.

“Death Maniac Sword Princess”

“Human – Female – 18 years old”

“Bond Level: 4 (75% experience sharing)”

“Bond Resonance – Insatiable Greed: While acting together, there is a chance to obtain better loot.”

“Silver Blessing – Carnival / Brutality: For each enemy defeated (including but not limited to sorcerer projections, knowledge creatures, monsters, sorcerers, construct creatures, etc.), critical rate and critical damage are increased. Different traits can be triggered based on the operator’s development route (currently on the Carnival route, capable of achieving up to 250% critical damage).”

“Golden Blessing – Luminous Star / Lunar Star: Each battle increases insight, willpower, and charm. Different traits can be triggered based on the operator’s development route.”

“Additional Blessing Trait – Luminous Star: The sword Princess desires to be dazzling, to receive the admiration of the masses, and to be liked by everyone. This route triggers the ‘Luminous Star’ effect, granting swordsmanship inspiration bonuses. The more people like her, the greater the boost, with inspiration potentially enhancing to a continuous flow (able to easily create and improve swordsmanship miracles).”

“Additional Curse Trait – Lunar Star: The sword Princess desires to cling to others, to be loved and cherished, and to bask in the attention of those she values. This route triggers the ‘Lunar Star’ effect, granting inspiration flashes across all sects. The more she immerses herself in love, the greater the boost, with inspiration potentially enhancing to a continuous flow (able to easily create and improve miracles across all sects).”

“Knowledge Curse: Vortex Secret Toxin, Expel Secret Toxin, Golden Fish Secret Toxin, Bronze Dragon Secret Toxin, Conceptual Secret Toxin, Rainbow Tail Secret Toxin.”

Ah, this...

When did the sword Princess’ bond level reach 4? The last time I checked, it was still at level 3... Did it really increase in just the past two days?

And this Golden Blessing...

Ashe blinked and couldn’t help but glance at the sword Princess.

Noticing his gaze, Sonya asked, “What is my Golden Blessing? I can vaguely sense it’s a growth blessing—the more battles I fight, the higher my growth value.”

Deya also looked up, curiously inquiring, “Observer, do you know our Golden Blessings?”

Since every blessing is custom-made for the sorcerer by the Virtual Realm and has no precedents, sorcerers generally have to slowly explore the effects of their blessings.

“Sword Princess, your Golden Blessing is...” Ashe hesitated for a moment, “Luminous Star.”

“The more attention your battles attract and the more people like you, the easier it will be for you to create and improve swordsmanship miracles. In simple terms, as long as you dress beautifully and defeat everyone on the battlefield who dares to look down on you, you’ll keep getting stronger.”

“Great!” Stretch Paw Club President excitedly clenched her fist. “As expected of the Virtual Realm, this blessing is perfect for me!”

“Observer, you seemed a bit hesitant just now,” the Witch suddenly remarked. “It felt like you were making a choice.”

Ashe immediately shook his head. “No, I wasn’t!”

“Some two-wings sorcerers’ s mention that their silver blessings have multiple paths, with different effects developing based on their chosen direction,” Deya analyzed. “Could it be that the sword Princess’ Golden Blessing also has multiple routes?”

When Sonya looked at him suspiciously, Ashe firmly shook his head. “Absolutely not!”

Maintaining a calm demeanor, Ashe looked Sonya straight in the eyes. The village girl stared at him for a moment before suddenly laughing. “Alright, if you say it isn’t, then it isn’t.”

She let out a soft hum. “Could I ever distrust you?”

Ashe breathed a sigh of relief and quickly changed the subject. “Let me check your blessings, Witch...”

“Black and White Witch”

“Human – Female – 19 years old”

“Bond Level: 2 (40% Experience Sharing)”

“Bond Resonance – Playing with People’s Hearts: Even without relevant Mental spirits, you and the Witch possess supernatural abilities to influence others’ minds.”

“Silver Blessing – Witch’s Taboo: Secrecy empowers you, and concealment is your weapon. The fewer people who know your true self in reality, the more powerful you become in the Virtual Realm. Currently, the Black and White Witch’s concealment rate is at 85% (seldom known), granting an 85% spellforce recovery speed boost. (The Observer’s observation is not counted.)”

“Golden Blessing – Witch’s Rebellion: Rebellion empowers you, and desire is your weapon. The more you wish to rebel against those who love you, or even harbor ill intentions towards them, the stronger you become in the Virtual Realm. Currently, the Black and White Witch’s rebellion rate is at 91% (filial piety distorted), granting a 91% additional spellforce.”

“Knowledge Curse: Bronze Dragon Secret Toxin, Golden Fish Secret Toxin, Rainbow Tail Secret Toxin.”

Ashe looked at Deya with a curious expression, but Deya only widened her innocent eyes. Suddenly, Ashe remembered something. “Witch, can you still not see my face?”

“No, I can’t.”

“Observer’s Visage” was still in effect for the Witch, possibly due to the insufficient Bond Level. Ashe cleared his throat and said, “Witch, your Golden Blessing is called Rebellion, and its effect is to increase your additional spellforce. If you can cultivate it to the limit, you can gain up to double the spellforce.”

The Silver Blessing boosts spellforce recovery speed, and the Golden Blessing increases the spellforce limit. The Witch’s future development path is quite clear—she’s going to be a massive miracle-casting bombardment platform, using high-cost miracles to bombard enemies!

“So, how do I cultivate it to the limit?”

“Well, you need to rebel against the people who love you,” Ashe thought that it had nothing to do with him, so he spoke truthfully. “The more ill intentions you harbor towards those who love you, the higher your rebellion rate will be. Since it’s already at 91%, it shows that your rebellion level can go even further.”

“Even further?!” Deya exclaimed, her expression a mix of surprise and complexity. “But I think we’re already quite rebellious...”

“Since the main direction is correct, focus on the details,” Ashe suggested. “Like how to rebel, what to do after rebelling...”

The Witch nodded nervously and began counting on her fingers, mumbling to herself, “One hour in the morning, two hours in the afternoon, three hours in the evening, two per three years,” murmuring something incomprehensible.

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

Chapter 486: Secret Toxin of the Rainbow Tail

Ashe looked at his new blessings, and his expression turned subtle.

“Silver Blessing: Observer’s Visage: Your appearance is deceptive, and unless you make an unusual move, others will subconsciously ignore your presence. Enhanced in the Virtual Realm, unless there is a close bond, others cannot see your appearance clearly.”

“Golden Blessing: Listener’s Woe: Your existence is deceptive, and unless you actively seek death, others’ hostility towards you will decrease by one level. Enhanced in the Virtual Realm, unless there is a close bond, others find it difficult to harbor killing intent towards you.”

The blessings given to Ashe in the Virtual Realm have never been direct power-ups.

For instance, the Silver Blessing “Observer’s Visage” had repeatedly proven valuable in the Blood Moon Kingdom for jailbreaks, assassinating Professor Sylin, and disguising as an adventurer. Ashe initially thought this blessing would be of little use outside the Blood Moon Kingdom, but to his surprise, within just ten days of arriving in the Gospel Kingdom, he had already become a fugitive. It was thanks to the full-cover cloak and the Silver Blessing that Ashe hadn’t been knocked out and handed over to the Red Hats for reward during his outings these days.

If the blessing could talk, it would surely ask Ashe, “Do you really not plan on spending a few peaceful days?”

The “Listener’s Woe,” on the other hand, is undoubtedly superior in practicality. It seems somewhat similar to the [stealth] trait of Spider Tower troops. However, the [stealth] effect means ‘you won’t be attacked if there are other friendly units nearby,’ essentially ‘you must first attack that taunting minion.’ But the mechanism of “Listener’s Woe” works on ‘the enemy lowers their attack priority on you,’ which means that while Ashe may still get hit, a lethal blow turns into a severe injury, a severe injury turns into a minor one, a minor injury turns into a beating, a beating turns into a scolding, and a scolding turns into “I endured it.”

This blessing sounds powerful, as long as Ashe doesn’t destroy the world, eradicate entire clans, or plunge the world into chaos, no one would want to kill him. However,

Ashe keenly noticed a loophole: hostility is a subjective emotion. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

If it's a conflict of interest on an objective level, even this Golden Blessing won't save him.

Just like when Ashe was previously a fugitive, being hunted by Cleos and other Red Hats. Cleos had no personal hostility towards him, but capturing Ashe would significantly advance her career, so the Weeping Sand Red Cap would definitely hit Ashe with full force.

Despite its loopholes, this blessing is still incredibly useful. After all, humans are emotional creatures. Purely rational beings devoid of emotion don't exist, and with this blessing, Ashe could essentially walk through life unimpeded.

However, Ashe expressed strong doubts about the "enhanced in the Virtual Realm" aspect—without an intimate bond, killing intent cannot be generated. This means as long as there is an intimate bond, anyone can completely obliterate Ashe!

What kind of enhancement is that?

In the Virtual Realm, Ashe only moves with his Operators, and forming an Operator Bond is a matter of time. Unless an Operator with a deep-seated hatred for Ashe suddenly appears, or if the Sword Princess and Witch plot to rise against the Observer's tyranny, this Golden Blessing is practically useless in the Virtual Realm!

Ashe thus concealed this aspect of the Virtual Realm enhancement, only sharing the first part with them. Sonya remarked, "Although it doesn't sound like it directly boosts your combat power, it's a permanent passive Miracle that's just as practical as the blessings the Witch and I have. Besides, for you... the Virtual Realm is indeed looking out for you."

Ashe clasped his hands together, "Thank you, Mother Virtual Realm."

In a few days, he would infiltrate the Royal Palace to execute the 'Assassinate the Princess' plan, and this blessing was like a lifeline in a snowstorm for him. If exposed and forced to flee, the enemy's attacks might very well graze past his body.

However, both his Silver Blessing and Golden Blessing are survival skills, making Ashe feel there's been a slight misperception about him in the Virtual Realm—he's just a simple person who longs for a peaceful life. His only desire is to upgrade his Substitute spirit to the point where it can earn enough to support both him and Lise. So why does he now live like a disaster courier causing trouble everywhere?

But Ashe remained confident in himself: none of this was his fault. In the Blood Moon, it was because Heath didn't clean up his own mess, leaving him with the "Cult Leader" storyline; in the Gospel Kingdom, he was forced to start the "Eternal Wanderer" side

quest due to the Eternal Presence smearing him with excrement. He was the victim in both cases.

“Right, I should mention to Annan later—if there’s still any wish capacity left, I’ll wish to remove the curse that the Eternal Presence left on me... But even if it’s not removed, it’s okay. Once the Weaving Festival is over and my Pact with Annan ends, I’ll stay somewhere safe with Lise and never risk my life again.”

However, thinking about how the Pact with Annan still had nearly half its term left, Ashe doubted his own resolve. Speaking of which, while Ashe and most species in the Gospel Kingdom were reproductively isolated—such as the Elf sisters Qenna and Nona—Annan just so happened to be purely human...

Ashe shook his head to discard the pleasant thoughts from his mind and asked, “You should have felt the new Secret Toxin by now, right?”

After they climbed out of the Golden Flow and stood on the white bull, admiring the Rainbow Tail they had created, a fragment of hidden knowledge silently surfaced in their minds.

“Rainbow Tail Secret Toxin”

“Number of Secret Toxin Infections: 9”

“Secret Toxin Strength: 9%”

“Current Effects of the Secret Toxin: ① You can convert golden spellforce to prismatic spellforce at a conversion ratio of 59:41; ② When using prismatic spellforce to drive spirits below three wings, they can produce effects equivalent to three wings; ③ While holding this Secret Toxin, all your seven-colored spellforce becomes prismatic spellforce, and using prismatic spellforce to drive three-winged spirits reduces spellforce consumption by 10% (enhancement at 11% reduces the benefit).”

The Secret Toxin has a total of three effects!

The first effect is similar to that of the Golden Fish Secret Toxin, which converts silver spellforce into golden spellforce. The Rainbow Tail converts golden spellforce into prismatic spellforce. This means that Ashe and the others can combine all their silver and golden mana bars into one prismatic mana bar if they wish.

The second effect is truly impressive. Using prismatic spellforce to drive two-wing or one-winged spirits will produce the effects of a three-winged spirit, regardless of the spirit’s inherent quality! It’s akin to offering an entry-level employee a \$50,000 monthly salary and receiving performance worth that salary in return, irrespective of their experience level.

This means that even if Ashe and the others haven't mastered the Sanctuary or possess a three-winged spirit, their combat effectiveness already far surpasses that of two-winged sorcerers, reaching the level of three-winged ones!

Until they promote all their spirits to the three-wing level, the second effect will greatly benefit them.

The third effect was somewhat puzzling for Ashe and Deya.

The only literate Miss Sonya explained, "Normally, the spellforce of Sanctuary sorcerers is seven-colored spellforce, not prismatic spellforce. Prismatic spellforce is likely an enhanced version of the seven-colored spellforce."

Ashe thought of Banjeet's frost spellforce and Harvey's Necromancy and immediately accepted this explanation, though he felt a twinge of regret. "If the infection numbers for the Golden Fish Secret Toxin were fewer than ten, we might have gained an enhanced version of golden spellforce. But that opportunity is now lost forever."

Though prismatic spellforce doesn't directly enhance the effects of three-winged spirits, its advantage lies in its effectiveness on any Sect spirit, making it extremely practical.

Even without considering advancement to the Sanctuary, the effects of these Secret Toxins alone made Ashe and the others feel that their arduous search for the Rainbow Tail was definitely worth it. It's no wonder that such a powerful Secret Toxin had fewer than ten infections!

"Infection count is nine..." Deya blinked. "There are three of us, which means there are six others who know about this Secret Toxin..."

For them, having just escaped the Time Continent, the number six held a terrifying significance. The thought that, apart from them, those who knew about this Secret Toxin might be those few supreme beings filled even Ashe with dread.

To put it into perspective, for someone you like, the more secrets you know about them, the closer you feel to them, bringing a sense of excitement. But for a serial killer, the more secrets you know about them, it feels as if they are getting closer to you, evoking a deep fear and aversion to something twisted.

Compared to the Divine Sovereign, a serial killer would seem as innocent as Lala Fatty.

Not daring to think further, Ashe stood up and said, "Let's explore this place while we still have time... By the way, Sword Princess, does the Distant Sky Domain also have a 'static domain' mechanism where you must keep moving, or you'll die?"

Sonya shook her head. "No."

The three of them stepped out of the alley into a bustling street. The city streets were clean and tidy, with buildings that seemed a bit old. The sky was bright, yet the neon lights of the shops were on, and even the vehicles on the road had their headlights on. Perhaps in this Dream, it was actually nighttime, but the Distant Sky Domain maintained a perpetual daytime.

Though not very dense, Ashe and the others could easily spot doorways that were just door frames. Some were attached to walls, others stood on ceilings. They were so conspicuous, almost as if afraid sorcerers might miss them. These were undoubtedly the space gates leading to other Dreams.

No one in the crowd paid attention to the trio; passersby simply walked around them. Ashe glanced at the blonde girl still observing them from a distance and asked, "How do we explore the Dreams?"

"There are sorcerer projections and knowledge creatures in Dreams as well, they're just hidden," Sonya explained. "Some Dreams are purely dreams with nothing in them. But Dreams themselves are resources."

"Each Dream has a Dream Master. If you can find and touch the Dream Master, the Dream will dissipate, and the sorcerer can gain the Dream Master's sect experience. Though it's not as much as an Experience Orb, the sum of small amounts can still be considerable. However, Dream Masters are incredibly hard to find, and if a sorcerer makes any sudden moves, the Dream Master will hide from the sorcerer."

Ashe glanced suspiciously at the little girl hiding behind a large tree and decided to take Sonya's words with a grain of salt. "So, the exploration method is to find the Dream Master?"

"Of course not," Sonya shook her head. "The way we explore the Distant Sky Domain is completely different from the Sea of Knowledge or the Time Continent. Given your intelligence, it would be hard to explain."

"Really?" Ashe looked at Deya. "Witch, it looks like you'll have to let the White Queen out more often."

"We just have different personalities. I'm just as smart as the White Queen!"

"I wasn't talking about your intelligence..."

"As if I didn't know what you meant!?"

"Actually, that's not true," Sonya interrupted their bickering. "You need certain permissions to read books about the Distant Sky Domain. What I know is limited. But compared to this, haven't you noticed you can't return to reality?"

Ashe and Deya froze, then tried and immediately panicked—they couldn't find the thread of consciousness to return to reality!

Descending into the Virtual Realm feels like having a rope tied around your waist as you explore a maze. Now, it was as if they were still in the maze but discovered that the rope had vanished!

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

Chapter 487: Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon

“Don't be nervous,” Sonya said. “The reason we can't return to reality is that we're not in the Distant Sky Domain; we're in a 'dream.' Separated by a Dream Phantom barrier, we cannot directly return to reality.”

“As long as we leave the dream and return to the Distant Sky Domain, we can normally exit the Virtual Realm.”

Deya anxiously asked, “Then how do we leave?”

“Find the Dream Master, or simply fly up. The dream's vertical height isn't too high; flying a hundred or two hundred meters should be enough to escape,” Sonya said. “But the problem is, once we return to the Distant Sky Domain, we'll immediately die.”

Ashe was taken aback, “What?”

“The dream is actually a protective mechanism for sorcerers. Once we lose the dream's protection and are directly exposed in the Distant Sky Domain, we will encounter the 'Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon,' and then die quickly,” Sonya explained. “Only by unfolding a Sanctuary can we resist the domain's synchronization, but sorcerers can't keep a Sanctuary unfolded indefinitely, so we have to hide in the dream and not expose ourselves to the domain constantly.”

“Wait,” Deya raised her hand. “Because we don't have a Sanctuary, we can't travel through the space gate; because we don't have a Sanctuary, we can't leave the dream; because we don't have a Sanctuary, we can't return to the Distant Sky Domain and can't normally exit the Virtual Realm... We can't leave, we can't escape—are we doomed then?”

“Yes, it's a dead end,” the village girl nodded heavily. “This is why every three-wings sorcerer must master the Sanctuary.”

“You either die repeatedly until your soul is annihilated and you are delisted from the ranks of Sanctuary sorcerers, or you endure the torment of ‘spatial teleportation’ and the ‘Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon’ to enter the Spatial Sect and learn how to unfold a Sanctuary, officially becoming a Sanctuary sorcerer.”

“Without a Sanctuary, not only can you not move forward, but you are also not even qualified to survive in the Distant Sky Domain,” Sonya shrugged. “The Virtual Realm won’t give you a free Sanctuary; there’s no benefit like automatically mastering skills at higher levels. If you want to master the Time Sect, go soak in the Golden Flow; if you want to enter the Spatial Sect, die a few dozen times in the Distant Sky Domain—if you die a hundred times, your soul might truly collapse utterly.”

Deya murmured, “So... does that mean we’ll die soon?”

“Some sorcerers with exceptional spatial talent can comprehend and unfold a Sanctuary during their first experience with the ‘Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon,’” Sonya said. “But such spatial geniuses are often from the Orc race, which is rare among humans... Observer, how is our spatial talent?”

“Not exceptional enough to be seen by me.”

“So, no matter what, we’re going to die at least once,” Sonya stretched lazily and said. “However, this kind of death shouldn’t cause significant damage to our souls, and with the soul-healing elixirs you have, Observer, we’ll recover quickly.”

“That means we won’t see each other for the next few days...” Deya softly whispered, “Which might be for the best.”

Not see each other for a few days?

Ashe felt a bit disoriented. Compared to the perilous plan to infiltrate the Royal Palace in a few days, this news depressed him even more.

Noticing Ashe’s gaze, Sonya quietly watched him back. She didn’t say anything, just stared at him with flowing eyes, pursed lips, and a determined expression, as if waiting for him to speak.

Ashe was unnerved by her stare. He instinctively avoided her gaze and looked around at the surrounding shops and buildings. Grandia Boutique, Mirror Premium, Feimeng Painting Square, Snow White Candy Shop, Bukin and Bok’s Orphanage...

Deya sensed the awkward atmosphere in the air and tentatively asked, “Should I go scout around?”

“Do you know why the dream in the Distant Sky Domain is called the Dream Phantom?” Sonya suddenly asked, hugging her arms. “Because, compared to a dream, it’s more like a phantom. You never know when it will suddenly-“

Break.

The entire world suddenly shattered like a bubble, and everything around them instantly vanished into thin air.

Ashe looked up, and the true Distant Sky Domain was reflected in his eyes: an endless expanse in all directions. The whole world was bright, though the source of the light was unknown, giving the impression they had fallen into the sky itself. The expanse appeared empty, yet in any distant view they could see, tiny, rainbow-hued “bubbles” floated, utterly dwarfed by the vast space around them.

They seemed to float in a vacuum, imbalanced but not falling.

The Cult Leader instinctively unfolded his golden and silver Twin Wings in an attempt to fly, but he saw the village girl shake her head, signaling that it was futile.

Sonya extended her arm towards him as far as she could, and Ashe reached out, trying to touch her fingertips in the final moments-

Whoosh.

A barely perceptible sound of wind pierced through his soul. He saw his fingertip and Sonya’s disintegrate into nothingness, and watched the terrified Witch collide with him, both of them dissolving into oblivion.

The wind effortlessly tore their souls apart, creating voids within each particle of their soul entities.

Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon: Wind Formation.

Seconds later, their dispersed soul entities began to reassemble, fragment by fragment, then gathered and merged into their bodily forms. The reconstruction was as beautiful as flower petals reshaping their bodies, and within the voids of their soul entities, new, independent spaces formed, equaling the size of their originals.

Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon: Flower Rebirth.

A few more seconds passed, and the roughly formed spaces within their bodies began to disintegrate again, fragmenting from a whole into pieces and grains. This collapse was irreversible; from an external view, their bodies rapidly deteriorated and

disintegrated like an avalanche, and the three of them watched as they dissolved into the air.

Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon: Snowbreak.

In the end, there was nothing left of them. Their consciousnesses drifted alone in the domain, but under the attraction of their awareness and the pull of gravity, the scattered soul energy reformed into new soul entities, now appearing as small, bubble-like spheres. Though weak and tiny, these new soul entities, after enduring the torment of the previous steps, had stable spaces within them that could temporarily exist in the domain.

This is the embryonic form of a Sanctuary, they thought.

Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon: Moon Void.

With an unheard farewell, the bubble burst, and consciousness returned.

Stars Kingdom.

Sonya stepped out of the Meditation building, gazing at the star-studded night sky, momentarily lost in thought.

Instead of returning to her dormitory, she walked to the school's entrance. Just as she was about to unfold her Twin Wings and take flight, a familiar silver Advanced sedan drove up.

"How did you manage to get through the gate so late?"

"Within reasonable limits, I still have a few privileges," Felix said. "Where to?"

Sonya pointed towards the distant White Tower. Despite Vlozrada's second son's curiosity, he didn't press the issue. She originally wanted to discuss Dimy's situation with the Stretch Paw Club President, but she astutely sensed that the Red-Haired Sword Princess's thoughts were far away, so she held back her desire to talk.

A few minutes later, Sonya watched the silver sedan disappear into the distance. She then turned her gaze to the towering White Tower before her.

At the base of the White Tower was a grove of trees, though she didn't know if they had been there before the Tower was built or if they were grown through a Miracle later. There were no guards in the grove, and a stone path led to the Tower, but no one could set foot on its steps due to an air barrier.

In the past, Sonya couldn't even detect its existence, but now she could vaguely perceive the shape of the air barrier.

The top of the White Tower glowed with a clear blue light, which Sonya knew was maintained by the Star Prayers to keep the night sky stable.

After a moment of hesitation, Sonya once again checked to make sure there was no one else around. She went to the stone path in front of the Tower, knelt facing it, clasped her hands together, closed her eyes, and silently prayed.

The Church of the Stars Sovereign wasn't open to the public, and only the nobility could become disciples. Therefore, the only building where Sonya could get closest to the Stars Sovereign was this newly built Star White Tower.

After a while, Sonya opened her eyes and looked up at the sky, awaiting a response from the stars.

I secretly prayed to the stars for you. No one knows, only the Stars Sovereign knows.

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

Chapter 488: Nabistin

"It really only took 10 minutes..."

On the third level of Nabistin, in the Purple Beaver Parking Lot, a hovercar descended from the blue Azure Lane. Without any guidance, the hovercar's autonomous driving system parked directly in a spot.

Nona opened the Gospel Book to check her trail. The map clearly showed that just 10 minutes ago, she was at the Senhaeser Building in Vamora. Yet now, she was in Nabistin, the blessed land of the Omniscient Weaver, situated in the Imperial Capital of the Gospel Kingdom!

To think, Nabistin is at the core of the Gospel while Vamora is on its southwestern edge; the distance between them exceeds 1200 kilometers!

"This speed surpasses any high-speed train and is nearly comparable to a tenfold supersonic aircraft. But we were just in Salome's ten-string sports car. The material cannot match that of an alchemical aircraft, and we didn't have any supersonic protective measures. The entire process was smooth driving," Nona said, biting her nail. "Unless space gates become fully widespread, no other transportation method can compete with this 'Azure Lane'!"

“No wonder they sent us the invitation only today.” Qenna tapped her fingers lightly on the steering wheel and smiled, “Turns out they wanted us to personally experience the future’s focal point.”

Typically, when a normal kingdom wants to test new technology, systems, or policies, they designate a pilot area to see the results. If successful, they implement it nationwide. However, the Gospel Kingdom is quite different in this regard—every reform starts in the Imperial Capital, Nabistin. Even if other cities come up with high-tech inventions, Nabistin is the first to have them widely applied.

It’s not that Nabistin suppresses other cities to steal technology but rather its efficiency is too high—while other cities are still investigating and planning, Nabistin has already started production. It’s like when you were in school, and before you even received the homework, the class representative next door had already finished it.

Moreover, it has been proven that any technology used in Nabistin is undoubtedly good, and Nabistin always provides a perfect example for the whole nation. Over time, all other cities became too lazy to do their own work and just copied Nabistin’s answers.

The city on the second level functions in the same way, and now this Azure Lane does as well.

Today is June 18th, three days after the ninth Weave ranking list was released. Qenna and Nona were discussing when the next Gospel Ranking would be published when an invitation from Nabistin appeared in their Gospel Book, instructing them to depart by 6:30 PM and arrive in Nabistin by 7:00 PM via the Azure Lane.

Although they had heard of Nabistin’s Court Banquet, they had never attended it. Fifty years ago, the guest was the last generation’s Six Heraldry patriarch. It was hard to believe that such an invitation could come so late in the afternoon, demanding guests to travel over a thousand kilometers to the Imperial Capital within 30 minutes, as if they were merely going to a neighbor’s house for dinner.

Now, they indeed felt as if they were visiting a neighbor.

Qenna opened her Gospel Book to check information about the Azure Lane and found that it required no points, as if someone had already waived the fee for them.

The technology behind the Azure Lane is a deep application of the Spatial Sect, which Nona almost couldn’t understand. Even Sanctuary sorcerer Qenna could barely comprehend it.

To put it simply, imagine space as a fluffy sponge, with all objects moving through the sponge’s gaps. Now, imagine making a dent in the sponge. As objects slide down the dent due to gravity, their speed increases. This is the principle behind the Azure Lane.

Currently, the entire spatial sponge of the Gospel Kingdom has been distorted, making Nabistin the “bottom of the dent” in the sponge, and all Azure Lanes are the “walls of the dent.” When Qenna and others travel on the Azure Lane toward Nabistin, they are like grains of sand sliding down the wall of the dent. Not only are they “approaching” Nabistin, but Nabistin is also “pulling” them in.

In the absence of a space gate, this is undoubtedly the most cost-effective mode of transportation. Stable and connected space gates require a Sanctuary sorcerer from the Spatial Sect to spend a year crafting, followed by regular maintenance to prevent spatial turbulence, making them an extremely delicate facility.

However, the Azure Lane is much simpler. It only requires creating a dent in space. Although such spatial dents need Sanctuary-level maintenance, a single spatial dent can extend into a dozen Azure Lanes. This makes it slightly less costly than space gates but with a reach multiple times greater.

The Yisuo Royal Family’s intent is clear: just as the policy for the past 50 years focused on constructing cities on the second level to enhance capacity, the plan for the next 50 years is to build a transportation network of Azure Lanes, reducing the travel time between any two cities to within 30 minutes.

Unlike other policies, this one is likely a strict directive from the Yisuo Royal Family with no room for negotiation.

The Yisuo Royal Family rarely enforces policies rigidly. Instead, they usually grant cities the freedom to implement policies that suit their needs. For instance, Vamora did not enforce the “Comprehensive Smart Home Adoption,” and many services there are still performed manually, including the presence of maids.

In fact, all of Vamora remains a “city of the old era,” characterized by low efficiency, high manual labor, and minimal automation compared to other Second-tier Cities. The city maintains this “feudal” setup because its revenue solely depends on Beauty Houuttynia, making the gross domestic product of its citizens somewhat irrelevant. Therefore, there is no need to increase individual productivity.

On the contrary, improving productivity would mean that other people would become unemployed. Even though Vamora can easily support the unemployed, the Six Heraldry Family cannot tolerate having any family member not working or producing, simply enjoying services without providing value. Even engaging in low-value labor is better than none.

However, this reflects a defect of the Six Heraldry Family—they are unwilling to abandon any clan member. In Mephila, those who society discards due to technological advancements, the “unemployed,” are subconsciously driven to accept extremely dangerous work, such as participating in human experiments. The mentality is that even “a piece of waste paper can be squeezed for some value.”

In the Gospel's evaluation system, the most crucial indicator distinguishing First-tier Cities from Second-tier Cities is the labor participation rate of residents. Higher labor participation correlates with enhanced citizen happiness, better public security, and higher educational levels.

Therefore, the Azure Lane caused quite a headache for Qenna. The establishment of Azure Lanes was bound to lead to drastic changes in production relationships, creating new jobs while rendering many others obsolete. Handling these changes is a challenge that every ruler must face. RÄNEBES

The two got out of the car and walked to the entrance of the parking lot. There was a transparent glass panel beside them, which displayed their identity information in purple text as they passed by.

"Qenna Senhaeser, visit time: June 18th, 5:53 PM, permission granted."

"Nona Senhaeser, visit time: June 18th, 5:53 PM, permission granted."

At this moment, a staff member approached them and pointed to the ground. They looked down and found guidance texts formed by lasers on the ground: [<<< Restroom, Mink Street], [Royal Palace, Central Avenue ↑↑↑], and [Nabistin Spirit Museum, Platinum Avenue >>>].

The two had no interest in wandering around and proceeded towards the Royal Palace.

Nabistin had no car lanes at all. The walkways were paved entirely with silver-white tiles. As they kept walking in one direction, their speed naturally increased, and a golden [↑↑↑] guiding path appeared ahead of them. Sometimes, Qenna and Nona's speed would abruptly slow down until someone crossing their path had passed, then they would resume their high-speed movement at 80 km/h, sometimes even reaching 120 km/h.

Other pedestrians experienced the same phenomenon. Although everyone was moving at high speeds, there were no collisions. Even if someone suddenly walked out from a nearby shop or paused on the street, everyone's speed adjusted seamlessly, incorporating these "noises" into the "melody," like a grand yet precise symphony.

This is a feature that Nabistin had fully equipped but other cities had yet to adopt: the Path of the Chosen. In simple terms, it accelerates pedestrian movement through ground mechanisms. Initially implemented in high-speed lanes, after refining the "individual path regulation mechanisms," it was naturally applied to city streets.

Nabistin now embodies advanced simplicity-there are no forms of transportation within the city; everyone moves solely on foot, albeit at astonishing speeds.

Midway through their walk, Qenna suddenly stopped and turned into a cake shop. Nona, aware of Qenna's fondness for cakes and recognizing this rare visit to Nabistin, quietly followed her inside.

The cake shop attendant respectfully said, "The recipes for all our cakes have been sent to your Gospel Book via email. Based on your preferences, we recommend the Number 13 Black Forest Lava Cake and Number 19..."

Nona reminded, "We're attending the Court Banquet later; we can buy the cake afterward."

"Do you really expect to get full at that banquet? Let's have some cake now to fill up a bit." Qenna cheerfully responded. Just as she pointed to the Number 13 cake, a server from the kitchen brought out the Black Forest Lava Cake she was eyeing.

"Alright, but be quick about it. We need to head over soon."

"Here, open your mouth."

"Ugh... I said I don't want any."

"Wow, this Lava Flow Core is so sweet. You should try it too."

"Stop feeding me!"

Nona stuck out her little tongue to lick the cream off her lips. When she couldn't reach it, she wiped it off with her finger and popped it into her mouth. Suddenly, she said, "The Weaving Festival ends tonight."

"Yes," Qenna nodded. "The end of the Weaving Festival marks the ascent of the new Empress. In no more than six hours, we will witness the next Saint who will rule for fifty years."

"Annan must have failed, especially since even her ranking was nullified by 'Ashe'," Nona remarked. "According to the Pact you made with Annan, she has to return to Senhaeser after the Weaving Festival ends, right?"

"Yes," Qenna replied, her lips curving around the spoon as she meticulously savored every bite of her cake. "By the time the sun rises tomorrow, Annan will become one of our clansmen. The Dolan Family's legacy will change its surname to Senhaeser."

"So, what do you really think?" Nona, uninterested in the Dolan Family, asked. "Annan will probably bring Ashe back."

"Then Ashe will have to change his surname to Senhaeser too."

“You know I’m not talking about that. I mean the special relationship between you and Ashe on the Future Ranking list.”

“You know that’s just the Gospel being weaved haphazardly.”

“Don’t you have any thoughts on it?”

“What thoughts?” Qenna chuckled, biting her spoon. “You need to be more specific; I can’t read your mind.”

“For example, when Annan marries Ashe, you might drag Ashe away and devour him first,” Nona said, expressionless.

“...Have you been reading some kind of book? Give me the name, and I’ll check it out.”

“Based on your answer, I might consider taking Annan and Ashe away,” Nona said seriously. “Unless you revoke my Family permission right now, I have the authority to do so. You said you wanted to bring her back to the Family, which is why I agreed to pretend to expose her Intelligence. But this time, I won’t help you if it means hurting her interests.”

Qenna took another bite of the Lava Cake, molten chocolate running along the corners of her mouth. With the spoon still in her mouth, she shrugged after a moment of silence. “Alright, alright, I’ll admit I am a bit interested in Ashe.”

“But this interest is much like seeing a cute little animal. Part of the reason is that he’s Annan’s pet. While making my daughter cry is certainly entertaining, I only meant to tease her a bit, not to snatch her toy.”

Nona breathed a sigh of relief. “So, you’re saying you don’t actually plan to go through with anything?”

“Huh?” Qenna was a bit taken aback. “Don’t you ever see a cute pet or a fun toy and want to borrow it for a few days?”

Nona’s face darkened. “How many days are you planning to ‘borrow’ him?”

“Until I get bored and give him back.”

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

Chapter 489: Exposed!

Seeing that her elder sister was about to end the conversation, Qenna quickly said, "How about I set a limit then? A thousand times... five hundred times, just five hundred times! I've already compromised half! If we hurry, we can get it done in three months!"

"Are you crazy, Qenna!?" Nona exclaimed, "You just can't—"

"Can't."

Qenna put down her spoon and said, "I'm a bit tired of this cake, I won't eat it anymore."

"To me, many things in this world are like this cake. Most things don't even qualify to interest me, and the things that do interest me quickly become tiresome. Over the years, the only consistent sources of enjoyment for me have been you and Annan."

"It's rare to find someone I'm interested in, so of course, I have to indulge myself before I let go," Qenna said. "But besides that, there's a more important reason."

Nona was taken aback and then realized, "The future of the family?"

"Since Gospel likes me being with Ashe so much, I'll just be with him," the Elf patriarch said, resting her chin on her hand. "If this can help Senhaeser get through the upcoming chaotic times, I don't mind sacrificing a bit for Annan."

Whether it was the formal Family Ranking or the somewhat chaotic Happiness Ranking, Gospel tightly bound Senhaeser, Qenna, Nona, and Ashe together. Now, with the future so uncertain, Ashe was indeed the lifeline designated by Gospel. Nona had no way to refute Qenna's excuse—compared to Senhaeser, Annan did weigh a bit less in her heart.

"Wait," Nona suddenly realized something. "I'm also part of the future that Gospel weaved!"

"So when I heard you say you wanted to take Annan and Ashe away, I thought you wanted it all for yourself."

"Get lost, I'm not like you!" Nona's pointed ears turned red with anger.

After all the effort, not only did she fail to persuade her elder sister, but she also ended up convincing herself.

"Speaking of which, are you really not planning to experience love at least once?" Qenna said, "If things do develop as the top three rankings predict, our peaceful days are numbered. I actually wanted to give you some annual leave—you've done so much for Senhaeser. Before Doomsday arrives, you should go out and explore, enjoy the scenery you've overlooked, savor the pleasures of perfect harmony. Who knows, you might break through the Sanctuary threshold faster."

"I'm not like you."

"I'm not chastising your celibacy, just concerned for you as family," Qenna laughed. "You've sailed across the waves of the Sea of Knowledge, wandered the ends of the Time Continent, but you haven't truly enjoyed life."

Nona remained silent for a moment. "I'm not actually celibate. It's just... do you remember the story mother used to tell?"

Qenna replied, "She never told me any stories."

Interestingly, their mother wasn't an Elf but a human; they inherited their Elf blood from their father. Since childhood, Qenna wasn't close to their mother—not only because she was the first child and didn't know how to interact, but also because Qenna was simply 'not interested' in an ordinary mother.

In contrast, Nona was very attached to their mother. When their mother's white mist threshold reached its limit and she was sent to the Beauty Houttuynia Farm to peacefully end her days, the grown-up Nona uncharacteristically sought comfort from her elder sister, while Qenna remained calm.

"Mother wasn't from Vamora. When she met Father, he was working as a thief..."

"A thief?"

Nona decided to ignore her elder sister's question, as more were sure to follow.

"She was a young lady from a big Family, attending a gathering at another family's estate when she unexpectedly caught Father sneaking in to gather information. But Mother wasn't completely innocent either; she had been looking for a chance to bring down this rival Family. She and Father quickly teamed up. To ensure Father would do the job and as the price for sparing him, Mother had him sign a Pact: Father would do everything to bring down the rival Family, and she would assist him."

Nona continued, "Father readily agreed: 'Do your best, and I will give it my all.'"

Qenna was engrossed. "And then?"

"And then they ended up together," Nona said. "They eventually stopped caring about the rival Family."

"...What exactly are you trying to say with this story?" Qenna asked. "Do you long for a love-at-first-sight romance?"

"No, I wish I were the rival Family in the story," Nona replied. "Love is just love, it's not like I can't live well without it."

As they approached the Royal Palace gates, the Court butler was already waiting for them.

“Miss Qenna, Miss Nona, your private dressing room is ready. Inside, you’ll find various evening gowns tailored for you. Would you like to change and freshen up?”

Qenna and Nona were both in their Red Hat uniforms and had no intention of changing. “Not necessary.”

“Please follow me.”

Passing through numerous palace buildings, they hadn’t yet had the chance to admire the Royal Palace’s internal scenery before being guided by the butler to a lavishly decorated hall: “This is the venue for the banquet. Feel free to explore. If you have any needs, nearby butlers will promptly respond.”

Hearing the commotion, people in the hall turned to look at them. Qenna recognized many familiar faces: Mercury, Kaesrei, Roland, Laplakin... Representatives from the ruling classes of various cities governed by the Gospel were all present, with Qenna representing Vamora.

Such social gatherings were natural hubs for exchanging intelligence, and Qenna was eager to discuss the future development of the cities with some of the Family representatives.

In the midst of polite and graceful toasts, two solitary figures stood out: a blue-haired young girl and a red-haired young woman, the Belldate sisters. S

Although it was later revealed to be one of Igor’s schemes, the Families, including Mercury’s, had ultimately fallen under Belldate’s domination at the Belldate manor. Naturally, the representatives harbored resentment toward Belldate. Furthermore, dealing with Belldate required extreme caution—without a mental sorcerer to oversee, no one dared to privately engage with Belldate.

Qenna herself had been a victim that night, and she had used that incident as leverage to extract significant compensation.

Although she was eager to dive into gathering intelligence, Qenna’s gaze was irresistibly drawn to the giant cake at the banquet, shaped like a volcanic eruption.

An attendant stood beside the cake, wearing a mask—likely to prevent any droplets from landing on it. It was evident that no one had dared to try the cake, as it remained untouched and pristine so far.

When Qenna approached, the attendant hesitated for a moment before carefully slicing a piece of the volcanic cake and placing it on a plate. The sweetness made Qenna’s

eyes squint with pleasure as she took a few bites. She soon felt cream on her face and used her tongue to try to reach it. When that failed, she looked at the attendant.

The attendant hesitated for a while, finally realizing that he should bring out a napkin. He awkwardly raised it to wipe the cream off Qenna's face. She didn't resist, allowing him to clean her cheeks before she lowered her head and continued eating the cake. Once she finished, she handed the plate back, and the attendant took it with a sigh of relief—

At that moment, Qenna suddenly stuck out her tongue. The attendant instinctively jerked back, but the Elf patriarch wasn't about to lick his face; she was merely licking the cream off her own lips.

Seeing the gleam of amusement in Qenna's eyes, Ashe knew he had been caught.

Σ(⌘°Д°;)⌘ Damn, how did she see through my disguise when I did it so well!?

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

Chapter 490: A Secret Meeting in the Restroom

Sneaking into the Royal Palace was unexpectedly simpler than imagined.

During a brief few days of odd jobs, Igor and his team not only measured Nabistin's terrain firsthand but also discovered a crucial detail: all personnel were provided by the Gospel.

Even if some workers weren't underground people but rather respectable residents of the ground city, they were still 'Gospel employees', whose service was all skill, devoid of any emotion.

They boldly inferred that the palace attendants were likely 100% automated. Though there was the possibility of traditional holdovers like 'real service is nobler', 'serving the royal family can't be outsourced', or 'being a dog for Yisuo must be cherished', the plan was a daring gamble from the start, and they'd just have to bet that the Yisuo Royal Family wasn't that feudal.

Clearly, Annan's bet paid off. At the Court Banquet hosted by the royal family, all the service attendants were 'Gospel employees', indicating that the Yisuo Royal Family had fully embraced modernity. However, palace attendants weren't recruited part-time from the underground city; they were full-time Nabistin natives. Ashe and his team could only

sweep the streets of Nabistin, as the palace grounds were an exclusive zone for upper echelons.

But there was a catch: all 'Gospel employees' had their duties assigned by the Gospel, with no intervention from the palace in personnel matters.

This presented a massive loophole for the Purple Moth to exploit with ease—don't forget, just over a month ago, Annan was a manager at a firm specializing in the Blasphemy Gospel!

The operation was quite complex in detail, but according to Ashe's simplified understanding, Annan switched their shifts with those of the palace attendants. The palace attendants took their places sweeping the streets, and they took the palace attendants' roles at the Court Banquet!

When Annan, with a tone of pride, explained how she cleverly and brilliantly executed this crucial step while resting a hand on his shoulder, Ashe had a sudden strange thought—

If Annan could swap their jobs now, what if the 'Gospel employee' system were extended to something like 'Gospel lives'? Would that mean Annan could swap their lives too?

Of course, Ashe didn't hold any grudges against Annan. When she approached him to take credit, he even gave her a high-five. Ashe's thoughts were mere speculation, after all. Currently, the 'Gospel employee' system was limited to Nabistin and hadn't spread nationwide to allow everyone the "automated" work experience, let alone evolve into a 'Gospel life' system.

He was merely terrified by the hidden potential.

Getting the funeral team out of the 'Gospel employee' state was even simpler.

Because 'Gospel employees' weren't always on autopilot; unexpected incidents that even the Gospel couldn't handle were bound to occur. For example, in Belldate's Wonderland World, if a child asked a worker where the restroom was, they'd get an instant answer. But if the child asked, "How do I get to my sister's heart?" or "Can you swing with me?" the Gospel wouldn't intervene but would switch the employee's status to manual service, letting them handle it themselves.

Annan spent some Gospel points, making the Gospel believe they were dealing with difficult customers. Hence, the funeral team's work status was locked in manual mode, allowing them to retain their self-awareness.

With a bit of simple makeup and disguise, Ashe and his team gained easy access to the Royal Palace. It was the smoothest and safest infiltration they had ever experienced. There were no Elf patriarchs with red hats to beat them up, nor any blue-haired wealthy

women with Bluebeard forcing them to work. It was as effortless as entering the neighboring community.

Swapping jobs, switching states... Although Annan exploited these two loopholes at different costs, the core idea was the same: follow the Gospel's rules, utilize its rules, and satisfy its rules.

"Deceiving the Gospel isn't hard," Annan once discreetly told Ashe her secret, "It's a lot like you. As long as you meet its needs, it will lie down submissively and let us manipulate it."

At that moment, Ashe couldn't tell if Annan was mocking, flirting, or being serious.

Even though Annan had perfected every detail of the plan as much as possible, errors were still inevitable in actual execution—

They couldn't leave.

More accurately, they couldn't abandon their posts and had to faithfully fulfill their duties as attendants during work hours.

According to the original plan, they were supposed to infiltrate the Royal Palace and immediately break into the princess's boudoir, then try to return to the inn to celebrate before dinner. However, they ended up staying in the banquet hall, providing manual service to the guests.

The reason was simple: the Gospel didn't allow employees to slack off. Even though the Gospel allowed them to switch back to manual service, this didn't mean it truly granted them freedom. Just as a boss might occasionally come to the office to ensure you're working efficiently, a Gospel that could monitor the entire Kingdom wasn't going to let directly governed employees leave their posts.

When Annan and the team opted for quick part-time work through Ark Square, they entered into a Pact with the Gospel. Even as part-timers, they had a detailed labor contract. Under the binding effects of the Pact, they couldn't engage in activities unrelated to their job.

Here's a brief explanation of what 'can't' means under the Pact: it doesn't involve indirect coercion through mental suggestions, electric shocks, or intimidation; it's very direct. It feels like when you have to pee, and you realize that any movement might make you wet yourself—you immediately clench your sphincter, not daring to move and quite literally 'can't' move.

When Ashe attempted to slack off, his entire nervous system would send out warning signals, physiologically preventing further actions until he returned to his post.

This area of deep tissue influence belonged to the Physical Sect, an area neither Igor, Harvey, nor Annan could handle.

However, to be on the safe side, Annan had assigned them all very easy tasks. If they were just a bit clever, they could pretend to be regular employees. For example, Ashe's position as a 'cake server'—who would eat cake at such an event, anyway?

So when Ashe was dragged into the isolated restroom by Qenna, he was still utterly confused. "How on earth did you recognize me? Even if I was moving a bit slowly, it shouldn't have immediately made you think it was me, right?"

Ashe wasn't trying to be cute; he was genuinely confident.

Not to mention that the "Twisting Mask" can distort any detection methods, Ashe also has the silver blessing "Observer's Visage" to lower his presence, the golden blessing "Listener's Woe" to reduce hostility, and the "Mysterious Power" that allows him to seamlessly adopt any identity...

In simpler terms, when trying to identify Ashe, you essentially have to go through four levels of checks:

Did you use a spirit's miracle?

Yes, but the result is altered by the "Twisting Mask." If no, proceed to the next question;

Is your attention focused?

If not, the "Observer's Visage" makes you overlook Ashe. If yes, proceed to the next question;

Are you focusing on him with hostility or goodwill?

If hostile, the "Listener's Woe" dissipates your hostility. If only goodwill, proceed to the next question;

Are his actions inconsistent with his identity?

If consistent, the "Mysterious Power" makes you believe he is who he appears to be. If inconsistent, you might start to have a slight suspicion.

Honestly, in terms of stealth and disguise, Ashe feels almost unbeatable. No one could possibly break through his four-layered defense. Forget about mere Royal Palace attendants; even if he donned the Empress's new clothes, people would just think the new Empress's features were quite lifelike!

The only potential flaw is that from an outsider's perspective, Ashe is always seen wearing a mask. However, Annan thoughtfully assigned him the position of a cake server, giving the mask a legitimate reason to exist.

Qenna locked the restroom door and opened the Gospel Book, pressing a few buttons slowly. "Violet Iris." search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Huh?"

"Violet Iris. Top notes of lemon, middle notes of violet, and base notes of cedar, but with Annan's personal scent mixed in." Qenna glanced at him. "You reek of Annan's perfume. I could smell it the moment I got close."

"But it could also be Banjeet or Igor—"

"Even though you might not notice, Banjeet has a distinct body scent. After all, he made it onto the Weave ranking list as an Echoer fifty years ago purely because of his looks," Qenna remarked, adjusting her attire in the mirror. "As for the others... Annan's relationship with them isn't strong enough for the scent to stick to them, right? By the way, getting a hint of the top and middle notes might be easy, but the base notes? That requires over ten hours of intimate contact."

Ashe's face turned pale, and he hurriedly explained, "I actually haven't—"

"Haven't what?" Qenna emphasized, smiling. "I'm not accusing you of anything. Why do you need to explain yourself to me? Anyway, that 'haven't' is quite telling. I can roughly guess how you've been spending the past few days."

Ashe awkwardly replied, "I just didn't want you to misunderstand..."

"Why are you worried about my misunderstanding? Because I'm Annan's mother? Or..." Qenna took a step closer, forcing Ashe against the wall, "...are you concerned about how I perceive you?"

The Elf's breath brushed against his face, making Ashe's entire body tense up. He couldn't tell if it was the Pact restraining him or just pure nervousness. He wanted to slip away, but as an attendant and Qenna being a guest, she could pull him into any room under the guise of 'service.' Moreover, Qenna had already blocked all his escape routes.

"This is different from the time at the Senhaeser Building, and unlike the Belldate manor," she whispered, her voice like tentacles invading his ear. "It's just you and me here; no one else around. Plus, I've just set up a Silence Barrier, meaning no one will hear a thing no matter what happens."

“So...”

Ashe’s heart pounded wildly as he watched Qenna’s right hand gently touch his neck. She leaned in and whispered in his ear:

“Tell me your plan.”

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

Chapter 491: Annan at the Door

“Are you really here to assassinate the Princess...”

Ashe, of course, did not confess.

It wasn’t because he was particularly brave, facing Qenna’s intimidation without anger and actively approaching her, but because he simply couldn’t confess-Annan’s Pact forbade them from disclosing secrets on their own. Ashe couldn’t even report to the Sword Princess that he had gained a daughter, so how could he possibly tell Qenna about her daughter’s plan?

But whether he confessed or not made little difference-as long as Ashe was here, the others were certainly here too, and since they had infiltrated the Royal Palace on the night of the Court Banquet, they weren’t here to assassinate the ruler. Could they be simply dining together?

So when Ashe turned the question around and asked, “Do you know about the Tower?” Qenna immediately understood that her daughter brought these friends to raid the Tower.

“We’re not here to assassinate the Princess.” Since Qenna had guessed it, Ashe could say a bit more: “We just want to nullify her rank.”

“The result is the same,” Qenna mused. “Empress Yisuo is bound to be the First Gospel. Without the First Gospel, Empress Yisuo will have to hold on for another fifty years or the Yisuo Royal Family will be extinguished... If you’re successful, the realm will face an unprecedented century of turmoil.”

“But even without the First Gospel, the Yisuo Royal Family has other heirs, right? They can have someone else ascend to the throne. Wouldn’t others revolt just because it isn’t the First Gospel?” Ashe tried to downplay the danger of their mission.

However, Qenna nodded: "Yes, they would."

Ashe was taken aback.

Qenna continued, "Do you think countless dynasties in history declined for no reason? Do you think our various Families and Consortiums are restricted to only our own cities for no reason?"

"Why hasn't the Six Heraldry expanded to other cities? Beauty Houttuynia Farm may be a unique legend, but couldn't we reduce its scale and create smaller White Mist areas in other cities?"

"Why hasn't Belldate's 'Bell-Pay System' spread beyond Mephila? Is it because the Bell-Pay System isn't attractive enough or because Belldate is unambitious and doesn't want domination over the whole population?"

Ashe hesitated a bit: "Because of the law?"

"Compared to the selfish nature honed over a long period, laws are merely a naive social experiment," Qenna said. "Expansion is the instinct of all organizations, whether Families, consortiums, or enterprises. When an organization grows to a certain size, it must strike and annex other organizations, leading to internal conflict, hatred, corruption, decay, and ultimately collapse."

"Now, each Family and consortium is confined to its own city, dedicating all their energy to developing production, competing for rankings, and accumulating the First Gospel, without any ambition to expand, and rarely engaging in conflicts with other forces. Do you know how the Yisuo Royal Family has maintained this favorable situation for seven hundred years?"

"How did they manage it?"

"I don't know," Qenna shrugged. "All I know is that it's related to the First Gospel. Any dynasty that didn't sustain its rule through the First Gospel has already vanished in history."

"So, your attempt to assassinate the Princess this time might hasten the fragmentation of the Gospel at best, or at worst, lead us toward a future woven by the top three rankings," the Elf patriarch's tone gradually grew colder. "Cities destroyed, necromancy rampant, schemes running wild... The world moving toward Doomsday, the Gospel's glory no more."

"Ashe," she said coldly, "what do you think I will do? Secretly stop you or report you directly?"

"I guess your next step is to assist us."

“Oh?”

“If you were truly so lawful and good, you would have sent me, a fugitive, to the Imperial Capital for a reward a month ago and locked Annan up, feeding her once a day with Lala Fatty. But you didn’t. You’ve allowed us to move freely, tried to persuade us to join Senhaeser, and even attempted to take Dolan’s legacy from Annan.”

“At that time, I didn’t think it would be this serious,” Qenna poked his chest with her finger. “Now I’m afraid, isn’t that enough?”

“But you’re not one to be afraid,” Ashe said. “You are creatures of the white mist indulging in dreams, drunkards living in revelry, madmen who take pleasure whenever they can. You are not afraid to become the nourishment for Beauty Houttuynia; why would you fear a distant future disaster?”

“The reason the Six Heraldry aren’t concerned with reality is because reality pales in comparison to the excitement of the Dream. Instead of wasting time managing the real world, they’d rather leave that to the Family and devote themselves entirely to the Dream. On the flip side, if they could find something in reality that offers a thrill comparable to the Dream, no matter how dangerous, the clansmen of the Six Heraldry probably wouldn’t hesitate to pursue it.”

“After we left Vamora, I occasionally pondered why your legendary necromancer ancestor established the White Mist System,” Ashe continued. “He had no need for Beauty Houttuynia and caring for the clansmen seemed like an exaggeration...”

“It wasn’t until I spent more time with Harvey that I began to understand—abandoning reality turns the clansmen into fearless soldiers. The boundless fantasies of the Family Dream provide an excellent training ground. The White Mist, which gives strong positive mental feedback, is the best stimulant and morale booster.”

“The Beauty Houttuynia Farm we see is actually the Six Heraldry’s ‘power-saving mode.’ If the Six Heraldry were to fully mobilize, using their peak willpower technology to send clansmen into battle, once they die, they become prime necromancer material, ready to be awakened and continue fighting for the Six Heraldry.”

“From the very beginning,” Ashe looked at Qenna, “the Six Heraldry have coveted the Yisuo Royal Family’s throne.”

“Setting aside that those are baseless accusations,” Qenna replied, “even if that were true, those were our ancestor’s ambitions. I am merely a young patriarch living in peaceful times.”

‘A young patriarch’... Ashe spread his hands. “Alright, I’ve run out of objective reasons to argue your true intentions. I have only one subjective thought left.”

“What thought?”

“You and Annan are mother and daughter. Annan is still deeply influenced by you, and many of her behaviors echo yours,” Ashe said. “Since Annan can persistently chase after the dangerous and elusive Divine Sovereign’s Wish, I don’t believe you are truly a conservative patriarch content with just protecting the Family.”

“First, protecting the Family doesn’t necessarily mean being conservative. Even with ambition, it’s ultimately for the Family’s future,” Qenna stared at him. “Secondly, I haven’t been in contact with you much. You say Annan’s behaviors are similar to mine... What behaviors exactly?”

Ashe sighed in relief. “So, you intend to assist us?”

“The Yisuo Royal Family has existed for too long, to the point of becoming a hindrance,” Qenna smiled. “Even we at Senhaeser would like to see the peak of the Gospel.”

“And Vamora alone is truly too small to contain six heraldry Families.”

These casual words fully revealed the Elf patriarch’s ambitious nature. Having made her decision, Qenna would not hesitate. “How do you need me to help you?”

“We are currently bound by a work Pact and unable to leave the banquet hall,” Ashe explained. “I need you to find a way to free us from this work state so that we can get a chance to find the Tower and abduct the princess.”

The two quickly discussed several plans, but they were all filled with randomness and had a low success rate. Qenna pondered, “While I’m willing to help you sink Yisuo, I can’t risk being discovered by the Yisuo Royal Family. If anything unforeseen happens or if I find the risk too high, I will stop.”

“Very reasonable,” Ashe replied. “Do your best, and I’ll give it my all.”

After refining the plan’s details, Qenna suddenly asked, “So what do you want?”

Ashe was taken aback.

“Senhaeser wants to feast on the Yisuo Royal Family’s fall, seizing the chaos to claim the highest throne; Annan seeks the Divine Sovereign’s Wish... what about you?”

“Because of the Pact, I must participate in this mission for Annan. It’s not like I’m willingly chasing a dream,” Ashe shrugged. “However, if there can be multiple wishes and there’s room, Annan will help fulfill mine.”

"If those were your only reasons, your eyes would show reluctance, fear, and anxiety," Qenna said. "But you don't have any of these negative emotions, and after being captured by me, you were still able to calmly pull me into your camp."

"Well..." Ashe coughed a couple of times, feeling a bit embarrassed. "I just felt like you wouldn't hurt me..."

"That feeling is wrong; I do very much want to hurt you," Qenna said bluntly, with a straightforwardness that was somewhat scary. "And you're still avoiding my question."

Ashe remained silent for a moment. "I'm just a bit curious. Curious about what would happen without the First Gospel, and whether I could disrupt the future Weave of the Gospel."

"But don't you feel the weight of it all?" Qenna asked. "Remember, to this day, you are still the prime suspect in causing the Doomsday future. It might very well be because you assassinated the princess, nullifying the First Gospel."

"If it really is because I nullified the First Gospel that caused the Doomsday, then though I might feel terribly unlucky, I would still do it and not regret it one bit," Ashe said. "Qenna, do you think I'm special?"

"Yes, I do."

"...No, I don't think I'm special at all," Ashe countered. "Even if there wasn't an Ashe, there would be a Soashe, Renashe, or Liashe. If I weren't here, the culprit of the Gospel Weave might be Igor or Harvey, or even Banjeet..."

"In the end, if one person can bring down an entire Kingdom, do you think it's the person's fault or the Kingdom's fault? There's a saying, 'the world goes on without any one person,' which means individuals aren't that important. But if an individual is crucial enough that the world would collapse without them, is that really a healthy world?"

Qenna nodded thoughtfully. "So you never feel that you need to take responsibility for the future calamities or the women you've attracted?"

Ashe half-joked, "Well, at least half of them I don't need to."

Qenna, as curious as her daughter, pressed, "But what if it truly is because of you that the Doomsday happens?"

Ashe rolled his eyes at her. "Then I'll drink red wine while watching the world burn."

Having finished their discussion, the two opened the door and left the restroom.

However, as soon as they stepped out, they saw a Court attendant standing outside. Although they looked entirely different, Qenna instantly recognized her daughter.

Despite the serious conversation they had just had, seeing her daughter always stirred Qenna's playful side. She lightly patted Ashe's shoulder. "Relax, I set up a Silence Barrier earlier, so she couldn't have heard us, no matter how loud we were."

"I wasn't worried..."

"Back to work," Annan glared at Qenna, tugging at Ashe's sleeve as she pulled him away.

Qenna returned to the hall and met up with Nona, who asked curiously, "Where were you just now?"

"Restroom."

"For that long?"

"Ashe Heath was also in there."

Nona blinked in surprise. "Oh... well, then it's not that long."

If there weren't so many people around, Qenna might have considered giving Nona a playful swat to wake her up.

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

Chapter 492: Scallop Man

As the night sky above the dome shifted with bright purple hues, Yvaren, veiled, lifted an oyster to her mouth, tilted her head back, and swallowed it promptly, casually remarking, "The 'Empress's New Clothes' is ready."

"Huh?" Anfel was taken aback, swallowing the peony shrimp in her mouth.

"The celebratory fireworks that happen every fifty years-it's understandable you wouldn't know if you haven't handled it before," Yvaren explained. "It's a collaborative project between Belldate, Salome, and Mercury's families. Together, we're orchestrating a fireworks extravaganza for the Yisuo Royal Family. The preparations started three years ago, codenamed 'Empress's New Clothes.' Before the official launch, we need to

conduct position tests. The bright purple glows in the night sky indicate that all units are ready.”

“Every fifty years? How many times has Belldate done this?”

“If I recall correctly, Belldate has been the royal fireworks supplier since the second Empress of Yisuo,” Yvaren replied.

“That means it’s a tradition spanning seven hundred years!” Anfel thanked the chef and popped the peeled crab claw into her mouth. “But what kind of fireworks take three years to make and require cooperation from our three families?”

“I don’t know the specifics; I’m not the one doing the labor,” the blue-haired capitalist replied. “You only need to know two things: First, the fireworks require the user to be at least a Sanctuary Sorcerer. Second, these fireworks must be visible throughout the entire Gospel.”

Anfel blinked. “You mean the fireworks are already prepared all over the country and will be set off simultaneously?”

“No, there are only fifty sets of fireworks, and they will only be launched in Nabistin,” Yvaren clarified. “According to the product design, these fireworks incorporate spatial materials from the Distant Sky Domain, such as ‘The Unrememberable Wood,’ ‘Blowwater,’ and ‘Sound Palace Pearls.’ When the fifty sets resonate at close range, they can create an effect akin to a Spatial Miracle, spreading the fireworks across the entire Gospel sky, allowing everyone to celebrate the birth of the new Empress simultaneously.”

“That’s also why the user must be a Sanctuary Sorcerer-without expertise in the Spatial Sect spells, one wouldn’t even qualify to set off the fireworks.”

Anfel scooped a spoonful of crab roe into her mouth and, while eating, exclaimed in surprise, “So there are fifty Sanctuary Sorcerers on standby in Nabistin right now, just waiting to set off the fireworks?”

“What’s so strange about that?” Yvaren took a sip of Ruby Sea Lala Fatty. “The majority of Sanctuary Sorcerers and all legends in the Gospel reside in Nabistin. The Yisuo Royal Family could afford to have Sanctuary Sorcerers set off their fireworks hundreds of years ago; why not now?”

“Was it always this extravagant hundreds of years ago?” Anfel was puzzled. “In my impression, the Yisuo Royal Family wasn’t so ostentatious... Does this firework display have some special significance?”

“As long as the basic pattern stays unchanged, everything else is up to our imagination,” Yvaren shrugged. “Moreover, the Yisuo Royal Family provides the

materials. Our three families are only responsible for the crafting. With such low requirements, high pay, and technical support from the royal family, when I first saw the business plan, I thought they were doing charity.”

“Because the quality is high, the fireworks display will undoubtedly be magnificent and unforgettable.” Yvaren winked at her sister. “See if you like it later. If you do, we made an extra batch on standby. I can ask a few Sanctuary Sorcerers to help set them off at your wedding.”

Anfel tilted her head while eating crab meat. “Wedding?”

“The Weaving Festival ends tonight. Do you think Annan can keep Ashe and Igor tied here forever?” Yvaren propped her chin on her hand. “Once Igor returns to Mephila, Belldate will definitely throw a grand wedding for you two!”

The “Ghost Ignorance Veil” rewarded by the Culprits Ranking was indeed effective. Yvaren seemed more lifelike than ever, Anfel thought.

To resist the bloodline domination of their ancestors, each generation of Belldate splits the family’s power between two people. One person becomes the vessel for the mental sea of all beings, with their self-awareness crushed under the thoughts of millions, eventually turning into an empty shell; the other’s soul is diluted with pure mental energy, making it impossible for any intense emotions to stir within, turning them into a rational person without blood or tears.

Belldate was willing to pay such a high price not only to extend her life but also to rebel against her selfish and cruel ancestor. Since the Necromancer Angel viewed descendants merely as resurrection machines, she couldn’t blame these cogs for being cold and unfeeling.

Now with the “Ghost Ignorance Veil,” Yvaren no longer needed to commit suicide before the age of forty to resist the increasingly heated bloodline call. More importantly, the veil perfectly protected her soul, so even if she had to use the family’s mental energy, her soul wouldn’t be diluted, and those repressed emotional depths could resurface.

Previously, Yvaren would have only urged Anfel to quickly get pregnant and give birth to the genius child, Leia. Now, she was actually concerned about the wedding. Although she was projecting her own longing for marriage onto her sister, the change was immensely comforting for Anfel. Yvaren had recently only viewed family members as breeding tools, and this was a significant shift from such rationality.

However...

“Why are you so sure Igor will return to Mephila?” Anfel asked with a smile. “Or rather, why would he come to Mephila in the first place? It’s not his home.”

"But you'll be his closest family in the future. You'll marry him, and you'll both have a daughter whom even Ashe would envy," Yvaren replied. "How can Belldate not be his home?"

"That's what Gospel thinks, not what he thinks. He won't accept such a future."

"I don't understand. Is it because he doesn't like you? Or because he has no feelings for you?"

Anfel thought seriously for a moment. "He probably likes me."

"Then what's the problem?"

"How should I put this..." Anfel tilted her head. "Igor, he's a bit of a tsundere."

The chef placed a plate of iceberg fish slices on their table. Yvaren took a bite. "So that's what Blade Fish Dragon meat tastes like... And then? What's wrong with him being a tsundere?"

"He finds it hard to accept himself entering a close relationship," Anfel said. "He's like a sensitive scallop man; when others approach, he wraps himself in coldness and hostility. Only when no one is paying attention does he quietly open a crack, showing his softness in hidden places, experiencing the warmth around him."

"I'm not the first person he's liked, and I won't be the last. Although he witnesses my blooming, he won't stay for me, because what he needs isn't a family to rely on, but an equal opponent."

Anfel continued, "We might like each other, our feelings might not be over, but we won't have a future together."

The blue-haired wealthy woman nodded thoughtfully. "I understand."

"Good that you understand," Anfel winked. "Since you've already given him all the other documents of the Dominance Sect, don't-

"I will bring Igor back, feed him an enhancement potion from Vamora, and wait until you both have Leia so he won't be able to run away. Then we'll have a proper wedding for you two," Yvaren said. "It's just that you'll have to work as a female knight."

Anfel didn't know whether her elder sister was in a rational or emotional state now. "What I mean is that we're not suitable for each other..." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Maybe you're not suitable for him, but he's definitely suitable for you." Yvaren rolled her eyes. "Even Gospel wouldn't dare to claim it could make everyone happy. Now that

there's a foreseeable future where at least you can be happy, why miss it? And how do you know this isn't the best outcome Igor could achieve? If he misses you, he might end up lonely for the rest of his life."

"But he doesn't want to--"

"You're the one unwilling to accept the future Gospel has Weaved," Yvaren said as she ate a piece of Blade Fish Dragon. "Just because Rust Crow cares more about his career than you, and you're not satisfied with such a future, you're ready to give up altogether-why not try to fight for a better future? You said he needs an equal opponent, so why don't you try to become that person?"

Anfel looked at her elder sister in shock, like she was watching a Lala Fatty discuss philosophy.

"Gospel has already prepped the fish, arranged it on the plate, and handed it to you on an iceberg. You feel the taste is lacking, and instead of seasoning it yourself, you choose to throw it away?" Yvaren said. "You say he is like a scallop, but aren't you the same? Igor uses coldness to resist others, while you use gentleness to protect yourself."

"In the end, neither of you has the confidence to maintain a close relationship. Gospel is just your excuse," the blue-haired wealthy woman said, clenching her fist. "So, the Gospel Ranking isn't for you to see-it's for me. At the rate you're going, the world could end, and you still wouldn't have Leia. I'll have to pry open your scallop shells and season you both properly!"

Yvaren herself was getting hungry as she spoke and turned her head to the chef, "I'll have an order of steamed scallops!"

The two chefs silently nodded. The sisters enjoying their feast naturally drew the attention of others in the hall.

The guests qualified to attend this banquet were part of the ruling class, sharing power with the Yisuo Royal Family outside these walls. Although the banquet offered a sumptuous and delicious spread, it paled in comparison to the allure of power.

The new Empress, Azure Lane, the Future Ranking, the Doomsday Catastrophe... There were so many topics to discuss. Everyone was busy strategizing on how to prevent a class slide or climb even higher, and yet here was this blue-haired woman, eating so much and so happily!

However, Yvaren no longer cared-after the battle at the Belldate manor, she had all but offended 60% of the Gospel forces, and the remaining 40% were extremely wary of her.

Even though it was known that Igor was the mastermind, the intelligence that “Belldate can completely dominate the Sanctuary” was enough to cause panic. Officials interfacing with Belldate had now all been replaced by ordinary people, and the sign outside the Sanctuary Sorcerer’s office now read, “No entry for people from Mephila.”

Rather than saying they were shunning Yvaren, it was more accurate to say they were terrified of her. After all, the Dominance Sect of Belldate was incredibly insidious. A casual phrase like “Sure, why not?” could turn into an infamous precursor to “I willingly become Miss Yvaren’s dog.”

So, Yvaren and Anfel tucked themselves away in a corner to enjoy the food. Though this banquet was a buffet, some delicacies were best made to order, like the seafood they were currently indulging in.

Beyond regular seafood, the menu also featured ingredients from virtual realm creatures such as Blade Fish Dragon, Mud Fish Dragon, and Foxlamp Dragon. While these ingredients were not much different from typical seafood, virtual realm creatures escaping into reality was a rare event. It was so uncommon that even top-tier families like the Belldate found it challenging to acquire such ingredients. Naturally, Yvaren wasn’t going to miss out.

As they tackled the Blade Fish Dragon, two tall, voluptuous elves suddenly sat beside them.

“Is it good?” one asked.

“It’s alright,” Yvaren replied, lifting her head to look at Qenna. “Want some?”

“I wouldn’t dare accept a favor from Belldate,” Qenna chuckled. “I’m here to discuss business.”

“Business?” Yvaren found it amusing. “Vamora doesn’t need an amusement park to provide happiness to its residents, and Mephila doesn’t need Beauty Houuttuynia to boost work efficiency. The Six Heraldry won’t tolerate their clansmen being dominated, and I won’t allow a united family in Mephila... What do we have to collaborate on? Jointly developing Igor and Ashe?”

“The Six Heraldry has no current interest in Igor,” Qenna responded. “But we clearly share common interests, like a long-forgotten path cut off seven hundred years ago.”

“Are you interested in a sunrise without the Empress?”

Yvaren’s expression didn’t change, but Anfel immediately grasped the elf patriarch’s implication. “You want to deal with the princess? What gives you that idea?”

“Ashe Heath,” Nona said.

Even Annan could pick up on that lethal option instantly, and they certainly were no exception. Yvaren suddenly smiled. "Increase what they desire, gift what they need... Once again, the family motto proves insightful. What do you want me to do?"

"Of all the guests here," Qenna fixed her gaze intently on Yvaren, "how many can you dominate?"

Anfel's face changed, but Yvaren remained calm. "Three-fifths, but I won't go all-in and gamble my life away, nor will I fully reveal this card. At most, I'll have them muddy the waters to disrupt the situation."

"That will suffice," Qenna leaned closer to Yvaren, looking down at the younger matriarch who held greater power. "To a fruitful collaboration."

"To a fruitful collaboration."

With just a few words, the two major forces of the Gospel formed an anti-Yisuo alliance. This was done so casually not only because it didn't require much effort-akin to buying a lottery ticket-but also because they had long grown tired of the Yisuo Royal Family's constraints.

Qenna might not feel it as strongly, but Yvaren was acutely aware of the Yisuo Royal Family's total control over the Kingdom. Unlike the family systems, Belldate's Bell-Pay System had virtually no barriers to expansion, making it relatively easy to grow. However, they had been confined to the regions around Mephila. Despite being national champions, they were restricted to local competitions-anyone would feel stifled.

It was as if an invisible hand existed within the Gospel. Whenever Belldate tried to reach for something it shouldn't, this hand would push them back. No matter how Yvaren tried to expand her loan business, any attempts outside Mephila faced rejection. Even the "Increase what they desire, gift what they need" secret ceased to work.

It wasn't just Yvaren-her parents, grandparents, and ancestors had all tried to break out of the Mephila map but were quickly shoved back into their cages. There was no administrative interference, no financial sanctions, not even troublemakers-yet, they were met with complete indifference.

Other families shared the same fate. Salome, Mercury, Six Heraldry...powerful forces renowned in their regions, yet they all found themselves caged by the structures crafted by the Gospel.

So, when Qenna asked Yvaren if she was interested in taking on Yisuo, there was no other option for Yvaren. Logically, Belldate had to remove the Yisuo obstacle to advance further; emotionally, how could Yvaren not covet the supreme position within the Gospel Kingdom?

She was, after all, the Queen of the Caged Birds ruling over millions in Mephila. The yearning for power had long seeped deeply into her heart!

“Increase what they desire, gift what they need” was not only the Dominance Sect’s secret but also its inevitable side effect! What desire is more captivating than power? What temptation more intoxicating than ruling over millions?

Those who have tasted the wonders of power are like wolves who have starved for too long-they can never be satiated! Tens of thousands, millions, eventually turning the entire world into their slaves-that’s the deep-seated professional ethic of every domination sorcerer.

For Yvaren, she felt trapped in the Gospel, confined within this kingdom brimming with miracles, covered in gospels, with no room for any adventurous pursuits.

Such a world is a haven for the weak, but a prison for the strong.

And now, with the opportunity to break free from this cage finally within reach, how could Yvaren not be willing to provide a little help?

In Ashe and Qenna’s plan, pulling Yvaren into their scheme would bring the success rate to 50%!

As they quickly exchanged their plans through the Gospel Book, Anfel suddenly realized something. “Since Ashe is already here, could Igor and the others be here too?”

Qenna smiled faintly. “What do you think of these two chefs’ skills?”

In the seafood area, there were only the Belldate sisters, so the two chefs naturally became their exclusive ones. One was slightly darker-skinned, excellent in slicing and cooking, while the other excelled in plating and seasoning...

It was at that moment that Yvaren sensed something was off. She had no distinct impression of the other chef!

Height, hair color, skin tone, age, eye color... all of his features were blurry. Every time, her attention was entirely focused on the food he served, with no mental resources allocated to his appearance, making it impossible to form a clear image of him in her mind!

This was... the Domination Sect’s Attention Domination!

“Excuse me, ladies.”

In Anfel’s flushed gaze, the blond chef placed a plate of scallops on the table. “Your order of scallops has arrived.”

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

Chapter 493: Empress Yisuo

“Why is Senhaeser fighting with Belldate?”

“I heard Belldate was called a midget.”

“That’s just too much, right? It’s not like Belldate is extremely short. Is it necessary to attack her weaknesses like that? Plus, Senhaeser is so much taller than her; fighting her is like using a fire hose from the second floor.”

“Even if Belldate had a reason to start the fight, there was no need for Senhaeser to get entangled with her.”

“Because both of Senhaeser’s sisters were insulted by Belldate.”

“What did she say?”

“Probably something along the lines of calling them overzealous, attacking from all sides, seeking reinforcements, scheming inside and out, being slick-tongued...”

Tap!

Yvaren landed lightly on the dessert table, and with a quick stomp of her little boots, the entire table shattered into powder. She then leaped, tracing a blue arc through the air, approaching Nona. In the blink of an eye, her right hand was about to grab the Elf’s nape!

Fist-Claw Miracle: Evil Twist!

Nona’s body suddenly gleamed with a layer of oil. As soon as Yvaren’s hand touched her nape, it slid off. Instead, Nona used Yvaren’s force to spin in place, her long right leg tracing a crescent arc, like a razor cloud, kicking towards the blue-haired girl!

Water Spell Miracle: Flame Burst!

Boom!

With a thunderous explosion, thick black smoke billowed out, and all the nearby tables were overturned and shattered!

Yvaren escaped from the black smoke, landing on another table with a graceful posture, her limbs touching the surface lightly. Her eyes had turned into vertical pupils, her expression resembling that of a frantic jackal. Her clear blue hair was now tainted with black grime, and her luxurious, elegant gown had spots tainted with blood.

Nona waved to disperse the black smoke. By now, the Elf was entirely drenched in transparent oil, her entire body sticky and wet, with droplets of oil sliding off her hair tips, fingertips, and hem, forming thin, long threads, soaking the carpet completely.

With a low growl from Yvaren, Belldate's elder sister and Senhaeser's younger sister started fighting again. Explosions and clashes echoed relentlessly. In moments, the banquet hall looked like a junkyard, lively as if fireworks had just gone off.

Such situations were not surprising at all. Although Yvaren primarily studied within the Fist-Claw Sect, her combat style was more akin to a cat than a bear. It was completely normal for her battles to turn the surroundings into a complete mess.

The Fist-Claw Sect is considered the easiest spellcasting sect to get into – quite literally, “if you have hands, you're in.” This means that the Fist-Claw Sect's spirits are the most varied, and its styles the most diverse. The differences in fighting styles within the Fist-Claw Sect are so vast that they rival the differences between entirely different spellcasting sects. Other sorcerers rarely delve into the nuances of fist-claw sorcerers and broadly categorize them into “Bear,” “Cat,” “Wolf,” and “Eagle” types.

Yvaren was a classic “Cat” type, rejecting all forms of frontal combat, excelling in agility and ambushes, constantly seeking out her enemy's weaknesses and flaws. It was only natural that her fights would inevitably involve tearing up everything around her. Search the [novelFire.net](http://novelfire.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

However, Nona was the bane of close-combat sects-she specialized in a derived branch of the Water Sect known as “Oil!”

This was a niche but powerful branch within the Water Sect because oil has two major properties: lubrication and flammability. By mastering these properties to their fullest, Nona could slide away from most close-combat attacks thanks to the oil film on her skin. In close encounters, almost no one could actually touch her skin!

Some might think, “If she's covered in oil, why not just set her on fire?” But the truth is, her enemies didn't even have to do that-Nona herself would ignite the glycerin on her body, sometimes using it as a lethal finishing move! As for why she wasn't affected herself, well, that's where the Miracle came in.

Although she was a water sorcerer, Nona excelled in explosions, burning, and close combat, making her a true anomaly among water sorcerers! Consequently, her battles were filled with constant explosions, a perfect match against Yvaren, who excelled in evasion and ambushes-practically making them a demolition duo!

Most guests retreated to the back, watching the chaos unfold with a sense of schadenfreude. However, some felt compelled to step in and stop the fight. But at that moment, someone nearby would immediately persuade them, "Why bother getting involved? Didn't you see their own people standing back and just watching?"

The onlookers squinted and realized that Belldate's sister, Anfel, and Senhaeser's patriarch, Qenna, were standing not far away, giving silent approval to this ill-timed and misplaced conflict. As for why neither of them stepped in, it was easy to understand – Qenna was a Sanctuary Sorcerer, which meant her involvement would be seen as bullying. Anfel, on the other hand, wasn't even a sorcerer, making her involvement equally one-sided.

Only Nona and Yvaren, both two-wings sorcerers, were evenly matched in combat power. It made perfect sense for them to defend their family honor. However, seeing Qenna and Anfel standing back and watching their respective sisters fight had the same feel as summoners watching their spirits brawl.

Smash!

Yvaren stepped back and accidentally crushed a grand volcanic lava cake underfoot. She was fine, but the adjacent attendant got splashed with cake. At that moment, Nona charged forward and delivered a mid-air kick. The glycerin on her high-heeled boot ignited in the narrow contact, causing a massive explosion that echoed violently through the hall, jolting everyone's eardrums!

Yvaren, like a lynx, leaped up and clung to the chandelier, while Nona quickly distanced herself from the blast zone, grabbing the unfortunate attendant who had been caught in their fight. With a flick, she tossed the cake-and-oil-covered attendant away. The guests moved aside and left a clear path for the hapless servant to roll out.

Perfect.

Nona and Yvaren exchanged a glance, ready to escalate the battle to involve the other attendants.

But just then, a steady, clear footstep echoed through the hall.

Both of them suddenly felt their bodies go rigid as their spirits, usually vibrant within their souls, huddled together in fear. The air grew heavy like lead, crushing their spines under its weight.

Adorable children dressed in exquisite outfits filed in from side doors, momentarily bewildered by the chaotic banquet hall. Then, two secret guards covered in pitch-black battle armor drew back the curtains. The elegant figure of a woman, veiled and dressed in a purple and rainbow gown, appeared before the eyes of the guests.

The hall fell silent in an instant. These once-arrogant family leaders, top-tier consortium members, and Sanctuary Sorcerers all knelt on one knee, bowing their noble heads. They greeted the Saint's arrival with reverent silence.

Though it was their first time meeting her, and despite their long-held plans to overthrow the Yisuo Dynasty and seize the throne, when she actually stood before them, they found they couldn't muster the courage to even look directly at her. Their soaring ambitions plummeted to the ground.

Soul? Miracle? Spirit?...- They racked their brains to pinpoint the source of their submission, trying to identify something extraordinary, seeking to discern any exaggeration in her formidable presence. But all their thoughts converged on one chilling possibility: she had done nothing at all.

Does a cat need to do anything to make a mouse flee? Does the sun need to do anything to evoke awe in humans? Does hell need to do anything to instill fear in the living?

While she looked human and moved like a human, everyone was acutely aware that the entity seated on the throne was not human.

The only difference between her and them was that she happened to wear a human guise.

That was the most terrifying part: they knew she wasn't human, but they had no idea what she truly was inside. This ambiguity of the unknown most stirred their primal fear.

"At ease."

Only then did they raise their heads, seeing her resting lightly against the throne, hands clasped tightly on her lap. The purple veil concealed most of her features, revealing just a pair of emerald-like, dazzling eyes. Two secret guards stood on either side, but everyone knew they were mere decorations.

The Empress needed no protection.

"The birth of the New Empress is now less than an hour away," she began, delivering news that made many hearts skip a beat. "During the transition period, the New Empress will need considerable time to take over the First Gospel and will be too occupied to address your needs. Therefore, if you have any reasonable requests, you may present them now, and Raypel will handle them immediately."

Raypel was the Empress's self-given title, not her real name – an Empress's real name was never shared publicly. This custom stemmed from the peculiar mechanism of the Gospel Ranking: when announcing the First Gospel, the Gospel Ranking wouldn't disclose the Echoer's full name. Instead, it takes a character from the name and combines it with the Gospel to form a new name.

This wasn't a deliberate concealment by the Gospel; rather, it was the Gospel's way of expressing affection, much like giving a pet a nickname instead of using its general name.

Moreover, with past Empresses always veiled during their appearance on the Ranking, for seven centuries of the Yisuo Dynasty, no one had ever known an Empress's true visage or name. The title "Empress of Yisuo" didn't refer to any specific emperor but was a collective designation for all Empresses within those seven hundred years.

Senhaeser and Belldate had initially planned to stir up trouble and provoke chaos in the hall, hoping that the Empress would question their disruptive behavior and they could then make a scene. However, the Empress completely ignored the commotion, leaving them too intimidated to act on their own.

At that moment, a little girl accidentally stepped on a rotten orange and fell to the carpet with a thud. Though she wasn't hurt, the incident momentarily drew the Empress's attention.

Without a word from the Empress, the secret guard beside her opened the Gospel Book. Instantly, all the dirt, food, garbage, and broken tables in the hall were levitated into the air. The attendants quickly moved in to clean up, restoring order before exiting the hall. The children hired to liven up the banquet also filed out, while other attendants brought in chairs. Within moments, the banquet was transformed into a meeting.

"Sit down," the Empress commanded. "Time is short."

Qenna watched as the attendants left the hall, then slowly took her seat. She had just mustered the courage to raise her hand when an urgent voice from the back interrupted her: "Your Majesty, where is my uncle, Mr. Bophis?"

The speaker was a Sanctuary sorcerer from the Mercury Family. Qenna had met Bophis years ago when she was still a two-wings sorcerer, and Bophis was already a Shadow Legend.

Bophis's most astounding achievement was enclosing a juvenile Shadow Evil Drake in shadows and bringing it back to reality, successfully enslaving it. Now, everyone knew the Mercury Family possessed a formidable Shadow Evil Drake, and it seemed the family had also discovered some techniques to aid in virtual realm exploration from studying the drake. Over the past thirty years, the number of two-wings sorcerers in their family had surged.

“He is studying the Truth in the Royal Palace,” replied the Empress.

“Then why hasn’t he come to see me?” demanded the Mercury sorcerer. “The last time he returned to the family, he gave me a Shadow mark, saying that if I ever activated it, he would come to me immediately, no matter where he was. Now I am here in Nabistin and have activated the mark, but he still hasn’t appeared. Why?”

“Because he no longer cares about the Family, nor about you,” the Empress responded calmly. “This is the path all Nabistin sorcerers choose for the pursuit of Truth. To discover their own Truth before their life ends, they must travel lightly and abandon all burdens.”

“The path to Truth is the path of Angels, a path beyond humanity, and a path of solitude,” she continued, looking at Mercury. “From the moment Bophis left the Family, you should have come to this realization.”

Truth... Qenna sighed softly in her heart.

If it weren’t for her Family, she might already be a Nabistin sorcerer by now.

‘Nabistin sorcerer’ isn’t a regional term but specifically refers to those sorcerers invited by the Royal Family to live on the land or even within the Royal Palace of Nabistin, continuing their spellcasting studies by listening to the Gospel.

Typically, only Sanctuary sorcerers qualify for this, but the highest level these sorcerers can reach within Sanctuary is limited. To progress further, they must rely on the aid of the Gospel.

Over the centuries, many Sanctuary sorcerers have successfully advanced to legendary status in Nabistin, while few have accomplished this feat independently outside. After all, the contrast is stark: on one hand, sorcerers research on their own without guidance; on the other, they have teachers offering round-the-clock mentoring. For sorcerers who often hit barriers in Sanctuary, resisting such temptation is difficult.

However, Nabistin sorcerers come with one important characteristic: severing family ties.

Upon arriving in Nabistin, most Sanctuary sorcerers quickly refuse any contact with their Family. Legendary sorcerers receive royal patronage and undergo relentless training in the depths of the Royal Palace, often never emerging until their death.

Despite this, a multitude of Sanctuary sorcerers continue to accept the Royal Family’s invitation, driven by the overwhelming allure of mastering spellcasting compared to worldly attachments. Especially when their path forward seems unclear, they are willing to pay any price to glimpse higher achievements.

Besides a certain Mudborn sorcerer, most Sanctuary sorcerers are idealists with a passionate pursuit of spellcasting. Those Red Hat Sanctuary sorcerers still active in the outside world are likely amassing Gospel points, so they can receive more substantial Gospel guidance upon retirement in Nabistin.

For example, Cleos is so obsessed with being ranked first on the “National Red Hat Ranking” because such a retirement ranking directly grants her access to the Royal Palace where she can listen to the Gospel, almost guaranteeing her ascension to legendary status!

Over the centuries, all Sanctuary Legends come to Nabistin to complete the final journey of their lives. The only exception is Vamora-the bonds of his Family shackled every patriarch, and even legendary necromancers willingly devoted their lives to the Family. Whether their efforts were righteous or not is another matter.

Currently, all legendary sorcerers influenced by the Gospel are studying in the palatial complexes deep within the Royal Palace, leaving no legends out in the world.

Besides the Red Hats, those Sanctuary sorcerers still outside either have attachments more important than spellcasting or unresolved conflicts in the secular world.

In short, Mercury could abandon any hope of relying on his Family’s legendary support.

Mercury sighed and pleaded, “Our Family’s future is already teetering on the brink. Could you allow my uncle to meet with me? I only ask that he intervenes at critical moments to save the Family from its downward spiral.”

The Empress nodded but did not respond directly. Instead, she asked, “Does anyone else have any other requests?”

“Archibald Harvey is an extremely dangerous individual. Allowing him to stay alive poses a threat to all our Families. Why hasn’t he been hunted down?”

“Ashe Heath is clearly the key figure behind the Doomsday disaster. Why was his warrant withdrawn?”

“Why has the Gospel been so influenced by Ashe Heath, causing the latter half of the Weaving Festival’s Future Ranking to be almost entirely invalid?”

“Igor Bukin will eventually establish the Four Pillars Cult; he must be eliminated as soon as possible!”

“Why did the Gospel weave the Doomsday scenes seen in the Art Ranking? Where was the Yisuo Royal Family during that time?”

Qenna raised her hand and posed a piercing question: “In the Happiness Ranking, it was mentioned that the future Empress of the Yisuo Royal Family also fell to Ashe Heath, and even the rankings were invalidated. Does this mean the next Empress no longer qualifies to control the Gospel?”

This question was no less than a challenge to the throne, leaving everyone momentarily speechless. However, the Empress did not react immediately. She waited for a moment until no one else spoke, then slowly said, “All the questions you mentioned ultimately boil down to a single issue: Does the New Empress have the ability to continue controlling the Gospel and protecting all living beings?”

“And this, Raypel cannot answer.”

Everyone was stunned for a moment.

“Because this answer,” the Empress continued, “will be given to you by the New Empress herself. The Gospel has already woven the best future, and in one hour, we will step into a new era.”

The best future?

It was difficult for everyone to reconcile the chaotic ranking lists caused by the Doomsday trio with the notion of the ‘best future.’ However, since the Empress had said so, they were willing to wait an hour.

At this moment, Yvaren suddenly spoke up, “I heard that several days ago there was a disturbance in the Royal Palace. It is rumored that the princess, the future Empress of Yisuo, who resides in the Tower, has gone missing. Is that true?”

The Empress slightly tilted her head to look at Yvaren. While her gaze showed no emotion, it made Yvaren so nervous that even her blue hair seemed to stand on end.

“The First Gospel will ascend to the throne in the Tower,” the Empress replied. “The Gospel has woven the best future, and no one can thwart the arrangement of fate.”

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

Chapter 494: Smooth Ascent to the Tower

Outside the banquet hall, the attendants, having cleaned up the remaining trash, sat down nearby to rest.

Ashe and his companions exchanged glances, stretching their bodies and realizing the shackles of their positions were truly gone.

The plan was simple and brutal – since they were bound to their posts, they just needed to eliminate those posts to stop working. If you make the company go bankrupt, can you still go to work?

So, Yvaren and Nona staged an impressive fight, turning the banquet scene into a crime scene. For them, there was no risk involved; apart from some reputation loss, at worst they'd just pay money. Belldate and Senhaeser lacked many things, but money wasn't one of them.

And the plan unfolded smoothly: The Empress decided to cancel the banquet, so the attendants specifically tasked with the banquet naturally transitioned from 'working' to 'on standby,' temporarily gaining the freedom to touch fish.

Without the constraints of their posts and being inside the Royal Palace, they could finally go to the Tower to rescue the princess-

"Perfect timing, follow me."

A distorted, hoarse voice came from behind, startling Ashe and his companions. Turning around, they saw a black-armored secret guard appear on the stone path behind them, seemingly heading off to work, and upon seeing a group of idle workers by the roadside, decided to incorporate them into his task group.

Just as this flawed plan seemed about to stumble to a successful conclusion, an unexpected twist threatened its success. Banjeet, unable to conceal his frustration, asked as calmly as he could, "What do you need us to do? Does it require so many people?"

"Hmm?"

The secret guard glanced strangely at the blue-haired attendant, making everyone feel a sudden tension.

However, the secret guard didn't question the obedient attendants' inquiry but instead explained proactively, "Of course, it needs this many people. We have to clean the New Empress's room. Let's go."

The New Empress!?

Annan and the others exchanged shocked looks – was the secret guard taking them to see the princess?

However, according to the Royal Palace map, the direction the secret guard was taking them in wasn't towards the Tower at all. Had the Yisuo Royal Family suddenly moved the princess to a different location? Or perhaps the princess needed to dress and prepare in a new room before officially ascending, and then appear in the banquet once the "Gospel Ranking" was announced?

Within moments, countless possibilities ran through Annan's mind, but their bodies were already obeying the secret guard's command to stand up. Annan and the others widened their eyes in surprise as they saw Ashe still sitting in his chair, his face lighting up with a look of joy.

Stick to the original plan.

After signaling with her eyes, Annan and the others followed the secret guard away.

Ashe didn't dare move until their figures completely vanished around the corner. He wasn't sure why he hadn't been included in the secret guard's group. Could it have been the influence of the silver blessing "Observer's Visage," making the secret guard overlook him in his quick glance? Or the power of the Golden Blessing "Listener's Woe," whereby the secret guard's intent to interrupt his touch-fish moment as 'malicious overtime' was dissipated? Or was it the "Mysterious Power" at play again – Ashe, sitting close to the trash bin with oil and cake around, was simply mistaken for part of the trash?

Regardless, Ashe was now free. He took just a couple of steps before spotting Lise peeking out from around a wall. Father and daughter reunited successfully.

Compared to Ashe and his companions, Lise's infiltration was ridiculously simple – the Court Banquet often hired children to enliven the atmosphere. Their role was just to eat, drink, and bring joy to the banquet. Since this wasn't considered work (Gospel controlling people to eat, drink, and play was just too weird), Lise hadn't entered the 'Gospel employee' state.

After the banquet ended early, the other children had been sent back in advance, giving Lise the perfect opportunity to slip away and find Ashe.

When Ashe had suggested involving Lise in the mission, Banjeet and Igor had predictably opposed the idea, Harvey abstained, and Annan was noncommittal, opting to discuss it with Ashe privately.

Ashe had been prepared to use every trick up his sleeve to persuade his superior, but Annan simply asked him seriously whether he had thought it through. When Ashe

affirmed that he had, Annan instructed Ashe to ensure Lise wouldn't reveal or expose their plan, allowing her to join in the mission.

Ashe later realized that the reason he thought Annan would oppose the idea was because he assumed she would be as concerned for Lise's safety as he was. But in reality, as long as Lise didn't jeopardize the plan, Annan didn't mind her accompanying them on the final adventure of the Funeral journey – though she was certainly considering Ashe's feelings.

For instance, when Harvey shamelessly suggested that Alice also double as an attendant ready to serve at any moment, Annan decisively vetoed it.

Ashe, holding Lise's hand, snuck along the palace pathways, briefly explaining what had just happened. He speculated, "Do you think your sister Nina is no longer in the Tower?"

Lise hesitated, glanced at her hand mirror, and nervously said, "Before moving into the Tower, Sister Nina used to live in the basement. Maybe Aunt Annan and the others are cleaning the basement, which also counts as Nina's room."

The basement?

Was the Yisuo Royal Family's education strategy one of austerity? Though something about a girl in the basement sounded oddly familiar.

As the two crept through the shadows, they surprisingly encountered no attendants or guards. A few minutes later, they spotted the target – the Tower.

Lise softly exclaimed, "There are guards posted at the base of the White Tower!"

"I'll handle it," Ashe responded confidently. "Just a few guards shouldn't be a problem, unless–"

"It could be a Sanctuary," Lise clutched Ashe's coat tightly. "The guard captain is a Sanctuary Sorcerer, and given how important tonight is, it's possible the captain is guarding the Tower in person."

Sanctuary...- Ashe tugged at the corner of his mouth. Although he was a semi-Sanctuary Sorcerer, he knew the significant gap between him and a full-fledged Sanctuary.

Let alone defeating one, should they encounter a Sanctuary Sorcerer proficient in the Spatial Sect, Ashe could be instantly killed. Many Spellcasting Sects gained transformative powers when combined with the Spatial Sect, making their combat methods bewilderingly difficult to defend against. For example, the Sword Princess once

mentioned a technique where a Fist-Claw Sanctuary could remotely extract someone's heart.

Only by forming a Sanctuary could one withstand such unpredictable Spatial Miracles. For Sanctuary Sorcerers, battling non-Sanctuary opponents was child's play.

"I'll try to lure the guards away," Ashe said, "and when the coast is clear, you sneak in and get your sister out."

"Dad, can you fight a Sanctuary Sorcerer?"

"No guarantees."

"Then what will you do?"

Ashe patted Lise's head. "If you only did things you were certain about in life, I'd still be in prison discussing how to make Lala Fatty tastier with Igor. Don't worry, I'm not an idiot. I'm not going to engage them head-on. Once I lure the guards away, I'll make a run for it."

"Really?" Lise looked at him sorrowfully. "Are you sure you're not an idiot?"

"...I've noted that. I'll let Annan spank you later."

"But if you're not an idiot, why are you so kind to me?" As they drew closer to their destination, Lise felt increasingly distressed. "Fighting for my sister, striving for my wish..."

"Putting aside that this is all Annan's mission," Ashe squatted down and gently hugged the sorrowful white-haired girl. "I'm kind to you because you deserve it."

"Am I really that great? Am I the best little girl?"

"To be honest, Leia from the ranking list is a bit better than you."

Lise grabbed Ashe's face and huffed, "Don't like any other little girl!"

"Don't make it sound like I'm committing a crime," Ashe laughed and cried at the same time. "I just think of you as family. Come on, we don't have much time, don't keep your sister waiting."

Strangely, though they exchanged only light-hearted words, the gloom in Lise's heart was dispelled, replaced by a glimmer of hope.

Maybe when Lise first picked Ashe out of the hall of the Four Pillars Cult, it was because of this indescribable sense of security he exuded.

As they approached Lake Yalan, they realized their earlier discussion had been a waste of time – there were no guards at the tower’s base. The lake didn’t have any boats, but Ashe had a Swordsmanship Movement Miracle called “Rush,” so he directly carried Lise and teleported them across.

The doves around Heart Island curiously eyed the uninvited guests. Ashe and Lise cautiously approached the tower’s entrance. While there were no guards outside, it was certain there would be inside – there was no way no one was guarding the princess.

However, when Ashe forcefully pushed open the door, ready for a fierce confrontation, he found the Tower completely empty. The ever-bright lamps were well-lit, the floors spotless, but there were no signs of life.

Could the guards be hiding in the passageways? Ashe examined the spiral passage clinging to the tower wall, trying to search for any signs of enemies. At that moment, he noticed Lise staring at a passage leading downward. “What’s the matter?” he asked.

“Nothing,” Lise glanced at her hand mirror and said, “I just didn’t know the Tower had a basement...”

“To maximize space, having a basement is quite normal.” Ashe advised, “Keep a step back from me; we might end up fighting in these passageways.”

Lise nodded, and the two cautiously ascended the Tower.

A minute later, Ashe and Lise stood in front of the door to the highest room, exchanging bewildered glances – could it really be this easy?

No guards, no alarms, no obstructions-they had reached their destination effortlessly.

“Could it be that sister Nina really isn’t in the Tower?” Lise murmured.

This completely unguarded state could only mean that there was nothing valuable or important to protect inside the Tower.

“If she’s truly somewhere else, Annan and the others will find a way to get me there. After all, I’m essential for the invalid ranking list,” Ashe reassured her. “We still have a chance.”

Lise nodded and turned to look at the door. Although it was her first time here, her other sisters had been confined here for years, and she felt a strange sense of unfamiliar familiarity wash over her body.

Even though it seemed certain there was no one inside, it would be foolish not to check. So Ashe turned the doorknob and pushed the door open.

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

Chapter 495: The First Gospel

As Annan saw more and more sentries, her heart grew heavier.

If the princess was not in the Tower, but deep within the Royal Palace they were approaching, Ashe would have no chance of getting through – there were simply too many guard posts along the way. If Ashe attempted, an alarm would be triggered. And if her senses were correct, they had just passed by at least two Sanctuaries.

Although it was no secret that Nabistin had a high concentration of Sanctuaries and legends, she hadn't expected such a dense gathering of high-ranking sorcerers!

Purple Moth was starting to regret having Ashe follow the original plan. But given the situation at the time, splitting up was undoubtedly the best choice. If the princess was still in the Tower, Ashe could directly complete the mission; if the princess was on their side, she could inform Ashe to come and assist.

However, the guards were so tight here that their target had to be someone important, most likely the New Empress. The bad news was they would have to complete the mission themselves.

Annan slightly turned her head to exchange glances with Banjeet, Igor, and Harvey, silently updating their plan. Harvey and Banjeet each had a card in their hand, ready to summon a coffin and the Frost Twin Guns if needed.

It was clear that Banjeet's suitcase couldn't be brought into the Royal Palace. Besides, in the likely event that they had to escape, simply running wouldn't suffice-they needed a mode of transport. Having a spatial artifact would be crucial for their survival.

Thus, Banjeet dismantled the suitcase, using a significant amount of Gospel points to transform it into six cards with spatial storage capabilities that any sorcerer could use. The trade-off was that the internal space was reduced by 90% and had limited durability.

After passing through the sixth guard post, they finally reached their destination: a small, ivory-white palace surrounded by violets.

Within the palace, there was a passage leading underground. Attendants followed behind the secret guards, filing in orderly. Crossing a certain step felt like passing through an invisible barrier. The faces of the Funeral members changed dramatically-spirits cowered, virtual wings drew back. This was the same overwhelming presence felt when the Empress herself appeared!

At this moment, they were absolutely certain that the New Empress was below! But what they hadn't anticipated was that the Empress had already shifted most of her power there-did they really have a way to kill the Saint who would govern the Gospel for the next fifty years?

Purple Moth cast a resolute glance at the group.

Having come this far, there was no room for retreat!

No matter what, this would be Funeral's final mission!

Igor's expression was extremely grim; it was evident he had no interest in dying alongside Annan. Banjeet's expression remained calm; he had already steeled himself. Only Harvey's lips curled slightly, revealing his excitement.

"Ugh," came the voice of a secret guard from ahead. "Disgusting, clean that up quickly."

Annan and the others stepped into the Underground Hall beneath the palace, and the first thing they saw was a gruesome corpse: the head appeared to have exploded like a melon, with fluids splattered everywhere, explaining the secret guard's reaction.

However, if their mood had been heavy and uneasy before, now it was outright terror!

They saw that the virtual wings of the headless corpse were dissipating, revealing silver wings, Golden Wings, rainbow wings, and... Dark Wings!

The Dark Wings continuously emitted darkness that quickly corroded and assimilated everything it touched!

This had been a legendary sorcerer who had manifested their fourth 'colorless wings,' specializing in the Shadow Sect, which allowed them to taint the colorless wings with their unique shade.

The corpse was unmistakably that of a recently deceased Shadow Legend!

Even Harvey, who had the greatest interest in corpses, felt no curiosity now. Witnessing such a powerful sorcerer, far superior in both skill and realm, smashed like a melon was a profound shock.

However, when they lifted their heads, the sight that met their eyes shattered their sanity entirely.

The Underground Hall had only one light source in the center. Sorcerers sat around it, legs crossed and hands clasped as if in prayer. With just one glance, Annan identified many of them: Igore, Mondara, Bojezia, Aboli... all legendary sorcerers who had ascended Ruby Mountain in the last hundred years!

But their attention was seized instantly by the presence at the center of the light source, which absorbed all of Funeral's focus.

There was a throne, and on the throne sat a figure.

But to say it was a person would be incorrect, for this 'person' was composed of transparent, flowing light. The only light source in the hall, their form shimmered with purple, gold, and silver hues.

Moreover, it wasn't just one figure; it was like two people fused together. One side resembled a man in a dark red trench coat, while the other side appeared as a beautiful woman in Court attire.

This bizarre entity, sitting on the throne, induced a strange urge to worship.

The most shocking part for Funeral was naturally that they recognized one 'half' of the man.

Ashe Heath.

Half of this luminous figure bore the face of Ashe!

At this moment, Harvey and Igor exchanged a glance, and Igor lightly shook his head.

They not only recognized 'half' of the man but also the 'other half' of the woman-they couldn't forget her because, in the Virtual Realm Arena, she and a female swordsman had defeated them, causing them to miss the chance to kill the heroic soul commander!

While similar appearances were common, so much time had passed that they weren't sure if it was the same person, making it unnecessary to mention it.

By now, the attendants had begun cleaning up the corpse, and Annan and the others dared not slack off-they had no intention of causing trouble here anymore.

"Hmph, just when it was about to end, now we can't keep our focus...-" a secret guard muttered as he opened the Gospel Book. "Hmm?"

It seemed something was happening outside, and the secret guard left the Underground Hall, leaving the attendants behind. Once the sound of his footsteps faded, Igor began to pant heavily-he had been so tense that he forgot to breathe.

Though surrounded by a dozen legendary sorcerers, Annan and her group had a strong intuition: these legendary sorcerers, like the attendants, were just shells controlled by the Gospel and not worth worrying about.

Harvey eyed the headless corpse greedily. "This corpse..."

"Don't even think about it," Annan warned in a low voice, keeping her gaze on the luminous figure on the throne. "What exactly is that?"

"Even you don't know?" Igor's frustration was evident. "I've never wronged you this much, have I? If you're suicidal, you could ask Harvey for help. Why drag us into such a perilous mission full of unexpected dangers?"

"That is a deity," Banjeet said, closing his Gospel Book. "As for which deity, the Gospel doesn't say."

"Why does the deity have Ashe's face?" Harvey asked, bewildered. "This is disgusting... Hey, look closely. Isn't the part that belongs to Ashe increasing?"

Everyone focused and indeed noticed the change. Whereas before, the luminous body was roughly 60% Ashe and 40% female, it was now 70% Ashe and 30% female, with Ashe's 'invasion' accelerating!

Annan had a puzzled look. "No way..."

"Do I need to beg you to get some Intelligence?" Igor said coldly.

Annan hesitated. "I'm not certain... I once read about an ancient Summoning Ritual in my Family's archives called 'Armored Sanctification.' The principle involves a sorcerer imitating a deity's behavior, demeanor, and appearance to summon the deity into their own body, ultimately achieving complete fusion and wielding divine power within a mortal shell."

"However, this ritual has fallen into obscurity, mainly because deities no longer exist in reality."

"What does that have to do with a deity having Ashe's face-" Igor started to retort but then suddenly froze, realization dawning on him.

"People imitate deities to merge with them," Annan murmured. "So what happens when a deity imitates a person?"

As they spoke, the luminous figure's 'Ashe' had fully taken over, reaching a 100% complete form!

At the same time, everyone's Gospel Book automatically opened.

Creak.

The doorframe let out a nostalgic groan as Ashe and Lise stepped into the princess's room, finding it lit.

A soft bed covered with white sheets, a cherry-pink bookshelf filled with beautifully bound fairy tales, a clean and comfortable carpet, and a teacup with a bear pattern turned upside down on the coffee table-all these elements spoke of a young girl residing here.

But there was one piece of furniture in the room that stood out, not only surprising Lise and her sister, but also Ashe.

In the center of the room stood a lavish full-length mirror, directly facing the entrance. As Ashe and Lise walked in, they saw their reflections in it.

As they were taken aback, their Gospel Books suddenly popped open.

It's over, it's too late, they thought.

However, instead of feeling disheartened, Lise felt a weight lifted off her chest, her body becoming lighter, her mood brightening significantly. Since it was too late, there was no need to cling to Nina anymore; they had done their best.

From now on, their lives would be for themselves and Ashe.

But that hopeful feeling for the future vanished as quickly as it came.

"10th on the Gospel Ranking, Art Maestro."

"9th on the Gospel Ranking, Family's Shadow."

"8th on the Gospel Ranking, Source of Schemes."

"7th on the Gospel Ranking, End of Happiness."

"6th on the Gospel Ranking, Nemesis of Evil Arts."

"5th on the Gospel Ranking, Nightmare Assassin."

"4th on the Gospel Ranking, Ruthless Person..."

The Gospel Ranking updated swiftly, and Ashe's heart sank quickly. By the time it updated to the last page, he no longer had the strength to turn it.

Bang!

At that moment, fifty fireworks exploded in Nabistin's sky, the intense resonance tearing through the spatial barrier. Bright purple spiderweb fireworks instantly spread across the entire Gospel night sky, enveloping it under the rule of the web.

"1st on the Gospel Ranking, Ashpel."

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

Chapter 496: Why is Ashe on the List

"Ashpel." Cleos, the 'Weeping Sand Red Cap,' gazed at the Violet Spiderweb covering the night sky of Azura, and tears of curse rolled down her cheeks.

"Ashpel." Ina, the 'Red Cicada Dame' and a primary enemy of the Happy Family Firm before the Funeral, murmured absentmindedly.

"Ashpel." The patriarch of the Six Heraldry looked up, wondering if it was time to proceed with the plan of changing everyone's surname to Senhaeser.

Vamora, Modora, Fidrola, Mephila... As the Gospel Ranking was announced and the fireworks of the Spiderweb illuminated the sky, everyone in the Gospel whispered the same name.

"Ashpel."

In the banquet hall of the Nabistin Royal Palace, the Empress rose from her throne and calmly declared the transition of power, extending her arms: "The New Empress has been born, and Ashpel will echo into the future. The Yisuo Dynasty will welcome a new Saint."

"How is this possible..."

"Why him! How could it be him? It can't be him! I will never accept it!"

"We can't allow this to happen!"

"The Weaving Festival is over, and so are we..."

When the Gospel Ranking concluded, many guests were in emotional turmoil. Especially those from the families of Mercury, Roland, and Kaesrei. They had sent people to hunt down Ashe, and their bounties on him were still listed on the Gospel market!

It wasn't just that they couldn't acknowledge Ashe as the future Saint of Yisuo; they didn't want to accept that they had made a mortal enemy of the soon-to-be supreme ruler of the Gospel!

It would have been understandable if they had known the consequences and acted accordingly, as it would be their own fault. But just a minute ago, those relentless in chasing Ashe were hailed as pillars of the Gospel, and in the next minute, they had become traitors who conspired to assassinate royalty!

From paradise to hell in one step; such an earth-shattering ordeal would be unbearable for anyone! Even during a market crash, there's a circuit breaker; at worst, you'd lose your capital with leveraged investments. But now, in one careless moment, they had lost centuries of family legacy. Even Sanctuary Sorcerers, accustomed to turmoil, would break under such pressure.

As for whether offending Ashe might not lead to problems... Well, over the past few centuries, nobody has really dared to offend the First Gospel. After all, the princess stays in the Royal Palace before ascending to the throne, and once she ascends, she becomes the emperor wielding the Gospel's power. She offends others; no one dares to offend her.

Yet, a glance at history reveals the answer: those dynasties that dared to offend the First Gospel have all become history; those famous sites that imprisoned the First Gospel are now ruins; and those rebels who tried to defy the First Gospel, their deeds didn't even make it into the records.

The reason they feared so much is that, unlike ordinary people, the families and consortiums at the very top of the ruling class are acutely aware of the absolute dominion of the Yisuo Royal Family. If the Yisuo Royal Family can suppress their fierce competition within their respective cities, it certainly has the power to obliterate them, leading to the rapid disintegration and even complete annihilation of their families within a day!

This isn't some paranoid delusion of the victims; the Yisuo Royal Family has actually done similar things in the past!

About three hundred years ago, a family produced a legendary sorcerer. He not only refused to enter Nabistin but also used his power to coerce and entice other families into submission, quickly expanding his influence across many cities. He assigned all important positions to his most trusted blood relatives and used pacts to aid in his rule, seemingly on the verge of breaking the "territorial limits" set by the Yisuo Royal Family.

They even built a tall tower, inviting various families to establish their prestige and trying to position themselves as the 'Second Gospel.'

But one night, this family suddenly met its demise. The reason? Internal conflict. Because the legendary sorcerer valued 'loyalty' over 'ability,' those who believed they had made great contributions were dissatisfied, while those who were favored didn't feel they were undeserving.

During rapid expansion, bloodline loyalty could weld together many real interests, but when the weight of those interests tipped the Balance over blood ties, the conflicts backfired tenfold.

Rebels seized the moment when the legendary sorcerer was logging into the Virtual Realm, using love to turn his daughter against him, remarkably succeeding in assassinating the legendary sorcerer. But the ensuing civil war engulfed the entire family, and nearly no one survived.

Even when looking back at this annihilated family, it was clearly their own downfall, showing no external influences. However, no one is naïve enough to think that the Yisuo Royal Family didn't intervene-after all, it's possible for a legendary sorcerer to be assassinated while logging into the Virtual Realm, but most sorcerers, no matter how secure they feel, would set up at least one or two defensive measures to guard against external interference before entering the Virtual Realm.

Perhaps this legendary sorcerer was simply careless or lazy that night, neglecting to set up any defenses before diving into the Virtual Realm. But such an incredible lapse in judgment is enough to send chills down the spine of anyone in retrospect.

Are the families like Mercury's truly unassailable fortresses?

To the Yisuo Royal Family, the castles these families have been fortifying for hundreds of years are no more robust than children's sandcastles.

The rebellious hearts of Qenna and Yvaren have been long in the making, driven not only by ambition but by fear. In fact, these two are intertwined. Once they realized that the blade of Yisuo had always been hanging over their heads, their dissatisfaction and longing were born.

So, figures like Mercury and others can't stand idly by and watch Ashe ascend to the throne-regardless of whether Ashe intends to take revenge or not.

If Ashe seeks revenge, their deaths will be swift and formalized; if Ashe does not seek revenge, they would still live in constant fear, interpreting every minor setback as a signal of Ashe making his move, effectively torturing themselves to death with paranoia.

Ultimately, the pressure exerted by the First Gospel is immense, so immense that it shatters their rational defenses. And they simply do not possess the power to oppose the First Gospel-no matter how strong they are, could they be stronger than the Elven Dynasty or the Emberflame Dynasty?

More importantly, the Yisuo Royal Family doesn't need these families to aid in governance. Though these sorcerer families possess certain advanced capabilities and play a crucial role in technological advancement and improving production efficiency, the Yisuo Royal Family inviting them to witness the throne succession signifies their importance.

But they are important, not indispensable.

Even if everyone here and their respective families were exterminated, Yisuo's rule would remain as solid as a rock, with the only consequence being a temporary stagnation in production and development, which time would eventually compensate for.

The Yisuo Royal Family never interacting with the outside world is the correct approach; no one can afford the consequences of being disliked by the princess, unless...

At this point, everyone couldn't help but glance at the main characters who had just caused a scene at the banquet.

No wonder Senhaeser and Belldate almost tore down the palace, and the Empress didn't react at all!

Qenna and Nona don't even need mentioning-the Gospel has repeatedly declared their sovereignty over Ashe, showing how much Ashe adores them; Yvaren, invalidated in the "Happiness Ranking," turned to become Ashe's secret technique, behaving like a loyal dog, as if dominated by him; and Anfel is Igor's wife, and Igor is the madman who would overthrow the entire Gospel for Ashe's resurrection. Moreover, Ashe also has a deep appreciation for Anfel's daughter Leia, making Anfel practically like Ashe's sister from another mother.

As the harem of the New Empress, what's a little palace tearing?

"Yvaren..."

"Patriarch of the Senhaeser..."

"Esteemed Lady Belldate..."

"Guardian of Vamora's Heraldry..."

As the guests began to show goodwill towards them, an angry voice echoed through the hall. search the NôvelFire(.)net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"The Gospel has deceived us!"

Mercury, eyes red with rage and teeth clenched, exclaimed, “The threshold for getting on the ‘Gospel Ranking’ is said to be ‘only the purest, most innocent, kindest, and most beautiful girl’-Why is Ashe on the list!? What right does he have!?”

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

Chapter 497: The Omniscient Weaver Adds More Content Personally

Everyone looked towards the Empress, with unresolved doubts burning in their hearts.

In fact, ever since ‘Gospel Ashe’ swept through and rendered most of the subsequent ranking lists irrelevant, they had vaguely anticipated the possibility of “Ashpel.”

Although they were mentally prepared for this outcome, it didn’t mean they understood it.

No matter how they thought about it, “the appearance of Ashpel” truly disrupted many rules of the Weaving Festival. The future woven this time was indeed chaotic and even contradictory. Mercury’s mere use of the word ‘fooling’ was already putting it mildly; they all felt like the Gospel was just messing around.

“Can’t you wait for the New Empress to give you the answers personally?”

The Empress seated herself back on the throne and calmly said, “However, now that the weaving has concluded, Raypel can also provide you with answers.”

“Firstly, Ashpel fully meets the requirements for being on the list,” she said. “In fact, the Gospel Ranking does not restrict by gender; it’s just that historically, there have been more girls, leading to your misconception. There were male First Gospels in the past; Ashpel is not an isolated instance.”

What about the labels “most pure, most innocent, most kind, most beautiful”? Just look at the harem the Gospel has reserved for him in advance, and his actions. Hasn’t he redefined the meaning of these adjectives?

To say nothing of purity-how could he still be pure now!? Search the [novelFire.net](http://novelfire.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

But these kinds of subjective personal qualities were evidently harder to attack. So, everyone questioned a more puzzling matter: “But not only is Ashe not a member of the Royal Family, he

arrived from an exotic land just a few dozen days ago. Historically, the First Gospel has always been the Yisuo Princess. Why the change this time?”

“Because the Yisuo Princess lost her qualification,” the Empress stated calmly. “So the Gospel had to reselect the First Gospel.”

“Why choose Ashe? Does he have any special qualities?” Someone asked, pretending to be straightforward. At this moment, everyone held their breath, hoping the Empress would reveal some secrets about the Gospel.

“That is naturally because he meets the requirements of the Gospel Ranking: purity, innocence, kindness, and beauty,” the Empress replied impeccably. “Moreover, the Gospel did not directly select Ashpel; he was just a backup candidate.”

At this moment, Qenna raised her hand, “Since Ashe is the First Gospel, wouldn’t the previous nine rankings be riddled with contradictions and conflicts? Why does the top three rankings imply that future doomsday disasters are related to Ashe? And why did Ashpel nullify the rankings of the Last Six Rankings?”

“Because Ashe underwent a change significant enough to influence the Gospel’s judgment,” the Empress explained. “The Gospel can only achieve ‘limited omniscience’; as an exotic land individual, the Gospel could not fully foresee Ashpel’s future.”

“In the Art Ranking, Ashpel was indeed seen by the Gospel as the origin of the doomsday disasters, which prompted Nabistin to issue a wanted notice for him. However, between the Art Ranking and the Family Ranking, Ashpel experienced a turning point.”

“What turning point?” Yvaren asked.

The Empress did not answer directly: “If Ashpel was just a backup candidate before, starting from the Family Ranking, Ashpel became the only choice for the First Gospel. It could only be him; it had to be him.”

People couldn’t help but look at Senhaeser-in the gap between the Art Ranking and the Family Ranking, Ashe had been living with Senhaeser. Therefore, Ashe must have encountered a significant turning point there, which led to him becoming the officially designated candidate for the First Gospel.

What treasure did you Senhaeser folks hide, and why did this fortune end up in the hands of an outsider? Wait, on second thought, Ashe almost seemed to be considered part of their own field...

Nona glanced at Qenna, who frowned slightly.

She remembered that Ashe spent those days playing games and didn't encounter any unusual events in real life. So, where exactly did he experience his turning point?

"The Family Ranking and the Ranking of Schemes were both influenced by Ashpel's efforts to save the Gospel," the Empress continued, "In the face of natural disasters, the living were no longer sufficient to resist, so complete necromancy was required; in the face of man-made calamities, Ashpel's premature fall necessitated the Rust Crow's resurrection journey."

"By the time of the Happiness Ranking, another turning point had occurred. However, this turning point was not related to Ashpel but was triggered by the interference of the Omniscient Weaver."

Omniscient Weaver!?

Upon hearing this supreme revelation, everyone was left in shock. They had never imagined that a mere once-in-fifty-years Weaving Festival would attract the gaze of the Divine Sovereign-this even silenced Mercury.

So what if Ashe is from an exotic land? He passed under the scrutiny of the Omniscient Weaver, certifying him like no other could.

"The reason for the interference is unknown, but the results of the interference are as you have all seen," the Empress stated. "Starting from the Family Ranking, the subsequent ranking lists represent Ashpel's 'new future,' which has nothing to do with the 'grim future' depicted in the Art Ranking. However, the Divine Sovereign's interference is the greatest variable. With the Omniscient Weaver's attention, the Gospel successfully wove a 'perfect future' even better than the 'new future.'"

"In this 'perfect future,' the subsequent six rankings, including the Happiness Ranking, are impossible to achieve, so they must be nullified. In reality, the previous three rankings should also be nullified, but they were not retracted because they had already been announced."

Anfel murmured, "A 'perfect future' better than the 'new future'? What's the difference?"

"The first nine rankings were all premised on the inevitability of doomsday disasters, even the 'new future'," the Empress explained. "But in the 'perfect future' watched over by the Omniscient Weaver, we will preemptively eliminate the calamities and narrowly avoid doomsday."

"Natural disasters, necromantic families, Rust Crow schemes, and everything else that Ashpel nullified-they won't happen."

"The Gospel wove for us the most benevolent Ashpel, and the Omniscient Weaver pointed out the noise that brings chaos to all."

At that moment, the previously silent Gospel Book seemed to come to life again.

The bright purple bookmark was completely different from the Weaving Festival's update prompts, causing everyone to wonder: Was this an epilogue personally added by the Omniscient Weaver?

"It's time." The Empress opened to the bookmarked page and issued a command to an unknown recipient: "Bring back Ashpel and eliminate the noise."

"Ugh!"

Ashe suddenly lunged forward, knocking over the full-length mirror. With a loud crash, the mirror shattered into countless pieces on the floor.

"Dad!?"

Lise rushed over to help Ashe, who was kneeling with his hands clutching his head amidst the shards. "Dad, what's wrong? Don't scare me, Dad!"

Ashe couldn't hear Lise's voice; his fingers were digging into his scalp like iron spikes, trying to counter the chaotic memories flooding his mind with pain! He wanted to scream, but every sound was trapped in his throat; he wanted to vent, but his body refused to obey.

In his vision, the shattered fragments of the mirror played out memories he had no recollection of: he had manipulated a young sorcerer, leading him to jump off a bridge; he had drained a Siren of water and tossed it into a fountain in the square; he had stood outside the restroom, staring at Banjeet who was washing his hands inside...

These memories were so vivid, the emotions in them so intense, yet they were entirely distinct from his original memories. Ashe not only couldn't digest these memories, but he also felt as if his very soul might be consumed by them!

"Dad, Dad!" Seeing Ashe in such a state of torment and hysteria, Lise herself was growing frantic. She looked at her hand mirror with tear-filled eyes, then her expression rapidly steadied. Wiping away the tears and snot on her face with her sleeve, a few strands of black and red had blended into her previously pure white hair.

She removed all the broken glass around Ashe, wincing slightly as she cut her hand but not letting out a cry. She guided Ashe to lie on his side with his head on her lap, cradled him, and whispered in his ear, "Little Ashe, we will live in a place with a garden, see the sea when we step outside, and we'll have a dog and a cat."

"Little Ashe, we'll go to Wonderland World again, just the two of us..."

"Ash, come on, stay strong."

“Dad, I’ll introduce you to four beautiful elder sisters, just wake up, please?”

“Ashe.” Tears couldn’t stop flowing from ‘Lise’s’ eyes. “Don’t leave me.”

Suddenly, Ashe’s tense and convulsing body relaxed, turning into a limp heap on the floor. ‘Lise’ struggled to lift him up to a sitting position and asked anxiously, “Hey, can you hear me? Are you feeling any better?”

“A bit better, but not completely...” Ashe gritted his teeth, using the bedpost to help himself stand. “The other me sure packs a punch...”

In Ashe’s perception, his mental world now contained two versions of himself: one being his original self, formed from his past memories, and the other being the ‘Gospel Ashe,’ formed from those foreign memories.

‘Gospel Ashe’ was extremely fierce, delivering a series of powerful punches that left the original Ashe on the ground, metaphorically calling for an ambulance. If ‘Gospel Ashe’ were to win, he would gain control of the entire soul, leaving the world with only ‘Gospel Ashe’ and no trace of the original Ashe.

But just when Ashe thought he was literally about to ‘start a new life,’ his mental self suddenly emitted a purple glow and stood up to continue fighting ‘Gospel Ashe.’ Surprisingly, the fight became somewhat evenly matched, allowing Ashe to barely regain dominance over his body.

Ashe knew very well where that purple glow came from-the secrecy power of his Secret Incarnation.

Although his Secret Incarnation was typically useless, it could play an irreplaceable role when needed. The Mysterious Power allowed him to naturally blend into any environment, assuming any identity, while the secrecy power enhanced his mental resistance and adaptability to deities.

Without the Secret Incarnation, he might be lost by now.

Seeing the worried ‘Lise,’ Ashe casually cast a Joy Sword to heal the cuts on her hand, leaning against the wall, he said, “Let me sort out the current situation... The top spot on the Gospel Ranking is me, so I am the First Gospel... But why me? How could it be me? It can’t be me! I refuse to accept this!”

Ashe was just as shocked as everyone else-he remembered that the requirement for the First Gospel was to be ‘the purest, most innocent, kindest, and most beautiful girl.’ Leaving aside the gender mismatch, how could a corporate slave with several years of work experience possibly associate with those adjectives?

If you used those words to praise me, I might even think you’re mocking me!

Ashe was certain that the Gospel Ranking hadn't selected him through normal channels; he just didn't know what had granted him this backdoor entry.

The Four Pillars? The Blood Moon? He didn't possess anything that would warrant such special attention from the Gospel!

Just as Ashe opened the Gospel Book to review his ranking once more, the book suddenly popped out a purple note.

It was a message from Annan.

"There is a deity in the basement, and that deity looks exactly like you."

Those strange alien memories, the sacred version of himself within those memories...

A deity, wielding divine authority in a mortal's form...

Secret Incarnation, secrecy power...

"Are you okay?" 'Lise' pulled on his sleeve.

Ashe stared blankly at 'Lise,' forcing a smile that looked more like he was about to cry.

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

Chapter 498: Rainfall

The Violet Spiderweb in the night sky burned out, with the rising currents condensing the moisture into cumulus clouds. The drizzling rain tapping on the window created a broken pitter-patter against the glass.

Now, the entire Kingdom of the First Gospel was experiencing rain. It was more than just rain; it was a Ritual Track symbolizing the spiderweb descending from the Firmament, spreading to every corner of the Kingdom.

When I inherit the First Gospel, this Ritual Track will take effect, extending my will and allowing my orders to traverse the land like fate.

The moment Ashe noticed the rain outside, intelligence surfaced in his mind that he wasn't supposed to know.

It was an uncanny feeling, as if there was an iceberg in his mind. Whenever he saw something, a corresponding part of the iceberg would melt, granting him instant clarity about all causes and consequences.

He had no doubt that when the iceberg completely melted, he would be incredibly close to Omniscience and Omnipotence. However, the overwhelming waves caused by the melting iceberg would inevitably drown his entire self-will.

Yet, he had no means to stop the melting. The deity that mimicked his face was slowly prying open his skull, stirring his brain; tearing open his chest, kneading his heart; eventually, it would wear Ashe's skin and step into a future named 'Ashpel.'

This final transition period was both cruel and merciful. The cruelty lay in watching his own self being crushed and assimilated by a greater will, akin to a Death Row Inmate being executed; the mercy lay in that he didn't vanish confusedly, but clearly understood that this was not by chance or misfortune, but an inevitable fate-it was a justified death. Perhaps, this was another kind of cruelty.

The source of all this was the Secret Incarnation.

The so-called First Gospel was actually about selecting the most suitable mortal to wield the deity. But a mortal's soul can never fully accommodate a deity, much like a barrel cannot withstand corrosion. Therefore, the Gospel could only strive to find the "most suitable, sturdy barrel" to maximize its lifespan.

"The purest, most innocent, kindest, and most beautiful girl" is the most suitable barrel. Of course, not all such individuals can adapt to every deity, but they can resist the corrosion of the deity of the First Gospel to the greatest extent. Each deity has different requirements for their suitable candidate.

The Yisuo Royal Family has managed to endure for seven hundred years, with successive princesses becoming the First Gospel, because they can cultivate princesses that meet all the criteria and are also aware of some hidden conditions. Hence, they naturally score higher and dominate all candidates, firmly securing the position of the First Gospel.

If everything proceeded smoothly, this generation's First Gospel should have been in the bag for the Yisuo Royal Family. However, after Ashe obtained the Secret Incarnation, the Gospel suddenly had a new idea.

It found a more suitable candidate.

In the Mermaid Palace, they knew that Harvey's future ability to wield the deity wasn't by chance, but because he would later acquire a conceptual Incarnation related to necromancy. With the buffer provided by the conceptual Incarnation, he could barely resist the deity's erosion (although Harvey had already missed the initial opportunity).

The conceptual Incarnation acts like a membrane covering the barrel, significantly reducing the harm from deities of the same Sect to the soul. This extends the barrel's lifespan. When Harvey later becomes a legendary necromancer, besides possessing Four Wings spellforce, he should also have a Miracle that strengthens the soul. Therefore, with the conceptual Incarnation, he can fully accommodate the deity.

This shows that no matter how sturdy a barrel is, it can't compare to one protected by a membrane. Additionally, deities are not static. When activated, they inflict severe damage on the soul. Hence, the deity's power must be limited to prevent prematurely exhausting the host's lifespan.

A soul protected by a conceptual Incarnation means a longer lifespan and the deity can exert greater power.

Imagine you are the deity, and you're about to move to a new home. You have two choices: ① A wooden house similar to the previous one, which can last up to fifty years but is prone to decay and might have a fragile staircase that you could accidentally break; ② A well-decorated small villa with a longer lifespan that withstands regular use and can handle occasional activities like exercising, barbecuing, and setting off fireworks.

Therefore, from the moment Ashe obtained the Secret Incarnation, he could no longer escape the clutches of the Gospel. No matter how pure, innocent, and kind the Yisuo Princess might be, she could not compare to Ashpel, who came with his own substantial dowry. The Gospel was extremely pragmatic and materialistic.

The Secret Incarnation was a concept that dropped from the Spider Tower commander, and the Spider Tower was part of the Omniscient Weaver's forces. Naturally, the Secret Incarnation had a high affinity with the Gospel's spirit. If only Ashe had known that the Gospel Ranking was choosing a deity's host, if only he had returned the Secret Incarnation to the Empress' commander, if only...

Ashe suddenly recalled something. At that moment, the 'Gospel Ashe' in his mind struck down his mental original again. His body trembled as he slid down the wall to sit, and 'Lise' hurried over, gripping his hand tightly, looking at him with concern. "Are you scared?"

"I'm not scared, not one bit," Ashe replied as lightly as possible, reaching out to embrace 'Lise', gently stroking her back, trying to convey his calmness to her.

Simultaneously, in his soul, he located the soul summoning spirit, which resembled a triangular bipyramid with hexagonal faces. He wrapped it tightly with spellforce and descended his will-destroy it!

Yes, since the deity favored him because he had the Secret Incarnation, couldn't he simply destroy it?

Although the Secret Incarnation was precious, it was nothing compared to his own life. Moreover, Ashe had already crossed into the Distant Sky Domain, significantly reducing the importance of the Secret Incarnation and the soul summoning spirit. Losing them wouldn't have a real impact on him!

Once he lost the Secret Incarnation, Ashe's finely decorated small villa would degrade into a dilapidated Cabin, unfit even for a dog. After all, he didn't fit the criteria of "the purest, most innocent, kindest, and most beautiful girl" in any way. Regardless of how the deity considered it, it wouldn't settle for living in Ashe's rundown state. Instead, it would go for the Yisuo Princess' modest Cabin. Then Ashe would naturally be saved!

As for the consequences of destroying the concept, Ashe could no longer care. After all, he didn't have any spirit related to the 'secret.' However, this would completely thwart Annan's plans. Even if he were punished when he returned, he accepted it willingly. It would just be a pity for the Divine Sovereign's Wish...

Ashe waited expectantly for a moment, only to find that the soul summoning spirit was still happily swimming within his soul.

He realized that whenever his spellforce attempted to harm the soul summoning spirit, it would suddenly stop functioning, almost as if...

It were bound by a Pact.

Impossible!

Ashe's pupils constricted. Although the Pact with the Empress indeed prevented him from destroying the soul summoning spirit himself, he had now reached the Third Layer of the Virtual Realm, fulfilling the conditions for the Pact's automatic termination. How could it still be in effect?!

Yet there was no other explanation for the current situation. Could the Empress have hidden a trap in the Pact that he was entirely unaware of?

As the thought crossed his mind, the original text of the Pact clearly surfaced in Ashe's mind, and he immediately identified the issue-it was in the first sentence of the Pact.

"When the Celestial Bull enters the Spider Tower Area, Party B must remain there for more than three hours."

The clause "when the Celestial Bull enters the Spider Tower Area" was the highest-priority condition in the entire Pact. All other terms were contingent upon the activation of this condition.

This meant that even though Ashe had already entered the Distant Sky Domain, the Pact was still in effect. He would have to wait for the Celestial Bull to enter the Spider Tower Area for the Pact to be automatically terminated.

So, when would the Celestial Bull enter the Spider Tower Area?

Other sorcerers might not know, but Ashe had the virtual realm map for comparison, allowing him to accurately calculate that the next entry of the Celestial Bull into the Spider Tower Area would be... tomorrow morning.

The rain outside grew heavier, and Ashe's heart grew colder.

Compared to a straightforward 'death sentence,' this tantalizing nearness to survival was even more abyssal.

This was the Divine Sovereign showing off, this was fate mocking him.

Of course, he had stolen the Secret Incarnation from the Spider Tower and was now in the Gospel's Kingdom-how could he possibly escape unscathed? In the virtual realm, he was hunted by the Spider Tower; in reality, he was manipulated by the Gospel. No matter what, the Secret Incarnation would ultimately serve the Omniscient Weaver, just for different purposes.

Even the Omniscient Weaver, who stands above the heavens, might not be watching him. The mere collaboration between the Gospel and the Spider Tower was enough to precisely and ruthlessly extinguish all his hopes. He felt like an insect stuck in a spiderweb, with no hope of escape.

The iceberg was still melting, and it felt as if his soul was dying too. Just then, a warm little cutie wriggled in his embrace, reaching out to pinch his face.

"Ashe, let's run away," 'Lise' said, looking at him earnestly. "Leave Nabistin, even leave the Gospel. As long as we run far enough, you won't be taken to become the Sorceress Ashpel."

Escape.

This option had never even crossed Ashe's mind from the start. After all, they were in the Royal Palace of Nabistin, with a deity directly clawing into his mind-where could he possibly run to? Any attempt would merely be a futile and ugly struggle before death.

But seeing the earnest 'Lise,' Ashe smiled and nodded, "Alright, let's escape. I won't become the First Gospel!"

Ashe didn't bother with the stairs. He jumped out of the window and used the 'Rush' Miracle to teleport outside Lake Yalan. Then he pulled out the 'Banjeet Spatial Card'

and retrieved the Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle-of course, the plan to assassinate the princess included an escape phase. Everyone's Spatial Card contained a motorcycle so they could quickly flee the Royal Palace or even Nabistin if the plan succeeded or failed.

Vroom! The mechanical monster roared with flames. Looking at the dense rain curtain before him, Ashe felt as if he had returned to the Time Continent. The noises in his mind seemed less harsh.

He pulled out his dark red trench coat from the card and draped it over the nearly soaked 'Lise.' She sat behind him, her small hands tightly holding his waist. "I'm not cold. You wear it," she said.

"The rain is too heavy," Ashe smiled. "It won't help me anyway."

Buzz! The Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle accelerated instantly, speeding on the cobblestone path of the Royal Palace. They rushed through several gates, surprisingly managing to escape the palace with ease!

Suddenly, the Gospel Book appeared before them again, its violet-glowing bookmark shining brightly in the Rain Curtain. Because Ashe was already a third transformed into Ashpel, he instantly knew the updated content when it appeared.

'Lise' opened to the bookmarked page and saw two additional woven side stories.

The protagonist of the first side story was named "Annan Dolan."

In the Underground Hall, the Funeral members looked at the Gospel Book's content. Banjeet fell silent, Igor sighed deeply, Harvey was overjoyed, while Annan remained calm.

"Annan Dolan"

"Aliases: Enemy Gospel, Purple Witch, Calamity Sovereign"

"Relationship with Ashpel: enslavement pact"

"Achievements: Annan used the enslavement pact to successfully steal the Divine Sovereign's Wish, wishing for the Gospel to have no effect in reality. From then on, the Gospel Book disappeared, the ranking list dissolved, and the world could no longer hear the Gospel, leading to a technological regression by thirty years and the outbreak of civil wars. Eventually, an invasion from the outlands occurred. Throughout Ashpel's life, he worked to mend the chaos Annan Dolan caused, even dying once in the process."

"Disposition: Eliminate."

"I often wondered if the Blood Moon Kingdom would be better without the Blood Saint or Moonshadow," Igor said. "But I never imagined you would actually do something like this, targeting the very foundation of your civilization-the Gospel."

"I find it a bit strange myself," Annan replied. "I intended to wish the Gospel to disappear, so why did it change to 'the Gospel cannot have effect in reality'...?"

"Even spirits have their own wills, let alone deities," Harvey chuckled. "Besides, would the Omniscient Weaver really kill its own deity just because of your wish? The fact that it fulfilled your wish as much as possible-who knows if it's a matter of keeping promises or simply not caring about the Gospel Kingdom's fate."

"Because the deity didn't disappear but continued to reside within Ashe, leading him to become 'Armored' as Ashpel in the future," the Con Artist sighed. "Now that you know how the future unfolds, would you still make that wish?"

"Yes," Annan answered firmly.

I won't ask why you don't care about Ashe-what belief fuels your resolve?"

"The Gospel despises Dolan," Annan said, looking at the deity on the throne. "As long as the Gospel lives, every generation of Dolan, including me, won't live past thirty. To survive, the Gospel must perish."

"Besides, I despise the Gospel myself."

Even Harvey was curious. "Aren't you a parasite living off the Gospel? Isn't your Firm all about exploiting its loopholes?"

"It would have been better if the Gospel had chosen you as the First Gospel," Annan glanced at the necromancer. "Precisely because I understand its core, I detest it."

"The Gospel grants no one freedom, none at all," Purple Moth scanned the legendary sorcerers surrounding the throne. "Information, emotions, relationships, education-everything people interact with is under its control. As an almost perfect system, it traps everyone in their own personalized cocoons. Cities led by different Families represent distinct incubation strategies-spiders, ants, bees-but they can never truly become human."

Igor reminded her, "Human freedom is restricted by the environment."

"But what if there's no freedom of thought either?" Annan asked. "The Gospel controls everything about the environment. All the choices you make are paths arranged by it, and you don't even realize it. Only those who can choose are considered human; those who blindly follow are nothing more than insects."

The Con Artist was silent for a moment, gazing at the Gospel Book's content. "Then what choice would Ashe make?"

"He has no choice," Harvey said, retrieving Alice's coffin from the Spatial Card. "Neither do we."

They remained in the Underground Hall instead of fleeing because they had sensed the commotion above.

The attendants around them instinctively pressed against the walls as the secret guard returned, accompanied by many others.

Annan and the others recognized a few among them, captains of the Sanctuary guards they had encountered earlier.

"Annan Dolan, you have been identified as noise interfering with Ashpel," the secret guard rasped. "Will you end yourself?"

"Get Ashe to say that to my face, and I'll consider it," Annan replied.

"Any contact between noise and Ashpel is considered a severe disruption to the future," the secret guard declared. "Starting now, eliminate the noise."

Frost Twin Guns, Alice, Donna, the Second Miss... As all the weapons were readied and the battle was about to erupt, a pang of regret for Ashe suddenly flashed through Annan's mind.

I'm sorry, Ashe.

Though there are many things I should apologize for, I just can't bring myself to care because even if I knew all this in advance, I wouldn't change a thing. I would still drag you to hell with me. At worst, you'd be on top, and I'd be below.

But there is one thing I truly feel sorry for-one that could have been entirely avoided.

If you two had never met.

Then you wouldn't have to feel this extra pain now.

"Lise"

"Alias: Daughter of Ashpel"

"Relationship with Ashpel: Ensorcellment Pact"

“Achievements: An eternal enslavement pact exists between Lise and Ashpel, enabling Lise to severely disrupt Ashpel’s will. As long as Lise lives, there is the possibility of desecrating Ashpel.”

“Disposition: Eliminate”

‘Lise’ closed the Gospel Book and saw twenty figures appearing on the city road ahead. They appeared so abruptly, forming isolated bubbles where rain couldn’t penetrate nor wind could touch. Walking leisurely in the downpour, they looked like they were taking a casual stroll.

Sanctuary Sorcerers.

“Lise.”

Unlike the barely concealed pain and confusion earlier, Ashe’s voice was now firm and steady, as clear as raindrops hitting the ground. “Are you afraid?”

“Not at all.”

‘Lise’ lay on Ashe’s back, her voice ringing clear through the Rain Curtain. “Not at all.”

“Ashe, you’re not afraid of the rain, and neither is Lise.”

“Hold onto me tight, don’t let go.” Ashe drew the Honey Sword from his mouth, mounted the Crow’s Non-Aerial Motorcycle, and sped towards the Sanctuary Sorcerers.

“I won’t let you get wet.”

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

Chapter 499: Loss

Sanctuary.

The pinnacle of genius, the zenith of the mundane, the ideal of countless sorcerers. No matter the kingdom, becoming a Sanctuary Sorcerer places one in the most successful stratum.

Interestingly, according to the Sword Princess, One-Winged Sorcerers are mostly production sorcerers, Two-Winged Sorcerers are predominantly battle sorcerers, and Sanctuary Sorcerers revert to being primarily production sorcerers. This doesn't mean that Sanctuary Sorcerers abandon combat, but rather that they shift their research focus to production, no longer as dedicated to combat as before.

There are three reasons for this. The main reason, of course, is the high efficiency of Sanctuary Sorcerers in production; spatial artifacts can only be produced by them and are typically consumables with limited durability, making every Sanctuary Sorcerer a continual gold mine. In the Stars Kingdom, Sanctuary Sorcerers are also required to pay a 'spatial tax,' producing a set amount of spatial artifacts each year as tax payments.

Secondly, producing spatial artifacts significantly aids in researching the Spatial Sect, offering an above-average and efficient method of cultivation compared to other practices.

The final reason is that Sanctuary Sorcerers themselves are acutely aware that to achieve quantitative and qualitative breakthroughs in combat, the best approach is not through combat research, but rather...

Mastering space.

Clang!

A glint of cold light arrived first, followed by the spear that came crashing down!

Facing the sudden appearance of a Sanctuary sorcerer with a spear from above, Ashe, riding his Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle, did not slow down. They clashed fiercely as they passed each other!

Clang! Clang! Clang! Clang! Clang!

In an instant, Ashe parried five strikes, and despite stacking 'Heart Sword,' 'Earth Sword,' 'Sword Mark,' and other spirits chaotically onto his sword blade, his Honey Sword was still dented in several places. The violent impact even caused the Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle to swerve!

Now in a state of high-speed movement, most of Ashe's miracles were difficult to deploy, leaving only "Rage Sword" and "Love Sword," which could either burst instantaneously or provide sustained enhancement. However, being unable to use miracles did not mean his spirits were useless; driven by Prismatic spellforce, the spirits could at least strengthen his weapon to the point where it could sever Sanctuary miracles!

The Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle carved several heart-stopping donut Trajectories on the rain-soaked ground, with Ashe never once hitting the brakes, continuing at top

speed, cutting a crimson line through the night. The spear-wielding Sanctuary from behind was quickly advancing, matching the motorcycle's speed thanks to his Movement Miracle and Path of the Chosen.

Suddenly, Ashe summoned a Substitute, and both wielded their long swords. As dozens of bullet sounds pierced through the Rain Curtain, their swords deflected an equal number of bullets.

If the spear-wielding Sanctuary reached Ashe using the Spatial Sect to charge up to him, then the Gunmanship Sanctuary simply delivered bullets right next to Ashe—normally, no one could predict where the bullets would appear. Sometimes, even if the Gunmanship Sanctuary aimed at your face, the bullet might pierce the back of your neck. Unless a sorcerer deployed their Sanctuary or expended Gospel points to pray for comprehensive protection, it was impossible to block the Gunmanship Sanctuary's shots.

But now there was an exception.

At this moment, a Fist-Claw Sanctuary stopped the chase and punched towards Ashe's back, causing the space they struck to collapse inch by inch, racing towards Ashe like a toppling row of dominoes!

Suddenly, Ashe slashed backward with a sword.

With a spatial aspect inherent in the 'Sword Mark' spirit, when activated by Prismatic spellforce, it barely added a touch of spatial enhancement to the Honey Sword, allowing it to cut anything not protected by a Sanctuary and enabling Ashe to slash and affect space.

However, this spatial enhancement was minimal. In the face of genuine spatial chaos, it would be smoothed out in an instant. But against the spatial chaos punch from the Fist-Claw Sanctuary, Ashe's single slash not only stopped the collapsing space but nonchalantly neutralized the Sanctuary Sorcerer's lethal strike.

To his right, thirteen shots.

To his left, Water Spell Detonation.

From behind, sniper fire.

In front, a spear.

Facing the bombarding onslaught from the Sanctuary Sorcerers, Ashe astonishingly managed to maintain his speed while perfectly deflecting and countering all these attacks! Apart from a few grazes, he was virtually unscathed!

Even the Sanctuary Sorcerers couldn't help but be a little surprised. For them, it was as if they were watching an elementary school student solve advanced calculus problems using basic arithmetic-Sanctuary attacks that should be unstoppable could only be defended against with another Sanctuary, and yet, Ashe hadn't even deployed his Sanctuary. How was he defending himself?

Ashe indeed couldn't defend against them.

But Ashpel could.

Now, Ashpel had taken over half of his soul. Even without actively channeling it, Ashe could still share some of Ashpel's powers-in Ashpel's perception, everything in this world was transparent, including the past, present, and future.

It was a marvelous feeling: the intangible fate now unfolded before him like a scroll filled with questions. Ashe merely answered all the questions, thus neutralizing the wild assault of more than twenty Sanctuary Sorcerers.

Of course, another critical reason was that the Sanctuary Sorcerers didn't want to kill him. Their goal was to stop Ashe from advancing and to kill Lise, so their attacks were primarily aimed at Lise, the Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle, and Ashe's limbs.

One side had, quite literally, "divine assistance," while the other was restrained and holding back. Given these circumstances, it wasn't surprising that such a well-coordinated battle could unfold. Furthermore, Ashe felt that all his sect experience was rapidly improving through the fight, especially with the Spatial Sect, which was nearing the Sanctuary threshold!

Indeed, since Ashpel was Omniscient and Omnipotent, he naturally possessed omniscience of All Sects. Even if Ashpel leaked just a bit of his knowledge, for Ashe, it was like raining Experience Orbs!

In the past, Ashe would have been overjoyed by such a pleasant surprise, perhaps indulging in a few extra meals of Lala Fatty. In the Virtual Realm, he would have eagerly sought out the sword Princess to show off. But now, Ashe felt no waves in his heart, and he even found it a bit amusing.

The more he received from Ashpel, the more Ashpel got from him.

The more efficiently he could use Ashpel's powers, the quicker Ashpel would replace his existence.

This fleeting vanity was not something anyone could truly desire.

However...

“We’re almost there.” Amidst the symphony of swords and Miracles, Ashe said cheerfully, “We’re about to escape Nabistin. Ahead lies the Azure Lane.”

“We’ll escape, then dodge and hide, running everywhere. From now on, you’ll have to pick up cardboard and sleep under bridges with me.”

“Okay.”

A pair of small hands clutched his waist tightly, like ten hooks, refusing to let go.

Ashe now seemed to know everything, yet he didn’t realize that the little girl clinging to him was deeply mired in guilt.

She was guilty that, despite accomplishing nothing, Ashe had muddled his way into becoming the First Gospel.

She was guilty that she needed Ashe to protect her, when it was he who needed the most protection now.

She was guilty that, until now, she remained a burden!

She, too, was a three wings Sorcerer and possessed Sanctuary-level combat strength!

But because the Trial of the Bronze Dragon wasn’t yet complete, she couldn’t return to her original form, and her spellforce in the real world was completely sealed off! Moreover, the Trial of the Bronze Dragon couldn’t be ended prematurely; it had to be completed, or it would continue endlessly until death!

How she longed to weather the storm alongside Ashe!

They were getting closer to the parking lot. The glowing Azure Lane pierced through the night sky, like rays of dawn.

But just before dawn, comes the darkest night.

A dozen Sanctuary Sorcerers blocked the only path forward, coldly awaiting the return of Ashpel to the palace.

“Lise’s” small hands trembled, “Careful!”

The night fell, and there was the mournful wail of small birds.

Ashe created a Substitute with his Honey Sword, holding twin blades that painted black marks of condensed space in mid-air. The Crow’s Non-Aerial Motorcycle roared as it charged into the enemy formation.

Then, like a furious beast, it roared louder and splattered its ink aggressively!

Sanctuaries might be impenetrable, but it didn't mean they couldn't be crashed through!

Aiming for the weakest point in the defense, Ashe broke through the iron wall of the Sanctuary Sorcerers!

At that moment, Ashe was pleasantly surprised to find that the noise in his head suddenly reduced significantly, and Ashpel's encroachment swiftly withdrew-the deity couldn't forcibly move into his well-decorated little mansion if the distance was great enough. If the gap between him and the deity grew to a certain extent, even if it couldn't be completely avoided, it could at least buy more time!

That's right, spirits have effective ranges, so why wouldn't deities? Even if the range is very large, it ultimately has a limit!

Just moments ago, I was scared senseless by the deity, nearly resigned to my fate. Thanks to Lise convincing me to run, otherwise I would've really waited for death!

Ashe let out a long breath. Now, there was only one bridge remaining to the parking lot. He said, "Lise, we did it-"

A flash of cold light arrived first.

When the spear Sanctuary appeared above him, Ashe's body reacted, but his mind hadn't caught up-Why didn't I sense his ambush?

Because I've lost Ashpel's power.

Without the Omniscience and Omnipotence of Ashpel, he couldn't fully defend against Sanctuary attacks.

Ahead, the thrust of the spear Sanctuary.

To the right, the spatial shock wave of the Fist-Claw Sanctuary.

To the left, the Water Spell Detonation.

The encirclement he previously could have easily broken through now felt like a cage closing in on Ashe. It was as if a weary beast had stepped into a trap, only to realize it could no longer escape as it did before.

Then,

Bang.

A perfectly timed sniper bullet skillfully avoided the need to capture a rare beast.

It only hit the weakest prey.

Ashe turned his head and saw Lise getting left behind.

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

Chapter 500: Farewell

“So, the Gospel was warning me to stay away from Ashe from the very beginning.”

Igor retreated behind the wall of legendary sorcerers. Hearing Annan’s murmurs as she reloaded her clip, he frowned and asked, “How did it warn you?”

“Do you remember my reward from the Art Ranking?”

The shy Second Miss Donna blushed, modestly firing metal bullets that skimmed past the shoulders of the legendary sorcerers like a spring breeze, creating ripples on the Sanctuary barrier of her pursuers.

Annan’s voice mingled with the roaring sound of gunfire, as if she had suddenly realized the correct solution after an exam ended: “One was ‘Calamity Insight,’ and the other was ‘Tongue of Release.’”

“You never seemed to use those rewards much,” Igor remarked as he opened the Gospel Book, rapidly restoring his spellforce using Gospel points. To drive the three wings spirit, he used both silver spellforce and golden spellforce as fuel. However, this desperate gamble only sped up the depletion of his spellforce, making him dizzy and weakening his soul to the point where he longed for a comforting embrace-an absurdly vulnerable thought.

“‘Calamity Insight’ can identify calamities on others, and ‘Tongue of Release’ can terminate any Pact verbally if both parties agree,” Annan explained cheerfully. “Together with my first-place Art Ranking piece, the Gospel’s suggestion was quite clear: this person is trouble, cut ties and leave him.”

“It’s quite obvious indeed. How did you miss that?”

"I didn't miss it," Annan replied. "I just didn't accept the Gospel's advice. My favorite thing to do is go against the Gospel."

"I can't argue with that," Igor mocked. "In our Blood Moon, dreamers as determined as you would be put on the emergency list and might even get a special session of the Blood Moon Tribunal just for them."

"However, in this regard, the Gospel is truly more advanced than the Blood Moon. It sent ten Sanctuaries after us, a spectacle that compares to the Blood Moon Tribunal without losing any grandeur."

Bang!

As they conversed, a bullet blasted Alice's head apart. An eerie green flame ignited from her severed neck, coalescing into Harvey's face.

Though this body is frostfire, it still yearns for the moment of complete combustion.

Bones, nerves, muscles, skin... Like a seamstress improvising, Alice was restored in an instant. Her skin was flawless, her eyes sparkled with vitality, her lips were plump and moist, and her hair was silky and vibrant!

But everyone at the Funeral knew the heavy price hidden beneath this beauty: Harvey was using his own living body to repair Alice's corpse!

He was extracting his own bones, marrow, muscles, nerves, skin, and blood to fill Alice's void! Although a necromancer certainly has ways to restore his own losses, this was happening in the midst of battle. If Harvey overused "himself," he would end up relying on Alice to sustain him.

After all, the idea of using a living person to repair the dead was inherently abnormal, grotesque, and terrifying. A normal person wouldn't have such a thought, just like you wouldn't feed a doll with your own blood. Sacrifices should be made for something more important.

Just like the pale bones growing from Alice, they could deeply and directly feel Harvey's thoughts- isn't that Alice is more valuable than he is. He simply believed that the world itself had no value.

As for the potential self-destruction... it's like telling someone who lives on instant noodles to pay attention to nutrition, but if they're already eating instant noodles, why would they care about nutrition?

With a push of her right hand, Alice sent the shadows in the Underground Hall sweeping like a torrent. Silently, Harvey had unlocked the fourth troop type of the Ghost King

Shackles-‘Shadow Spirit.’ Even without a related spirit, he could directly manipulate shadow powers to bind the enemy’s shadow and even materialize it to engulf them!

This was the real terror of the first prize from the Family Ranking, the Ghost King Shackles-it allowed a necromancer to ignore the barriers of the Spellcasting Sect, mastering other sects’ powers by converting necromancer troops, all without needing to gather supporting spirits, achieving miraculous effects. It was the pauper’s version of an All Sects sorcerer!

In the Underground Hall, other than the throne, everywhere was dimly dark, filled with shadows Alice could exploit. Moreover, most miracles can’t defend against shadows, making Harvey’s offensive power at this moment unrivaled within the Funeral.

But this geographical advantage meant nothing in the face of absolute power.

The dense gunfire and blinding white flames from the Sanctuary Sorcerers instantly annihilated the torrent of shadows. Even the simplest of attacks, augmented by their spatial sanctuary, possessed miraculous destructive power.

As they retaliated, Alice dove into the shadows to avoid the counterattack. Simultaneously, on the other side, gunshots rang out. A handsome blue-haired youth darted and leaped among the legendary sorcerers, his dual pistols singing like a music box. Even if the frost bullets couldn’t penetrate the Sanctuaries, the blooming white mist obscured their vision.

Banjeet’s self-created Miracle, and his exclusive Miracle-Melt!

The older he appeared, the more frost spellforce he could harness, elevating his combat power to the level of the three wings!

Igor suddenly glanced at a swordsman Sanctuary Sorcerer who was drawing his blade, and then that swordsman slashed towards Annan from a distance. But the Sanctuary behind the swordsman unexpectedly shattered, as though he had killed himself!

“Instantly redirecting a Sanctuary Sorcerer’s attack... That’s a three-wing Mental spirit,” Annan exclaimed. “You’ve only visited the Distant Sky Domain once, and you managed to gain something like this?”

“I was fortunate to receive help from a swordsman and had a fruitful Adventure,” Igor, weak and leaning against the wall, replied. “I didn’t expect there to be kind people among sorcerers.”

“Getting help on your first trip to the Distant Sky Domain? You really are lucky.”

“I didn’t get that help for free. He asked me for advice on how to mend his relationship with his estranged brother, and I provided quite a few useful suggestions,” Igor

explained. "And if I were actually lucky, I wouldn't be down here accompanying you on this descent into hell."

It might seem like the Funeral party was barely able to resist the attacks from the Sanctuary Sorcerers, but that was because they were using hostages-the sitting, unresponsive legendary sorcerers-as shields.

The legendary sorcerers appeared almost completely unresponsive to the outside world, but everyone could tell they had a close tie to a deity, a connection that was practically transparent-they were the energy vessels for the deity.

Previously, everyone believed that the Gospel was a system directly operated by the Omniscient Weaver. However, upon witnessing the scene in the Underground Hall, the members of Funeral realized that the Gospel Kingdom never relied on some Divine Sovereign Emperor; it was all a Divine Intervention crafted by the laboring masses.

The Gospel, this grand Divine Intervention that enveloped the entire Kingdom and extended to everyone, a cornerstone of civilization, was the collective achievement of all the legendary sorcerers who had served as its fuel throughout the ages! It was through their relentless self-sacrifice, day and night, that the deities could function, allowing the Gospel to traverse the land and illuminate all beings!

As to whether these legendary sorcerers were coerced or brainwashed, there were various speculations, but Igor believed they were voluntary participants.

For these legendary sorcerers, who stood at the pinnacle of mortals, delving into divine knowledge and constructing the celestial ladder of Angels might be the only temptation that could fill the void in their hearts.

To increase what they desire, to gift what they need, this was a win-win exchange. The deities could operate thanks to their contributions, and they, in turn, could glimpse higher realms because of the deities. However, even as energy vessels, they bore immense risks-the deities were so vast that being in close proximity to them meant their wills would inevitably be assimilated and dissolved.

In Igor's eyes, regardless of their different appearances and ages, there was no distinct 'individuality' left in the minds of these legendary sorcerers; only one voice remained: Gospel.

Incidentally, the Sanctuary Sorcerers currently fighting Funeral exhibited similar signs of 'noise reduction'-their emotional fluctuations were pitifully low, like once-varied stones gradually sculpted into identical artworks. When they eventually become legendary sorcerers, they too were destined to become the next generation of energy vessels.

However, to say they were deceived by the Gospel would be underestimating the sorcerers. Not to mention the assistance they obtained from the Gospel, without which most of them would have no hope of advancing to the legendary level.

Moreover, they had the choice not to come to Nabistin. They likely guessed the truth behind the Gospel, but having come this far, they must bear the consequences of their choices.

At this moment, Igor suddenly recalled Annan's words: "All the choices you make are paths arranged by the Gospel, and you don't even realize it... Only those who can choose are considered human; those who blindly follow are nothing more than insects."

The Con Artist shook his head and turned his gaze back to the battlefield in the Underground Hall.

Regardless, it was precisely because of these legendary sorcerers serving as energy bars that Funeral had been able to hold out until now. The Sanctuary Sorcerers didn't dare attack the legendary sorcerers, not because they were fragile – in fact, if Annan and her group could have threatened the legendary sorcerers, they would have done so long ago – but the Sanctuaries seemed more unwilling to 'disturb' those diligently working legends.

Annan and her group could only use the legendary sorcerers to build a defensive line, unable to further leverage these strategic weapons. Each legendary sorcerer was encased in a Sanctuary layer bound tightly to their bodies; unless the legendary sorcerer's spellforce was completely exhausted, there was no way to reach their originals.

But they could only go this far.

The Sanctuary Sorcerers blocked the only passage, and the ten Sanctuary Sorcerers were in no hurry, slowly wasting their time away. Banjeet's Melt had a time limit, Harvey's "Frostfire" couldn't be sustained at full force for long, Igor's spellforce was depleted again after using a three-wing spirit, and Annan herself had the combat power of only a two wings – impressive for her age, actually. If not for the Rainbow Tail Feather, neither Igor nor Harvey could have matched Annan in combat strength!

Their injuries were mounting, and defeat was only a matter of time.

"Come to think of it," Igor said, "their target is just Annan, right?"

"Correct," Annan replied calmly. "So you all will die protecting me."

"If it were Ashe, he wouldn't be dragging us down."

“Yes, that’s why I like him,” Annan said. “But if it were Ashe, you wouldn’t abandon him either.”

“Banjeet-“

“If you can persuade Banjeet to live alone, I’ll let you all go,” the Purple Moth laughed. “With only me and Banjeet in hell, it would be a bit lonely. And if it were you, knowing you’re about to die, would you drag others into hell to prolong your life for a little while, or would you choose to die decisively?”

The Con Artist suddenly asked, “What if Ashe were here?”

“I’d choose whatever you’d choose,” Annan retorted.

Igor sighed helplessly and stood up with great effort. “One last question before I die-if you could go back and do it all over again, would you heed the Gospel’s warning?”

“When the surrounding world is an abyss of darkness, how could a moth not fly towards the flame?” Annan said while reloading her magazine. “However, I would at least use the Tongue of Release to spare him some of the pain in advance.”

“That way, he wouldn’t need to face-“

-Separation.

Ashe extended his arms but only managed to hold half of Lise.

A Sanctuary sniper bullet had torn her small body in half.

His heart, too, was ripped apart.

Split into two.

Lise was blown away by the wind. She reached through the Rain Curtain as if she were playfully asking Ashe for a hug.

Ashe abandoned his sword, ignoring the attacks from all directions. His arm stretched almost out of its socket, as if this hand existed solely to prevent her from leaving.

Separation.

Don’t leave.

Don’t leave me.

Hydrotherapy, Rekindle, Reforge, Single-minded Devotion: Joy Sword, Mechanization, Super Regeneration, Centenary Tree Man, Clay Figurine... Dozens of different healing Miracles from various Sects flashed through Ashe's mind. Each one capable of healing her grievous wounds, each one capable of preserving Lise's life. In Shattered Lake Prison, he had suffered far worse injuries. As long as treatment was timely, his skin would even heal better than before.

This was a world filled with Miracles. There was always time. The very essence of a Miracle was to remedy regret!

His gaze followed his hand through the Rain Curtain. He saw Lise's lips move, seemingly whispering, "Don't be afraid."

Then he saw the space around Lise collapsing, as though a Whirlpool had formed.

Lise was sucked in.

His hand grasped at nothing. The exaggerated motion caused him to be thrown off his Crow's Non-Aerial Motorcycle. The motorcycle flew into the final destination, crashing into the hovercar park connecting to Azure Lane, colliding with other hovercars. Ashe remained on the bridge, flung back into the deity's city, forever halted just before the finish line.

The cold, rain-soaked ground held only 1.5 family members.

Spatial teleportation.

He recognized it.

While Sanctuary Sorcerers could excel at creating spatial domains, performing temporary spatial teleportation of living beings was challenging. It often required other spirit aids, like the cold glint of the Sanctuary spear, or was limited to inanimate objects, such as bullets.

Without a designated target, living beings might be torn apart by spatial turbulence or transported to unpredictable locations-maybe hundreds of meters in the air or soil layers underground.

Spatial teleportation felt more terrifying than being inside a spinning washing machine. Lise would surely find it distressing enough to cry.

For some reason, this inappropriate thought crossed Ashe's mind.

Struggling to rise, he found Sanctuary Sorcerers silently surrounding him. The half-crippled body on the ground was drenched in rain, looking like a cotton-stuffed doll. A spear handle poked it, scattering the cotton and breaking the doll apart.

“Do not fear; the noise has been silenced,” a Sanctuary Sorcerer said. “It’s time to welcome Ashpel back to the palace.”

“Not afraid.”

Ashe whispered through the rain, “There’s nothing left to fear.”

Suddenly, he slashed at the neck of the Spear Sanctuary, grabbing the spear with his left hand. A Substitute appeared overhead, delivering a powerful kick. Simultaneous rapid attacks from three directions forced the Spear Sanctuary to erect a barrier, which Ashe’s hand knife sliced through, even rupturing his throat with boiling rage!

Fist-Claw Sect.

Rage Sword.

As the Spear Sanctuary retreated for treatment, clutching his neck, others attacked without hesitation. Ashe seized the wrist of the Swordsmanship Sanctuary, using his long sword to sever the earthen mound binding Ashe’s legs. Then, he activated the “sword body barrier” to block several bullets and close combat attacks. As the barrier shattered, he successfully seized a sword, tracing an ink mark through space.

Swordsmanship Sect.

Heart Pen.

Sword body barrier.

The Fist-Claw Sanctuary attacking Ashe suddenly froze for a second, allowing Ashe to deftly maneuver him into the Gunmanship Sanctuary’s line of fire. Six bullets found their mark, fulfilling their potential by embedding in a Sanctuary Sorcerer.

Time Sect.

Second Seizer Spirit.

Ashe’s sword struck the core of the Waterfall Miracle, causing the cascading water to scatter like bullets, disrupting the Sanctuary Sorcerers’ attack formation completely. He redirected the path of the destructive light, obliterating the vine chains that sought to imprison him.

Water Sect.

Light Sect.

After a fierce and electrifying battle, Ashe turned to see the Sanctuary Sorcerers still densely blocking his way. They seemed more numerous than the rain itself, completely obscuring Ashe's sky.

The streetlamp's glow was no longer warm, and the drenched ground bore mocking laser-guided texts: [<<< Restroom, Mink Street], [Royal Palace, Central Avenue ↑↑↑], [Nabistin Spirit Museum, Platinum Avenue >>>].

"It's okay, I'm not afraid at all," he said.

After he let go of his mental defenses to embrace Ashpel's presence within him, he finally regained the strength to challenge fate. Yet, the only thing truly his own was rapidly deteriorating.

Within that core lay his past, his self, Sword Princess, Lise, Igor, Annan... Ashpel would extract all the noise, leaving a pristine, six-star shell behind.

If I can protect you, then I will forget you.

If I can hold you, then I will lose you.

Annan, Igor, Harvey, Banjeet-are you also locked in desperate battles? Are you complaining? Are you afraid?

Don't be afraid.

I'm coming.

The night rain died, the air died, and Ashe was about to die too.

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