

# Sorcerer's Handbook

## Chapter 561: Aerial Combat

“Above the High Skies: Souls shackled by gravity can regain their freedom only from the sky. Touching any ground-based surface will cause your spirit to stagnate and be unable to activate for 3 seconds; when you are not in contact with a surface, all effects of your spirits will be enhanced by 100% for 3 seconds.”

“Affix Identification Reward: small amount of spatial sect experience, small amount of spellforce.”

“Limited Affix Privilege: In the next dream phantom, you will trigger the positive effect of Above the High Skies.”

Within the first five minutes of entering this dream phantom, Ashe and his team quickly figured out this affix, especially since their spirits seemed to wilt as if they couldn't breathe as soon as they arrived.

However, when they triggered the actual battle, they realized the situation was completely different from what they had imagined!

Swish!

Ashe launched the Miracle 'Heart Pen,' and the Heart Sword's strokes created a mesh of ink marks in the air.

Yet, the Spear Sanctuary flapped its golden and silver Twin Wings, swiftly rising above the defensive ink web. Even though Ashe immediately attempted to intercept, the Spear Sanctuary expertly leaned back in mid-air, executing a Spin, its spear tip carving a half-moon Trajectory, striking Ashe's Sanctuary like a comet!

Boom!

Every spirit effect enhanced by 100%, meaning the Miracle's effect was amplified by at least three times! The spellforce used to maintain Ashe's Sanctuary was rapidly depleting, dropping below the critical 30% threshold!

On the other hand, the Spear Sanctuary remained nearly unharmed by Ashe, whether by Heart Sword, Heart Pen, or Rage Sword. With its flight capabilities, it evaded all of Ashe's attack methods, and even in close combat, Ashe couldn't reach its Sanctuary!

Ashe desperately needed support, but the others were not faring much better:

The Sword Princess fought against the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon, whose surface was covered in Saint-like fur that hardened with speed, rapidly increasing resistances. Without striking a weak point, the Sword Princess's explosive attacks felt like mere backrubs.

The Witch was tangled with the Swordsmanship Sanctuary, her Water-born Thread easily severed, leaving her struggling to maneuver.

Vesser was the only one unscathed, but even a momentary distraction would lead her to fall prey to the virtual realm creature's sudden assault.

In fact, given the enemy's configuration, it should have been the Sword Princess against the Swordsmanship Sanctuary, the Witch restricting the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon, and Ashe and Vesser engaging the Spear Sanctuary, waiting for the Sword Princess and Witch to finish off their enemies and regroup for support.

However, the "Above the High Skies" affix restricted the battlefield to the air, making all their strategies unworkable-more accurately, they wanted to implement their tactics, but the virtual realm creatures simply demolished their strategies through sheer mobility.

Ashe and his team's aerial combat skills were too weak.

Accelerated turns, loops, rolls, barrel rolls, ascension maneuvers, half-roll reversals, cobra maneuvers... For Ashe and others who could only fly forward and weren't yet accustomed to reversed perspectives, the virtual realm creatures' flying techniques were dizzying. Not to mention, while everyone had Twin Wings, the virtual realm Sanctuary's flight speed was notably faster-clearly mastering the art of fluid dynamics.

When Ashe's team initially figured out the first affix, they felt quite confident. Wasn't it just aerial combat? Wasn't it simply changing the battlefield from flat to three-dimensional? How hard could it be?

It turned out to be very hard.

Even the Sword Princess, who had some preparation, found the difficulty much greater than she had anticipated.

To put it in perspective, she thought this affix merely made 'enemies adept at aerial combat stronger,' but in reality, it meant 'anyone who isn't proficient in aerial combat becomes obsolete,' instantly rendered irrelevant by a temporary version change!

Ashe felt like they weren't battling opponents of the same level but rather like a casual gamer thrown into matches with diamond-tier players. In other aspects, there wasn't

much of a gap between the sides-if it were a ground battle, Ashe and his team would certainly defeat the enemy. Yet, their weakness in aerial combat was crippling them.

They wanted to deploy opponents based on Spellcasting restraint, but it wasn't up to them-the virtual realm creatures, with their superior maneuverability, dictated the engagements.

The sole exception was Vesser. Her aerial combat skills weren't weak. Initially, the virtual realm creatures tried to attack who they thought would be the weakest, Vesser, but realized they couldn't take her down quickly and shifted focus to others.

However, Vesser wasn't particularly skilled in combat and could at most assist in rescuing her teammates.

"This isn't going to work if this keeps up!" Ashe shouted as he maneuvered away from the Spear Sanctuary. "Our spellforce is going to run out eventually! Can any of you deal with your opponent!?"

"Ugh..." Deya grumbled, narrowly avoiding the pursuit of the Swordsmanship Sanctuary. Her threads could barely manage to constrain the enemy. "Just give me a bit more time. If I can trigger the aging effect a few more times, he'll be done for!"

Deya was equipped with the "Golden Collection: Golden Flow Water," which allowed her attacks to gradually infuse the target with Golden Flow Water. This effect doubled the target's spellforce consumption and had a 5% chance to trigger an aging effect, causing a 20% loss of current spellforce and slowing reaction speed by 20%.

This Collection was perfect for sustained effects, which suited Deya's threads, known for their control and entanglement, making the Collection an ideal match for her.

Indeed, in previous dream phantoms, as long as Deya's threads managed to latch onto the enemy, they quickly triggered the aging effect, causing the enemy to lose combat ability.

Thanks to the powerful boost from the Golden Collection, Deya undoubtedly became the main damage dealer in this virtual realm exploration. However, in aerial combat, she couldn't choose her opponent and was forced to face the Swordsmanship Sanctuary, which restrained her. Her threads didn't stay attached long enough, and only triggered the aging effect once, leaving her suppressed by the Swordsmanship Sanctuary.

Damn it!

When she first acquired the Collection, the Witch sisters were so excited, thinking that this would be their moment to shine. They imagined encountering strong foes, fighting a prolonged battle, and then she would heroically defeat the enemy, rescuing Ashe from danger. Naturally, this would lead to Ashe being captivated by her heroic demeanor,

unable to help himself from embracing her, while the Sword Princess, still entangled by the virtual realm creatures, could do nothing but witness the Witch's flawless victory...

Though they were indeed embroiled in a fierce battle now, she couldn't make any headway! And to make matters worse, she was stuck fighting the Swordsmanship Sanctuary, which countered her abilities. Deya couldn't help but wonder if the virtual realm was implying something.

"I'm not having much luck either," Sonya said, dodging the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon's swoop attack. The crimson Vibration of the "Blood Moon Shattered Lake" flickered across its underside, producing an ear-piercing clang of steel without even scratching its surface.

Sonya's Collection for tonight was the "Silver Collection: The Moonshadow Governs Life," which bestowed a blessing reducing Sanctuary damage by one layer with each attack, lasting 30 seconds and stacking up to 10 layers. This meant that for the same spellforce expenditure, Sonya's Sanctuary could absorb more damage, which gave her the ability to confront the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon head-on.

The best time to attack the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon was when it halted. However, the beast would always charge far away, then soar high into the sky before swooping down, moving much faster than Sonya.

The most frustrating part was that after Sonya first used the Meteor Trial to severely damage its wings, the beast would initiate every dive by ejecting steel feathers, triggering the Meteor Trial.

The village girl's Meteor Trial could counter long-range attacks by tracing the Trajectory to the source. The issue, though, was that the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon itself was rapidly moving, meaning by the time Sonya struck back, it was long gone from its original spot.

Without the Meteor Trial's effectiveness, the dragon's Sanctuary-like feathers could deflect all of Sonya's slashes. Its speed was so great that even cutting its fur was impossible, with the sword light's Vibration merely petting it like a dog.

"Focus fire to break through," Ashe suggested. "Two people concentrate on one target, while the other and Vesser work to distract the other two."

"I have an uncertain idea," Vesser suddenly spoke up. "I need you all to fly close to the ground and give me time to experiment with different possibilities. Of course, I can distract them if necessary; I'll follow the captain's orders."

"Then let's test your idea," Ashe quickly decided. To be honest, even focusing fire might not quickly resolve a target-these virtual realm creatures aren't just Lala Fatty, they can

fly when hit. On the ground, you can trap them, but in the air, they can escape with all their aerial maneuvers.

“But we need to proceed with the focus fire plan as well; we can’t delay any longer. Sword Princess, you and the Witch-“

“Captain, is your spellforce reserve still sufficient?” Vesser asked. “You’ll need to distract two of them.”

“I’ll do the distracting. Observer, you and the Witch go for focused fire,” Sonya immediately offered. “With ‘The Moonshadow Governs Life,’ my Sanctuary is sturdier than yours.”

Time was of the essence, and Ashe nodded in agreement. “Alright! Vesser, keep an eye on the sword Princess. If there’s any danger, prioritize assisting her! Let’s go!”

The four immediately plunged into the steel forest below. This dream phantom’s realm resembled the bustling metropolis of the Blood Moon Kingdom, with towering skyscrapers. However, after fighting for so long, the ground had long been cleared of people.

With their flying altitude reduced, Ashe and his team became more cautious. Any contact with a surface would lead to spellforce stalling, causing their Sanctuary to dissipate and making them plummet from the sky.

These surfaces included skyscraper walls, balconies, and railings. Anything that traced back to the ground would trigger the negative effect of “Above the High Skies.”

The virtual realm creatures pursued them relentlessly. Compared to Ashe and his team, they were much more adept at maneuvering, with even the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon gracefully gliding over the obstacles as if dancing on eggshells. This was why Ashe had chosen the sky as their battlefield; the high-rise buildings posed a greater threat to them than the virtual realm creatures did.

As the distance between the Swordsmanship Sanctuary and the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon closed, Sonya launched a circular slash at the Swordsmanship Sanctuary. Meanwhile, Deya accelerated, her fingers deftly plucking to wrap her threads around the Spear Sanctuary.

When the Spear Sanctuary attempted to slice through the threads, Ashe executed a climbing maneuver, his Heart Sword intercepting the spear to buy Deya enough time to trigger the “Golden Flow Water” effect.

The virtual realm creatures weren’t allies; they simply acted on instinct, executing the best combat strategies. Now that Sonya was willing to face two opponents at once, the

Swordsmanship Sanctuary and the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon naturally didn't shy away from ganging up on her.

Despite several exchanges, even with the defensive enhancement from "The Moonshadow Governs Life," Sonya found her spellforce rapidly depleting like floodwaters rushing through an open sluice.

Unlike ground battles, where she could use the terrain to minimize her exposure to attacks when facing multiple adversaries, the sheer number of potential attack vectors in aerial combat overwhelmed her defenses.

Moreover, the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon and the Swordsmanship Sanctuary demonstrated seamless teamwork. Whenever she defended against one, the other would seize the opportunity to attack from a blind spot, creating an almost unbreakable pressure.

Sonya suddenly understood how the Blade Fish Dragon must have felt. Back in the Sea of Knowledge, she and Ashe had similarly toyed with and overwhelmed the Blade Fish Dragon.

The tide has turned, and the virtual realm is getting its payback...

But I am not just another stepping stone like the Blade Fish Dragon!

Sonya lowered her flying altitude once again, weaving daringly through the buildings. This forced the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon and the Swordsmanship Sanctuary to adjust their positions carefully. In some areas, the dragon even had to retract its wings, breaking their rhythm and greatly reducing the pressure on Sonya.

At that moment, Sonya suddenly heard the sounds of battle nearby. When she glanced sideways, she saw Ashe and the others engaged in combat between the buildings behind her. She immediately redirected her flight toward a corner street, but just then, the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon loomed above her, forcing her to dive lower and accelerate.

Smack!

A neon sign for "Mimosa" appeared in front of her, and it was too late to avoid it.

As she crashed into the sign, her spellforce stalled, her Sanctuary was dissolved, and her virtual wings shattered. She went crashing through the sign's glass, plummeting downward.

The effect of "Above the High Skies" would last for 3 seconds. With her spellforce not yet recovered, the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon's deadly wings were already closing in, and its enormous shadow engulfed her vision.

There was no escaping this dire situation!

Perhaps because she hit her head, Sonya's mind went blank. But as she caught a glimpse of Ashe flying toward her from the corner of her eye, a strange light gleamed in his ruby eyes.

Boom!

With an explosive crash, the Blade Wing Chariot Dragon soared over Sonya's head, like a derailed train smashing into the ground. The Swordsmanship Sanctuary also fell, crumpling upon impact.

"Made it just in time," Vesser's voice rang out from above. "The second affix is that falling buildings have a strong negative effect."

Vesser flew up to Sonya, and when the Stretch Paw Club President jumped up, she grabbed her and ascended, smiling as she explained, "The Blade Wing Chariot Dragon isn't afraid of spellforce stalling, so why does it insist on diving in the air instead of the more effective ground jumps? The latter is faster and more destructive. It seems the reason is that the dragon fears the buildings themselves."

As Vesser explained, a piece of information flowed into the minds of the sorcerers:

"Overturned Tower: The dust bathed in the tower's shadow will witness everything's collapse. Any target hit by a collapsing building will be stunned for 10 seconds."

"Affix Identification Reward: A small amount of spatial sect experience, a small amount of spellforce."

"Limited Affix Privilege: In the next dream phantom, you can trigger the effect of the Overturned Tower once."

"Thank you," Sonya exhaled with relief after narrowly escaping. "If it weren't for you, I might have to wait another dozen days before I could enter the Virtual Realm again."

"You're welcome. Aren't we friends who help each other?"

"Well...", Sonya said, somewhat embarrassed. "My spellforce has recovered, so you don't have to hold so tightly."

Vesser had one arm around her back and the other around her waist, holding her so closely it was like she was pulling Sonya into herself. Vesser gazed intently into the village girl's eyes, their noses practically touching-an intimacy that left the village girl blushing.

"Sorry," Vesser released her grip and said politely, "You're a captivating person."



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

## Chapter 562: The Gift

“No affix bubble, no collection...”

Ashe crossed his arms, scrutinizing the spoils of the hard-fought battle, spinning endlessly in the air. “How’s your soul energy?”

“One-quarter.” “One-quarter.” “Two-fifths.”

Aside from Vesser, everyone’s soul energy was significantly depleted.

Soul energy is related to the frequency of actions, and aerial combat far surpasses ground combat in terms of action frequency. The previous five dream phantoms only consumed 50% of their energy, yet one aerial combat consumed 25% alone.

In theory, they could still explore two more dream phantoms, but it’s not that simple. Battles and explorations in the Time Continent of the Sea of Knowledge can be estimated precisely in terms of energy consumption, and rarely does one run out of energy mid-battle.

But the Distant Sky Domain is different. If you encounter a dream phantom with a particularly confusing affix, like “invulnerable under certain conditions,” you’re stuck if you can’t figure it out.

Battles in the Distant Sky Domain are like taking exams while playing a shadowy game of ping-pong. Fortunately, Ashe drew an operator good at thinking, so he doesn’t have to defeat every virtual realm creature to decipher the affix-according to the sword Princess, it’s not uncommon for sorcerers to fail at deciphering affixes even with all the hints.

Take her professor, Trozan-an average of six or seven dream phantoms conquered solo by the sword saint in a night-but even he couldn’t identify every affix. When he couldn’t decipher them, he’d move to the next phantom, gathering only the points he could, skipping the questions he couldn’t answer.

In the Distant Sky Domain, 20% soul energy is the lifeline. When it drops below this line, it’s time to consider heading home for a rest.

Ashe opened the virtual realm map to ponder their next course of action.



After arriving in the Distant Sky Domain, the virtual realm map was revamped into a “route map.” Once a dream phantom was conquered, Ashe could see an overview of the other phantoms leading from it, categorized as “Lone Journey,” “Pair Journey,” “Trio Journey,” and “Dream Come True.”

Indeed, the map doesn’t distinguish phantoms by difficulty, but by the number of affixes. “Lone Journey” signifies a single affix, “Pair Journey” has two, “Trio Journey” has three, and “Dream Come True” is unpredictable.

Generally, three affixes are more challenging than a single one, but a single affix can occasionally be extremely troublesome, so you can’t completely rely on the virtual realm map’s descriptions.

“Dream Come True” is the most peculiar; it can range from one to three affixes and shows no clear difference from the other three options. However, the virtual realm map doesn’t make baseless recommendations, and given the team’s current state, high-intensity exploration wasn’t suitable. So Ashe chose a “Dream Come True” portal to enter.

As soon as Ashe entered, he noticed something unusual about this phantom-the town was filled with colorful beams shooting into the sky.

“What’s going on?” Ashe asked. “Is it caused by an affix?”

“No!” Sonya said excitedly. “This is a virtual-real phantom specifically for producing materials!”

Through the sword Princess’s explanation, Ashe learned that this place was akin to a reward level in the Distant Sky Domain.

There are no enemies in the virtual-real phantoms, and the beams of light indicate virtual-real materials. These are like upgraded versions of the essence materials in the Time Continent, with an added feature: they can be taken back to reality.

All virtual-real materials can be transformed from virtual to real!

Virtual-real materials aren’t creations out of nothing; rather, they’re items from the phantom imbued with Virtual Realm Energy until they transform. It could be a tree, a door, a cat, or even a gun. The original fantasy creations were directly extracted from dream phantoms.

Sorcerers can choose to use them personally or feed them to their spirits for evolution. However, on the sword Princess’s side, they’re always for personal use because the Stars have developed a complete creation industrial system, where any material is utilized to its fullest, and letting a spirit consume them would be a waste.

“Some virtual-real materials can’t be replicated by creation sorcerers at all, and can only be found in the Distant Sky Domain,” Sonya said, clenching her fist. “For instance, The Unrememberable Wood, which can be made into a box that traverses the virtual realm and reality. With this, we can exchange spirits in the virtual realm!”

Upon hearing this, Deya blinked.

Ever since inheriting the position of Empress, she had considered depleting the treasury to support Ashe. However, after looking into it, she realized it was difficult to become a ruler like that even if she wanted to.

She also knew about The Unrememberable Wood, yet the entire Gospel Book contained no such virtual-real material.

Or rather, there were simply no virtual-real materials in the entire Gospel.

This is because the Gospel Book offers exorbitant prices for virtual-real materials, alongside a ‘Weave the Future’ opportunity, which almost no sorcerer can refuse.

Moreover, virtual-real materials are essentially luxurious items-and Gospel has long been at peace, with little need for gear to enhance combat abilities in reality-so over a thousand years, Gospel hasn’t stored any virtual-real materials.

Upon discovering this intelligence, Deya realized how the Gospel Ranking’s physical rewards were obtained-the Omniscient Weaver wasn’t creating something from nothing but selecting and refining suitable materials from the virtual-real materials!

So even though the Yisuo royal family has many spirits, Deya could only use them for herself.

But if she could obtain The Unrememberable Wood, then she could also give a gift to Ashe!

“The acquisition of virtual-real materials requires a substantial amount of soul energy, around 10%,” Sonya explained. “So let’s not rush into grabbing these materials. Take your time to see if there are better options. However, be mindful that the dream phantom may break apart, so it’s best to wrap up your selection within half an hour.”

Vesser suggested, “Shall we split up?”

Everyone nodded and dispersed. The town within this phantom seemed to be built atop the clouds. While it wasn’t as urbanized as Gospel, the streets were clean, the citizens polite, and there were few vehicles. Street performers played soft melodies on the flute, children chased each other playfully, and the afternoon sun slanted across the inverted triangular rooftops, creating a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere.

Deya followed the colorful beams, searching for materials. “Pocket watch that stops all clocks in the area,” “sword that inevitably breaks and self-repairs,” “a stone that returns to its original spot automatically”... Most virtual-real materials possessed unique Miracles, yet practical finds were rare. With reproduction, however, they might reveal additional potential.

The Witch naturally prioritized finding a tree but only found a “tree whose bark, when placed against your face, makes others enjoy kissing you.” Just as she contemplated whether to gain the rights to this material, Ashe’s voice came from behind, “Are you thinking of choosing this one?”

“Ah! No, no,” the Witch replied, startled, turning around. She shook her head, pulling Ashe along, “I haven’t decided what to pick yet-why are you here, Observer?”

“Because everyone split up, it’s a rare chance,” Ashe replied with a smile. “Finally, some time for just the two of us.”

“Ah? Ah!” Deya blinked, looking at Ashe’s earnest face as if her sisters in her mind were all screaming in chaos; amidst the confusion, she had one thought-thankfully, she hadn’t brought Lise along tonight.

“So, what did you need from me?”

“Can’t I just want to see you?”

“Of course not-you tease!” Seeing the playful smile on Ashe’s face, Deya lightly punched his arm.

“Sorry, sorry, I guess spending time with someone who loves teasing others rubbed off on me unintentionally,” Ashe chuckled, clearing his throat. Then he took out a bag. “This is for you.”

The Witch carefully took the bag and pulled out a set of sophisticated black-and-white attire, even including shoes, shorts, and stockings.

She looked at Ashe with a puzzled expression. Ashe cleared his throat and explained, “I got this as a reward from a particular Adventure. It’s a custom-made outfit for you, so I’m not exactly sure how it looks when worn. All I know is that when you wear it in the Virtual Realm and use water spells, your Miracle effect increases by 50% in the Rain Curtain...”

His words were cut short as Deya transformed instantly, donning the garments, spinning around to show them off. “How do I look?”

“Beautiful!” Ashe clapped. “This outfit is called the Empress in the Rain, and it suits you perfectly.”

“Thank you!” Deya exclaimed, flinging herself onto Ashe, twirling him around playfully. “I’m so happy!”

“As long as you like it,” Ashe said, ruffling her hair. “I’m going to look for more virtual-real materials, see you later.”

“See you later!”

After Ashe left, Deya found a clothing store and admired herself in front of the mirror, twirling and basking in her reflection. The outfit perfectly matched her usual style, and she felt delighted. If he gifted her clothes today, she couldn’t even imagine what he’d give next time!

But soon, a question raised by the Black Butler abruptly ended the Witch’s happy moment with her sisters-

“He seemed to mention there are two gifts.”

Sonya pushed open the oak door, the bell chiming sweetly. The café inside was spotless, and classical music with an exotic flair filled the air. The middle-aged manager behind the counter was polishing glasses, while a few patrons were busy with their activities as they enjoyed their coffee.

Sonya approached a table marked by a colorful light beam to get detailed information about this virtual-real material: “coffee table that prevents distractions while drinking coffee.”

Although it wasn’t The Unrememberable Wood, it was a virtual-real material related to the Mental Sect. With some refinement, it could fetch a good price. If there weren’t better options, it might be worth choosing... As the village girl evaluated its value, the café’s bell rang again.

She looked up to see Ashe walking straight towards her, seating himself across the table.

“What a coincidence you’re here too.”

“Is it still a coincidence if you walk straight towards me?” Sonya teased, although she couldn’t hide the smile in her eyes. “Have you decided on any material yet?”

“Not yet,” Ashe admitted, glancing at the coffee table. “This one seems pretty good.”

“It is, but do you have anywhere to process a table like this? You can’t exactly bring it along while chasing the Silver Lantern, can you?”

"Then maybe you can keep it or sell it," Ashe shrugged. "Or we could give it to Vesser. Even though she never complains, resources have always been prioritized for you and the Witch. Her contributions deserve more recognition... We can't just neglect someone so straightforward."

Sonya nodded in agreement. This had been on her mind too. As a Sanctuary member, Vesser was extremely obedient and played a crucial role in the Distant Sky Domain. Withholding resources for minor gains would be counterproductive. It made more sense to offer resources to win her over.

While this was her thought process, Sonya said, "Why don't you give her my share of resources, especially since she's more valuable right now."

"That's not true, you're just as important."

"How so?"

"Your attack power is immense; you're still our team's indispensable frontline."

"But Vesser is proficient in all mainstream sects. If you allocate resources to her, she can also become a powerful frontline."

"Plus, you have a great rapport with both the Witch and Vesser. At times when I can't step in, you help maintain team stability."

My good relationship with the Witch might become a thing of the past... Sonya propped her chin on her right hand and said, "But Vesser manages that too. Is there anyone not getting along with her? She's intelligent, humble, and cooperative. She's arguably more suitable than I am. Is there anything critical 'only I' can provide?"

"Hmm," Ashe mused, "like being so gentle and adorable-"

The Stretch Paw Club President couldn't help but burst into laughter. She tried to cover her mouth to stifle it, but she couldn't stop, laughing so hard her body shook with amusement. Ashe snapped back to his senses, baring his teeth in mock annoyance, "Were you trying to trick me?"

"Yes!" Sonya nodded with an air of defiance. "I just didn't expect to uncover your fib-seriously, after the Meteor Trial, plenty of people praised me, but you're the first to use 'gentle' to compliment me."

"If you say it's a fib, then it's a fib." Ashe looked out at the sunset, grinding his teeth.

Sonya reached across the coffee table and playfully brushed her fingernails against Ashe's nose. "It's alright, I really like your fib. If you try a little harder, it might even become the truth."

“Why am I the one who has to try harder?” Ashe grumbled as he stood up. “Alright, I should get back to finding virtual-real materials.”

“Wait a second.”

Sonya grabbed his wrist, puzzled. “Didn’t you come to see me for something?”

“No, I was really just passing by.”

Ashe and Sonya locked eyes-his dark eyes meeting her crimson ones. After a moment, Sonya released his hand and said, “Alright, but if you’re hiding something or lying to me, I’ll be upset.”

“And by the way, when I grabbed your wrist earlier, I used a spirit of sincerity,” she added, tilting her head with a gentle smile. “You can still sit back down.”

Reluctantly, Ashe sat back down without saying a word, clearly troubled.

Sonya didn’t press him further. Instead, she signaled to the manager for two classic coffees and placed her hands on the table, her lips pressed together as she watched him intently with wide eyes.

When the manager brought over two cups of coffee, Ashe hesitantly produced a bag from his belongings.

As Sonya reached for it, he held onto it. “You can only open it after I’ve left,” he instructed.

“Then take it back,” Sonya replied. “If you won’t sit here with me while I look at it, then I don’t want it.”

“Why?” Ashe asked, in a voice like someone questioning the heavens.

“Because I’m the not-so-gentle sword Princess,” Sonya said with a teasing smile. “Are you going to give it to me or not?”

After a moment of silence, the Cult Leader gave up, letting go in resignation. Sonya opened the bag to reveal a completely transparent outer garment, a two-piece pure white, alluring swimsuit, and even a straw hat.

She gazed silently at Ashe, who immediately started to stammer in explanation, “It was just an Adventure, something custom-made for you... but I didn’t expect it to be a swimsuit, that’s not what I meant at all... If you wear it in the Virtual Realm, it grants a Composite Miracle, reducing spellforce consumption by 10%... I don’t mean for you to actually wear it in the Virtual Realm! It’s just... I didn’t really intend to give it to you, but it was just there... Oh, just pretend you never received this gift! I’m leaving-“

As Ashe attempted to make his escape, the sword Princess caught his wrist once more. She gestured for him to sit back down, her sharp gaze making him a bit uneasy. Then, in a calm voice, she asked:

“Do you want to see?”

Instinctively, Ashe glanced around the room, as if Sonya were asking a Blade Fish Dragon that had sneaked into the café.

“Do you want to see me wear it?” she repeated.

Confronted with such a challenging question for the first time, Ashe found himself bewildered. If he said yes, it might seem too forward, like he had brought the swimsuit just for her to wear. If he said no, he feared she would scorn him for being insincere.

Thinking it over, Ashe decided on a compromise-

He nodded.

Then he saw Sonya raise an eyebrow, lean back slightly, and her lips curled into a smile.

“Hmph.”

She let out a soft sound through her nose, hinting at disdain, pride, or perhaps both. Her eyes sparkled with amusement that spread across her face, glowing in the warm light of the sunset.

She rested her head on her left hand and looked out at the leisurely street, while her right hand was placed in front of her chest. Her thumb toyed with the edge of her collar, as if to let in some air or perhaps to slip it off and change.

“Tell me,” Sonya asked softly, “do you think there’s a swimming pool here?”

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

## **Chapter 563: Fast Forward Relationship**

Sonya glanced sideways at Ashe, returning the warmth in her eyes to the setting sun, her eyes shining like rubies, unabashedly revealing a pure emotion.



Ashe blinked, but before he could react, the doorbell rang again.

“What a coincidence, you’re all here?”

The oak door burst open with a bang, and the Witch almost glided in, quickly making her way over to them. She asked, “Is this virtual-real material really good? Why is everyone here?”

Despite what she said, Deya’s gaze remained fixed on the bag beside Sonya. Sonya noticed that Deya had changed into a similarly styled but cuter and more mischievous battle outfit. She naturally understood everything, casting a faint glance at Ashe.

Uh-oh.

This was exactly what Ashe was worried about-if they both received swimsuits or normal clothes, it wouldn’t matter. But as it happened, the Witch got normal clothes while the sword Princess ended up with a swimsuit. The difference between functionality and sexual function was so pronounced that if the sword Princess hadn’t spoken harshly earlier, Ashe might have already caved.

He should have just given a gift to the Witch!

At most, the sword Princess would be angry, but now there’s even a hint of disdain?

Moreover, if there was still a chance to see the sword Princess in a swimsuit earlier, now that the Witch was flaunting her new clothes, the image-conscious sword Princess wouldn’t wear it under any circumstances.

Facing the situation, Ashe decided to be honest and said, “I got two outfits on this Adventure. As long as you wear them in the Virtual Realm, you’ll receive enhancement protection. My dark red trench coat is actually one of them, but these clothes are custom-made. They only work for you and won’t have any effect on others.” [search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

Ashe implied his reasoning for gifting the Witch a normal battle outfit while giving the sword Princess a swimsuit, as it was beyond his control. Deya gleefully spun around to show off her new clothes and then curiously asked, “Sword Princess, what kind of outfit did the Observer give you?”

Sonya turned her head away, “You ask him.”

“Ashe racked his brain trying to explain, ‘Not all custom clothes are designed for combat. The sword Princess’s outfit just isn’t suitable for everyday wear, but it does have specific scenarios where it can be used... Oh, we’re out of time, we need to quickly choose the virtual-real material, let’s go, let’s go!’

The three of them left the cafe, each choosing a direction to continue exploring.

As Ashe walked, pondering whether his gift-giving tactics might have been a bit biased, he suddenly felt an impact on the back of his head. Instinctively, he raised his Sanctuary to defend, turning around to find himself hit by a piece of milk candy. He looked up to see the sword Princess walking normally in the distance, seemingly not the culprit.

But if it wasn't her, then who else could it have been?

Ashe picked up the candy and threw it back with force. The candy traced an arc across the warm light, nearly hitting the sword Princess's head when waterlines suddenly appeared around her, and she quickly caught the candy with her right hand.

Casting Moonlit Water while moving, her Miracle seems to have reached a new level... Wait, does she really need to use a Miracle for defense?!

The Stretch Paw Club President turned to face Ashe, leisurely unwrapping the candy. Her teeth gently bit into it, and her tongue softly rolled it into her mouth. As if savoring the sweetness, she squinted her eyes and mouthed at Ashe from a distance:

You owe me.

With that, she melted into the crowd to continue searching for the virtual-real material.

Ashe scratched his head, wondering how gifting a present ended up with him owing the sword Princess an outfit... The swimsuit could be effective when worn underneath... Was there no reasoning left?

However, even with this newfound 'debt' and the missed opportunity for a swim, the Cult Leader didn't feel down. Instead, his mood lightened, and he hummed a tune played by Harvey as he continued his search.

Unnoticed by anyone, Vesser quietly observed everything from a nearby rooftop.

She first watched Ashe leaving but ultimately focused her gaze on the distant sword Princess.

In the night market of Black Robe Town, while pretending to be the Mercury Trojan Horse to test Ashe, she concluded that Ashe's 'realness' isn't a controllable ability; it's more like an unpredictable reflex, akin to how a cat might refuse to eat in unfamiliar surroundings."

Vesser reminisced briefly and realized that Ashe's transformation was triggered by her act of killing Raven Annihilation, which is why she used the life and death of the mental sorcerer to test Ashe's response.

If Ashe had indeed reverted to 'reality' due to such a threat, Vesser planned to break free from the constraints of the Kaleidoscope by using Divine Hosting on the spot, using the mental sorcerer's blood as paint to color Ashe with the hues of reality.

Unfortunately, Ashe managed to hold it in-perhaps he needs to witness death to awaken from the illusion into the reality of Immortality.

Vesser even contemplated the possibility of eliminating everyone else, a challenging but not impossible feat. Previously, she refrained from aggressive actions in Food Factory Town simply to avoid alerting the Transcendent Cult prematurely.

However, she quickly realized the flaw in her murderous plan: the sword Princess and the Witch.

If Ashe, living in illusion, resembles a pet cat, then his true self is like a wild cat. The best way to transform a pet cat into a wild one is naturally to render him homeless.

Vesser indeed wished to eliminate Ashe's companions and was eager to kill the sword Princess and the Witch. She imagined Ashe's descent into madness, awakening his true nature, employing every conceivable method to torment himself. The thought excited her indescribably, making her yearn to stain Ashe's eyes with the sword Princess's blood immediately.

But the problem was that both the sword Princess and the Witch were not within the Kingdom of Senlo.

Unless Vesser could master a Miracle capable of annihilating a sorcerer's soul completely within the Virtual Realm, she posed no threat to the two of them.

As long as they remained alive, Ashe was like a balloon tethered by strings, lost in the illusion of deception.

Though their time together had not been long, Vesser clearly sensed that Ashe, the sword Princess, and the Witch regarded the Virtual Realm as a 'secret home' to retreat to.

Ignoring physical distances, sharing common interests, meeting every night, and existing separate from real-world relationships-they could reveal their true selves freely. As long as they had this refuge, Ashe could never be truly homeless.

Therefore.

Changes in interpersonal relationships within the Virtual Realm would be more stimulating for Ashe.

In the real world, Ashe can resolve misunderstandings whenever and wherever they arise. But in the Virtual Realm, due to the infinite spatial distance and limited interaction time, even the smallest conflict can accumulate into a significant chasm.

This is precisely why their relationships have remained at their current status-Vesser, even as an outsider, can see that Ashe and the sword Princess have mutual feelings for each other, and the Witch harbors strong affection for Ashe. However, Ashe has not yet developed romantic feelings for the Witch.

But why have none of the three-Ashe, the sword Princess, or the Witch-taken any action or made a bold move, like declaring their feelings? Ashe aside, both the Witch and the sword Princess have very proactive personalities, so why are they holding back?

It's because they all fear changes in their interpersonal dynamics.

Their current state-more than friends but not quite lovers-serves as both their comfort zone and their safety zone. Even if conflicts arise, they would only be 'disagreements between friends'. The chances of mending things are quite high, and at worst, they can start anew.

However, becoming lovers is different; the closer the relationship, the more effort it demands from both parties. If either side slacks off, they might find that what they thought was reality was merely an illusion.

Friendship is like forged steel, while romance is like a bubble. The latter can reflect a spectrum of happiness but is more vulnerable to bursting.

Furthermore, this isn't a two-person team; it's a four-person team, and new members may join in the future. If one person takes a step forward, it forces the others to make concessions. After all, rumors about an affair between a boss and a colleague can easily lead to suspicion, not to mention if another colleague is also vying for the boss's affection-this could tear the team apart.

Conversely, as long as they don't take that step, everyone remains in this comfortable state, ensuring that nothing deteriorates.

Perhaps it will take Ashe meeting an operator in the real world to break this stalemate. Until then, everyone will cautiously maintain the team's atmosphere, preserving this shared hideaway, this shared home.

Having analyzed the situation, Vesser knew exactly what she needed to do next.

She aimed to alter the team's dynamics, distort the atmosphere, and fast forward their relationships.

Initially, she considered creating a crisis for the sword Princess to see if it would trigger a change in Ashe. However, with death in the Virtual Realm being somewhat trivial, Ashe would be worried but not overly concerned, so Vesser abandoned this option.

So how could she change the team's atmosphere?

Should she try seducing Ashe, making the sword Princess jealous and the Witch anxious?

She wouldn't mind if it were feasible, but without a foundation of feelings with Ashe, it was unlikely he would fall for it. Moreover, she would face hostility from the sword Princess and the Witch, which was a significant departure from her usual approach. She had always avoided making enemies of valuable targets.

Instead of playing this romantic game, she needed to become someone everyone relied on.

Since Ashe and the others hesitated to enter a close relationship, she could offer a little push.

She intended to help the sword Princess confess her feelings.

She planned to create opportunities for the Witch.

The best-case scenario would naturally be the sword Princess and the Witch confronting each other, leading Ashe to realize that the Virtual Realm was no longer a place he could escape to. A less ideal outcome would be Ashe choosing one, with the other gracefully bowing out. The worst-case scenario would be all three becoming closer, transcending their previous boundaries and truly becoming a family.

Even the worst-case scenario was acceptable to Vesser.

No matter how intense the feelings, time would eventually erode them. Just as fairy tales rarely depict the stories after the princess marries the prince, the relationships they forged in the Virtual Realm would inevitably face trials unless they could break free from their illusions.

Moreover, neither the sword Princess nor the Witch was particularly magnanimous.

Even if Ashe did have the skill to keep them both, at worst, Vesser would miss out on a perfect ally but would gain the team's friendship and become someone Ashe and the others trusted. Plus, she relished the occasional chaos in others' lives-it was one of her few pleasures within the illusion.

Having made her decision, Vesser swiftly entered a nearby alley, pretending to encounter the sword Princess by chance. She greeted her with a smile, “I just saw the Witch in a new outfit.”

“It was a gift from the Observer.”

“And what about your gift?”

Sonya glanced at her and said, “I didn’t get one; the Observer is closer to the Witch.”

“Is that so?” Vesser feigned surprise. “Could I have misunderstood?”

“What did you misunderstand?”

“Oh, it’s nothing... I just thought...” Vesser lowered her head as if embarrassed, mumbling, “I thought you two were lovers.”

Sonya blinked, “We’re not; we’re just companions exploring the Virtual Realm together.”

Though her denial was firm, her tone carried an undeniable lightness.

“I’ve never been in love,” Vesser chuckled gently, “but the way you look at and treat the Observer doesn’t seem like you’re treating an ordinary companion.”

“It’s just that I’ve known him since the Sea of Knowledge, so we’re a bit more familiar with each other.”

“Oh?” Vesser’s curiosity was genuine, “Could you tell me about your experiences in the Sea of Knowledge? I crossed it alone, navigating the vast, white ocean and facing the perilous knowledge creatures by myself. I often wished for someone to accompany me... Given your close relationship, your memories of the Sea of Knowledge must be filled with warmth and mutual support, unlike my cold and solitary experience.”

Struck by Vesser’s words, Sonya couldn’t resist sharing after a brief pause, “Back then, we had a boat...”

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

## **Chapter 564: Dead Apostle, Sorceress, Marriage**

In the morning, Ashe, having returned from the Virtual Realm, checked his pants in relief at the inn in Black Robe Town to ensure everything was back in place.

“Do you need me to look away?”

Harvey, now back to normal and no longer in the vulnerable form of a young girl from the night before, was examining a rabbit corpse. Alice was feeding him some pancakes. “With others around, it might be inconvenient for you to come out, right?”

“If it were anyone else, I’d think they were making a dirty joke. If it were you, I’d wonder if you were talking to one of the other corpses you just picked up,” Ashe replied irritably, hearing the sound of running hot water in the bathroom, indicating he couldn’t wash up at the moment.

The inn’s bathroom was tiny, and having a bathtub was a pleasant surprise; wet and dry separation was too much to hope for.

“Why are you fiddling with a rabbit?”

Harvey looked up at him, “I’d like to work on a corpse, but it’s not time yet.”

“Not time yet?” Ashe didn’t understand.

“Rabbits, cats, large dogs, large felines-once you’re used to me conducting research like this, you’ll probably be okay with me working on corpses by then.”

Ashe said, “That’s a nice idea, but have you considered that the difference between human and animal corpses isn’t just size?”

Harvey showed a puzzled expression, “Do you mean the difference in appearance? Should I use monkeys as a transitional material?”

“It’s about meaning and value!” Ashe explained seriously. “A human corpse bears the marks of time carved upon them, records of their paths, pains, and joys. It’s like a condensed version of their life!”

Clap, clap, clap.

Harvey didn’t hold back his applause. “Well said, Ashe, I didn’t expect you to have such a level of thought!”

“Yeah,” Ashe agreed, acknowledging his own eloquence. “Thanks-“

“Perfectly aligned with the core philosophy of our Necromancy Sect!” Harvey exclaimed. “The fact that corpses are full of meaning and value imposes upon us necromancers the duty to realize their full potential, rather than let them rot under the soil, be consumed by flames, become a kingdom for scavengers, or turn to worthless ashes-Ashe, come join me as a lapdog of Haagen-Dazs!”



Almost forgetting that these Spellcasting Sects have their self-consistent logical systems, Ashe turned away with a curt response, "I'll think about it later."

Harvey asked, "When you die, do you want to be with me, or with Igor?"

Ashe looked perplexed, "Since when did I become you and Igor's child? It sounds like you both are divorcing and asking who I'd stay with..."

"If you die and I'm still alive, I definitely wouldn't bury you. I'd turn you into a necromancer's death spirit," Harvey declared. "If you want to be with Igor, I'd show how he'd control you; if you want to come back with me or go to Lise, I'll take you back."

"Though I haven't asked Igor, there's no way he'd go with me. As for myself, you aren't necromancers, so you can't turn me into a death spirit. When the time comes, you can handle my corpse however you please."

Ashe sat up, looking at Harvey with a strange expression.

"Why are you suddenly so sentimental today?"

"Sentimental? Is that what this is?" Harvey said. "Raven Annihilation told me that if he loses his special aversion to the Virtual Realm upon death, he wants me to make him into a powerful death spirit. As long as he kills only the bad guys, he's willing to follow my command."

Incidentally, the three of them shared a room, while Tamashi occupied another. Initially, they wanted all four to stay together for safety against sudden attacks, but Tamashi said, for religious reasons, he couldn't share a room with heresy.

"We'll return to the Gospel alive."

"Last night on the street, you encountered the Silver Lantern," Harvey shook his head. "If she suddenly engaged in Divine Hosting then, could both of you really have made it back? Maybe you could, but the Con Artist might not be so lucky."

"Apart from the Silver Lantern, the Senlo wasteland is filled with many entities that can take our lives. They might not even be sorcerers, but remnants of past heritage, like the Blood Seed within us. This isn't the Blood Moon, nor is it the Gospel; there's no regime here to suppress the chaos, and living and dying by the day is the norm."

"It's a pity you don't follow the Necromancy Sect," Harvey mused as he continued studying the rabbit. "Otherwise, I could rely on you after I die."

Ashe blinked and then smiled warmly. "Harvey, I never thought you actually cared for us."

“Hmm?”

“You’re not creating undead for your own desires but crafting phantoms of death to accommodate the living’s feelings,” Ashe chuckled. “When a friend leaves us, you wish to keep their place as if they’re still sharing the feast of fate with us.”

“...I’ve always said that the dead should serve the living.”

“I recall when we first arrived at the Gospel, you asked Annan to help get you a corpse without considering our thoughts,” Ashe glanced at the rabbit corpse. “Why are you now concerned about our feelings?”

“Because there isn’t a separate room now,” Harvey replied. “I’d rather avoid getting beat up by you guys.”

“Let’s just say that,” Ashe shrugged. “However, your worry is valid. When we face the Silver Lantern in the future, do your best, and I’ll give it my all.”

“Instead of discussing post-mortem arrangements, shouldn’t we be focusing on the present?” Ashe shifted topics. “Igor has Anfel waiting for him; Harvey, where do you plan to settle down? The Gospel or the Blood Moon?”

Harvey didn’t respond, leaving Ashe to shrug off the silence and open “Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook.”

The moment he opened it, three notifications popped up.

“Growth report of Death Maniac Sword Princess 6.14~7.4”

“Bond Level: 4 (75% Experience Sharing)”

“Swordsmanship Sect: Gold → Gold”

“Light Sect: Silver → Silver”

“Water Sect: Silver → Silver”

“Time Sect: Gold → Gold”

“Spatial Sect: 0 → Silver”

“Spellforce: Golden Full-winged → Sanctuary One-winged”

“Training Evaluation: S!”

“Due to receiving S-grade evaluation, Death Maniac Sword Princess received class enhancement: Dead Apostle!”

“Dead Apostle – Class Trait: Has a 5% chance to deal true damage to the target’s soul.”

“Due to increased spellforce, Death Maniac Sword Princess’s talent enhancement!”

“Due to the S-grade evaluation, Death Maniac Sword Princess received class assessment task ‘Dead Apostle’!”

“Dead Apostle: Within the next 7 days, instantly kill 100 targets using the Dead Apostle trait. After completing the task, the Dead Apostle class trait can be permanently fixed! Current progress (0/100).”

Since Ashe parted with the Sword Princess and her group in the Virtual Realm, he hadn’t received any growth reports until this batch accumulated over the past three weeks.

The Dead Apostle trait is exceptionally terrifying. True damage is an attack that cannot be mitigated by non-Sanctuary methods, and combined with the Sword Princess’s already aggressive fighting style, its activation results in instant kills. However, while there are many battles in the Distant Sky Domain, there aren’t as many enemies as on the Time Continent, where one can continuously hunt targets. Instantly killing 100 targets is quite challenging.

The Sword Princess’s talent has been elevated from mid-tier to upper-tier. In addition to the numerical increase, she can now summon the Phantom of the Resentful Dragon more frequently. Based on previous experiences, triggering this effect is practically an instant kill.

“Growth Report of the Black and White Witch 6.14~7.4”

“Bond Level: 2→4 (75% Experience Sharing)”

“Mental Sect: Silver → Silver”

“Fist-Claw Sect: Gold → Gold”

“Time Sect: Gold → Gold”

“Water Sect: Silver → Silver”

“Spatial Sect: 0 → Silver”

“Training Evaluation: S!”

“Spellforce: Golden Full-winged → Sanctuary One-winged”

“Due to receiving S-grade evaluation, Black and White Witch received class enhancement: Sorceress!”

“Sorceress – Class Trait: Has a 5% chance to inflict a special status on the attack target, lasting 5 seconds (Admiration, Infatuation, Cherishing, Adoration).”

“Due to increased spellforce, Black and White Witch’s talent enhancement!”

“Due to the S-grade evaluation, Black and White Witch received class assessment task ‘Sorceress’!”

“Sorceress: Within the next 7 days, activate the Sorceress trait 500 times. After completing the task, the Sorceress class trait can be permanently fixed! Current progress (0/500).”

Wow, Ashe thought to himself. If the Dead Apostle trait greatly strengthens the Sword Princess’s combat capability, the Sorceress trait elevates the witch’s control abilities to a new pinnacle. However, these special statuses seem a bit odd-they’re not the usual stun, blind, or knockdown effects...

And while there are four special statuses, don’t they all essentially turn the target into the witch’s thrall?

The Witch’s talent has also undergone some changes:

“Innate Talent – Witch (upper-tier): Additional acquisition of 200% time experience, low chance to obtain 10000% time experience, occasionally gains the assistance of the Bronze Dragon (Talent levels unlockable upon strength upgrade).”

Ashe remembered it used to be “The favor of the Bronze Dragon,” so why has it changed to assistance now?

“Growth Report of Yolan Vesser 6.28~7.4”

“Bond Level: 0→2 (40% Experience Sharing)”

“Spellforce: Sanctuary Zero-winged → Sanctuary One-winged”

“Training Evaluation: B”

Vesser’s growth report showed almost no changes, garnering Ashe only a ‘B’ evaluation. Since she is a newly joined operator, minimal growth is expected.

What was surprising, however, was that Yolan Vesser's Bond Level jumped from 0 to 2- even though they've known each other for less than a week!

This progress is faster than both the Sword Princess and the Witch!

Recalling Vesser's soft and almost ingratiating demeanor, Ashe thought he might have truly found an earnest operator this time. After all, appearance can be deceiving, attitude can be misleading, but the Bond Level shown by the system doesn't lie. If Vesser didn't have a high enough regard for him, how could the bond have risen from 0 to 2?

After reviewing the growth report, it's time to set a training strategy.

However, after feeding them "Advanced Energy Potion," "Advanced Experience Potion," and "Career Potion," Ashe didn't go on to arrange specific tasks.

The situation has changed.

When the Sword Princess and the Witch first arrived, they didn't place much emphasis on spellcasting, so Ashe had to push them towards growth through a structured training strategy. But now that they have become sanctuary sorcerers and understand their path in spellcasting, Ashe's guidance has become more advisory than necessary.

More importantly, the bond between him and the Sword Princess and the Witch has increased, and the reverse is true as well.

He trusts that they will manage their own plans and he is happy to allow them more personal time to live their lives. As their Observer, he only needs to provide logistical support.

As for Vesser, it's even more of a non-issue. Ashe and the others might occasionally slack off, but Vesser is a dedicated sanctuary sorcerer and a Truth sorcerer skilled in over twenty Spellcasting Sects. There's no way she would neglect her studies.

So Ashe no longer sets strict schedules for training, learning, or leisure, allowing the operators to develop freely.

At this moment, Igor finally finished his bath. Ashe stretched and went to freshen up, brushing his teeth as he asked, "Where are we headed next? I can't stand staying in Black Robe Town for another day."

"Didn't you hear what the Mercury Trojan Horse said?" Igor replied, toweling his hair dry. "The Silver Lantern is in Black Robe Town. Either we wait for her prophecy to narrow down the search area or wait for her to predict the Silver Lantern's whereabouts. Either way, we'll have to stay in Black Robe Town for at least one more night."

“No-“

In another room, Vesser looked at the three bottles of potions on the table in front of her. After a moment of thought, she didn't bother running any tests. Instead, she quickly downed them all.

Her reasoning was simple-if Ashe could send potions trans-spatially, then if he wanted to poison her, he could just deliver it directly into her stomach. There was no need to overthink things. Until Ashe makes a different stance known, she would consider him a resurrector using compound divine interventions.

Once he awakens from illusion to truth, it signifies his complete resurrection.

“I've already understood the Sword Princess's experiences, but according to her, there's no reason for the Witch to like the Observer-she hasn't had any opportunity to deepen her relationship with him,” Vesser pondered. “The Observer's attitude towards the Witch is logical, but what's illogical is the Witch... it seems the Witch has some intelligence that only she knows.”

“Which pair should I matchmake first...”

From the mirror, a voice identical to her own suddenly emerged: “It seems like you're troubled by some interesting matters.”

Vesser turned her head to see a quiet girl stepping out of the mirror. She was a bit puzzled, “Has the Mirror Dragon been watching me too frequently lately?”

“Perhaps it's because your recent experiences are very intriguing,” the quiet girl smiled. “Judging by your expression, you must have met Ashe.”

Vesser nodded and suddenly asked, “What was the Ashe you encountered in another world like?”

“Exactly the same as you're imagining now,” the quiet girl lay on the bed, swinging her legs playfully, “He's the only one besides you and me who has broken free from illusions.”

Vesser couldn't help but feel a bit envious, “How nice, why did I have to meet this Ashe?”

She then shared her ‘fast forward relationship plan’ with the quiet girl, seeking her opinion: “Do you think I should find a way to create opportunities for Ashe and the Witch, provoking the Sword Princess's annoyance? Or should I help the Sword Princess and Ashe confess to each other, then let the Witch stir things up?”

However, the quiet girl didn't answer Vesser. Instead, she seemed to remember something, a strange smile forming on her face.

"What are you smiling about?"

"I just recalled something amusing," the quiet girl laughed. "In my world, Ashe was married in real life."

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

## **Chapter 565: Ashe Just Wants to Return to the Virtual Realm**

In the middle of July, thanks to Igor's efforts in gathering intelligence, Ashe and his team finally received some good news: there indeed exists another method in the Senlo Wasteland to remove the "Blood Seed."

Various producers such as the Fire Cat, Bluebird, and the Gray Fox Divine Era have developed products similar to a "universal elixir." These might not be in the form of a medicine, but as injectors, embedded Chips, or even tattoos, all designed to immediately dispel any negative conditions and fully restore one's state in an emergency.

For example, the "Reverse Day" spirit can accomplish this. If Ashe and his team had the Reverse Day spirit at that time, they could have eradicated the Blood Seed from themselves immediately. Since there's "Reverse Day," naturally there are "Reverse Month" and "Reverse Year" as well, which could still work on the three of them despite all the days that have passed. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

This is the simplest method but also the least feasible. Aside from the possibility of "Reverse Day" being used medically without side effects, "Reverse Month" and "Reverse Year" would be high-end luxury life-extension products, extremely difficult to obtain and definitely not available in the market.

If Ashe returned to Gospel, he could act spoiled with Lise, and she might generously offer a few reverse hour spirits. Yet, if he could return to Gospel, Lise could directly request a legendary sorcerer to help with the treatment since almost all Sanctuary Legends would heed Yisuo's command.



Just consider, Ashe being precisely transported to the Kingdom with a divine intervention by either an Angel or the Divine Sovereign demonstrates the difficulty of inter-kingdom transportation... Comparatively, seeking a divine era heritage is more practical.

In fact, Ashe and his team had previously inquired the Mercury Trojan Horse on this topic, but she evaded the question by claiming ignorance of the Gray Fox heritage, leaving them with no solution.

As for Tamashi... How much intelligence resource can one expect from a warrior? It's not that he lacks intelligence, but that his information is on the level of the "Ten Mysteries of the Wasteland."

While pursuing the Silver Lantern, they passed through many towns governed by various cults. Igor utilized the "Transcendent Cult certified merchant" identity to not only enter towns smoothly but also gather much intelligence on Senlo.

Among the most critical pieces of information is that the Twinborn Cult's base, "Nightfall," is rumored to have once possessed the "Reconstitution Elixir." This elixir can completely deconstruct and reconstruct a person's body, removing all curse impurities, restoring a perfect form, and even rejuvenating the soul.

The concepts of power and perfection are different. Power is built over time, while perfection is an inherent gift. It's said that all beings in the womb possess perfect bodies, enabling healthy souls to form. However, once separated from the mother, imperfections arise.

Many sorcerers believe that death results from too many flaws in the body, which can no longer house a perfect soul.

There is a story about a legendary sorcerer whose soul was on the brink of collapse due to death in the Virtual Realm. By taking the Reconstitution Elixir, he temporarily gained a perfect body, managing to nurture his dying soul back to health.

Such a potent elixir would naturally have no problem treating something as minor as a Blood Seed.

However, there's another piece of news, neither good nor bad: According to Mercury Trojan Horse's guidance, the Silver Lantern also seems to have headed to Nightfall.

It had been many days since Black Robe Town, and along the way, they had a brief encounter with the Silver Lantern. It wasn't an ambush by them or by the Silver Lantern; it was simply a case of enemies crossing paths on the street, their hatred rekindled, and they decided to fight right then and there.

This encounter differed significantly from the overwhelming victory at the Transcendence Building. This time, the Silver Lantern chose to host the Inferno of Tribulations, and even though it wasn't a perfect hosting, Ashe still couldn't suppress her.

Ashe and his group realized that unless the Silver Lantern exhausted her Demi-God powers first or they gained support from other forces, it would be quite difficult for them to capture the madwoman of Senlo.

While the Transcendent Cult had already spread the word about the Silver Lantern, and the Qinyi Alliance raised the security of all their Demi-God powers, meaning she shouldn't have another chance to acquire more, she already possessed six Demi-God powers. This equated to six lives, six forms, and in a game scenario, she would be considered a near-endgame boss.

Even though the Silver Lantern is bound to offend other cults, and there might be opportunities to take advantage of this in the future, the lack of control in this situation is truly frustrating.

Ashe and his group must wait for the Silver Lantern to make a fatal mistake before they can act against her. In the meantime, the only thing they can do is draw circles and curse her.

Additionally, due to their experiences in the Kingdom of Gospel, both Igor and Harvey have developed a strong aversion to being controlled or dominated by others. Despite their deep hatred for the Silver Lantern, that's no reason for them to accept Mercury Trojan Horse's command-she's the only one who can accurately predict the location of the Silver Lantern.

While they call it cooperation, in reality, it feels more like they're being used by one bad woman to hunt another bad woman.

Even Ashe feels similarly dissatisfied. He might not dislike Annan, but not everyone is fit to be his Young Lady commanding him around, especially not someone like Mercury Trojan Horse, who continually changes her guise.

If they could find the Reconstitution Elixir, aside from Ashe's issue with his Half Tactile Sense, everyone else would essentially be out of immediate danger, eliminating the need to meddle in the conflicts of Senlo.

The Silver Lantern, the Four Pillars Cult, and the Qinyi Alliance can continue their battles at their own pace while they make their exit.

Even Ashe is growing weary of this pursuit. All he wants now is to return to the Virtual Realm and happily explore the Distant Sky Domain with the sword Princess, the Witch, and Vesser. Recently, the team's atmosphere has become increasingly pleasant, to the

point where Ashe finds himself smiling foolishly during the day, longing to promptly return to a safe place to make progress in the Virtual Realm.

After all, this wasteland lacks a unified authority, and dangerous heritages are everywhere. Even a sanctuary sorcerer doesn't feel as secure as they would under a Blood Moon-better to have a room in Senlo than a bed at Shattered Lake!

Then, they got some bad news.

The setting sun was as red as blood, the desert like a vast sea, with dust flying thousands of miles and spellcasting raining down like falling water.

Ashe and his group rode their motorcycles to the edge of a cliff, gazing out at a massive army numbering in the tens of thousands besieging a city.

One-Winged Sorcerers provided cover for ground troops assaulting the city, while Two-Winged Sorcerers engaged in fierce aerial battles. Sanctuary sorcerers from both sides at the battle's edge created chaos with each Miracle, bringing about carnage and bloodshed.

Non-sorcerer soldiers wielded simple rifles and bayonets, wearing light yellow chainmail armor. Their eyes turned icy and ruthless under the influence of mental sorcerers. Using ladders and tunnels crafted by Earth sorcerers, they scaled the city walls to engage in brutal combat above and below with the city's defenders.

Outside the city, thousands of linked sorcerers from all directions created a vast sandstorm that engulfed the city like a tidal wave.

Inside the city, Miracles erupted continuously. Seeds within the walls rapidly took root and sprouted into vines, entangling and slaying soldiers while also shielding against the sandstorm.

Every second, sorcerers fell from the sky; every second, corpses lay gazing up at the heavens.

Corpses piled up, buried in the dust, turning their lives into added weight for the desert, while their blood and flesh became the brightest colors present. The wails of agony and battle cries seemed nothing more than the sound of time swept away by the wind.

Boom!

In the midst of the yellow-clad army, a brownish-yellow pillar of light suddenly shot up. A figure leaped out, grabbed a retreating sanctuary sorcerer, and forcefully slammed them into the city wall, piercing it like a battering ram!

At the same time, another pillar of purple-blue light burst inside the city.

The two beams of light tangled, directly shattering the city's defensive line!

This was the bad news they witnessed firsthand.

The origin place of the Reconstitution Elixir, the Twinborn Cult's base, "Nightfall," was in a state of war.

"The divine host has made a move," Tamashi remarked.

"Whether it's the divine host or sanctuary sorcerers, their combat power far exceeds everyone else's. Their victory or defeat decides the outcome of the war," Ashe frowned and asked, "Why still send low-level sorcerers and ordinary people into battle?"

It's not that Ashe is so kind-hearted he can't bear to see death. In fact, upon realizing this was a world full of Miracles, Ashe had long prepared himself for the notion that a common person's life might not be worth much. Given that sorcerers represent the pinnacle of violence and productivity, no matter how cruelly they rule the populace, Ashe wouldn't find it surprising.

However, looking at the current situation, there doesn't yet appear to be a nation where sorcerers disregard humanity altogether. The Kingdom of Gospel, not even worth mentioning anymore, still holds the highest rating; despite some oddities in Senlo, based on the conditions of previous divine eras, the standard of living for its people likely surpasses other nations-albeit with less stability. Even Blood Moon, which could be considered the baseline, at least meets the material needs and spiritual desires of its lower level inhabitants.

So when Ashe saw the scene unfolding before him, he was genuinely puzzled-what good is wiping out one army with another when a Sanctuary sorcerer or a divine host can single-handedly obliterate any legion using high-level combat power? Why wait for an all-out battle when you can have these formidable forces decide the outcome?

"Do your wars not involve ordinary people?" Raven countered.

"Most sorcerer kingdoms don't," Igor replied. "I have a hunch about why this is happening... In other kingdoms, war is a continuation of politics, but in Senlo, war stems from a conflict of beliefs."

"They kill for the sake of killing."

"Pretty much," Tamashi said. "As you mentioned, Ashe, the divine hosts possess the highest combat power, and having them determine victory or defeat would generally decide the war's outcome. However, even though there are differences in strength among the divine hosts, they have immense stamina and can't easily be defeated."

“Even if a divine host falls, as long as the Demi-God remains, someone else might successfully become a divine host. Facing a crisis and attaining resonance with the Demi-God to turn the tide-there are countless examples like this.”

“And the number of disciples is directly linked to the Demi-God’s strength,” Raven’s distorted voice carried the cold indifference of Senlo. “The real objective of the war is to eradicate heresy.”

Ashe asked, “Then why don’t the divine hosts participate in the war from the beginning?”

“There are four walls around this city,” the Con Artist pointed out towards the distance, “If I were the attacker, I’d send the divine host to assault the second or third most advantageous wall, forcing the defending divine host to respond, while the primary advantage pushes to breach the gate. If the defenders were to go on the offense, I’d do the same, sending a divine host to aid the advantage to breach the city... Regardless, you need to wait for the battle to reveal its advantages and disadvantages.”

Raven added, “Although I’m not a divine host, I’ve heard that becoming one is extremely draining. It’s best saved for critical moments, as forcibly becoming a divine host can deplete your life... Ashe, don’t you feel exhausted when you become a divine host?”

Ashe was somewhat puzzled. “No, not at all. In fact, I feel quite energized, and my body feels weightless. Could it be that I haven’t reached the danger point because I use it for a shorter period?”

Harvey asked, “That sounds like you’ve secretly taken my candy.”

“Maybe it’s because you are a perfect divine host,” Tamashi offered. “But this is how cult wars work. They might not even decide a victor this time, but instead retreat after exhausting each other’s disciples to prepare for the next wave of attack and defense. Slowly accumulating losses, one side will eventually collapse.”

“Aren’t they all part of the Qinyi Alliance?” Ashe asked, “I thought...”

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

## Chapter 566: Deception

“Oh?”

Tamashi seemed genuinely surprised: “Your Kingdom doesn’t have that? What’s it called again? I can hardly remember, something like... Infant Incubator?”

“It’s probably the most widespread gray fox heritage,” he said. “There are many discounted items in the self-service vending machines, but almost every cult inevitably buys a bunch of Infant Incubators. If they don’t have them, they find ways to buy or borrow from other cults. Although ‘Dragon Array Shopping Cards’ are hard to come by, as a cult, finding one or two is relatively easy.”

The term ‘self-service vending machine’ was not unfamiliar to Ashe and his companions; in fact, they had just passed by one today.

It looked like a large, glossy black box with a control panel. By inserting a shopping card or paying with credit points-though naturally, no one in the wasteland had credit points-one could purchase five million types of Dragon Array’s own products.

No delivery was needed; it was produced on the spot.

Shopping cards and vending machines were the most common and practical heritages in the wasteland. Cults could restore social production and even repair some divine era production lines by relying on these vending machines to stock up, eagerly licking the remnants of the divine era’s glory.

“With just the genetic information of two people, the Infant Incubator can automatically create life. If enough genetic information is provided, multiple possibilities can be matched, and the most excellent attributes can be selected,” Tamashi explained. “Generally, the Infant Incubator operates endlessly. Although some still choose natural pregnancy, as long as one is eligible to queue, no one would opt for the outdated method of childbirth.” [search the novelfire.net website](http://search.thenovelfire.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

He paused, “I was born this way.”

Ashe: “Do you remember your parents then?”

“Before I was old enough to understand, they seemed to have already died. We basically grew up with older kids taking care of the younger ones, generation after generation... Being a warrior is a position with a high mortality rate.”

“Just living in this wasteland already comes with a high mortality rate.”

Ashe quietly watched the distant skirmishes, feeling a complex mix of emotions. Faith created the divine era, faith sparked wars, faith united wills to resist Choking Green, faith drove disciples to brave death... Each Kingdom has its own theme, and Senlo’s theme is probably ‘burning faith.’”

Every Senlo native Ashe had encountered along the way-Mercury Trojan Horse, Raven Annihilation, Silver Lantern, Transcendence followers-everyone seemed to be in a hurry, as if time were slipping through their fingers. The chaos and strife of the wasteland filled their hearts with an inexplicable sense of urgency. They were all eager to burn through their own value before reaching the end, like moths drawn to a flame in the darkness, desperate to feel even a sliver of warmth.

Perhaps this was the foundation of the divine era, or perhaps it was the root of war.

As the blue of the sky deepened into a richer hue and the night breeze carried the deadly intent of Choking Green, both sides finally retreated and ceased fighting. The attackers set up camp, surrounding the city with bright bonfires that held back the darkness. The faith of tens of thousands was enough to repel the invasion of Choking Green.

"We should head over," Ashe said, releasing the clutch and twisting the right handle of his steel monster, which emitted the hum of electromagnetic rotation.

"What cult is that?" Igor suddenly asked, pointing toward the attackers.

"The Nature Cult," Raven replied. "Their ideal is to study methods of transforming the body into nature-becoming flame, light, ice, or earth. Their ultimate goal is to embody the sun, or even become part of the Virtual Realm... They're followers of the Circle Cicada Demi-God, pursuing a more eternal and grander Immortality."

"Do they have any grievances with the Transcendent Cult?"

"Huh?" Tamashi was taken aback. "I don't know. But why would any cult have grievances with the Transcendent Cult?"

In the Land of Senlo, the Transcendent Cult was undoubtedly a unique oddity. No matter what ideals other cults pursued, they all harbored a fervent desire for expansion. Only the Transcendent Cult kept to itself, holed up in its building, ignoring you as long as you didn't intrude.

Without Silver Lantern's combat prowess, it would be difficult to even provoke the Transcendent Cult.

Igor glanced at Raven and said, "I have a feeling that if we reveal our connection to the Transcendent Cult, we might run into trouble."

Even now, Igor hadn't revealed that he possessed the spirit of 'Revelation.' With Tamashi by his side, he certainly wasn't going to mention it.



While brushing his teeth this morning, the Revelation had whispered, 'Don't expose the Transcendent Cult.' In the perilous Senlo wasteland, Igor didn't dare ignore the implications of fate.

"Then we'll keep it hidden," Ashe said decisively, parking the Transcendent motorcycle.

Igor pondered for a moment. Always cautious, he wondered if merely hiding their connection to the Transcendent Cult would be enough.

The Con Artist turned to Tamashi and said, "Lend us a few sets of clothes."

With that, he pulled out three sets of Raven Annihilation outfits from his Spatial Card, signaling for everyone to put them on but to wear face covers instead of masks. Then he took out a bottle of something from his pocket, applied it to his hair, and instantly his blond locks turned brown.

He glanced at Tamashi and added, "Take off your mask for now. Anyone would recognize you as Raven Annihilation."

Raven watched them quietly, not asking why. Instead, he tore a few strips of cloth from the hem of his clothes and began wrapping them around his face, soon transforming into a bandaged figure with only his eyes exposed.

Once everything was ready, Ashe picked up Tamashi, and the three of them unfurled their golden and silver Twin Wings, soaring toward the camp. They were halted by soldiers at the outskirts, and soon a blond young man with glowing pupils approached, his piercing gaze scrutinizing them carefully.

"Who are you?"

"Travelers."

"Where are you from?"

"Tribulation Fire Temple."

The blond young man frowned. "Isn't the Tribulation Fire Temple a group of bandits... and hasn't it already been destroyed?"

"Yes," Igor replied, a hint of sorrow on his face. "Due to the threat from the Four Pillars Cult, we were actually sent by the Tribulation Fire Temple as a goodwill delegation, hoping to join the Qinyi Alliance. But unexpectedly... and with the fire extinguished, our atonement vouchers have also become invalid. We hope the Nature Cult can shelter us for a night, or perhaps longer."

Ashe's Transcendent atonement voucher was still usable, but it was a finite resource-once depleted, he'd have to return to replenish it. Using it to resist Choking Green overnight would consume an unknown amount, and it wasn't 100% effective either. He might wake up the next day to find parts of himself already overrun by the green.

The cults of the Qinyi Alliance were generally friendly to travelers, which was why they had taken the risk to seek shelter here.

The blond young man caught the underlying message in the Con Artist's words-they wanted to join the Nature Cult.

A sorcerer from a fallen cult was a valuable resource anywhere, but the blond young man glanced at them and asked, "Are you a group of four travelers?"

"No," Igor said, pointing at Tamashi. "He was picked up by my companion on the road. It seems he was abandoned due to facial disabilities, possibly a defective product of natural pregnancy. We're planning to take him to Black Robe Town to help him find a nighttime job that doesn't require a good face... He doesn't even have virtual wings. How could he be part of our group?"

In the Land of Senlo, merchants are divided into two categories: stationary merchants and Travelers. Stationary merchants operate within fixed routes, selling specific goods, and the majority of merchant caravans fall into this category. Travelers, on the other hand, are essentially part-time Intelligence brokers. They are often tasked with gathering information for their respective cults, which requires them to venture into dangerous, far-flung regions. Most Travelers are composed of two-wings sorcerers-no surprise, since they can fly quickly. While other means of transportation exist, flying is the most common. The distance a two-wings sorcerer can cover in 12 hours is often considered the maximum distance between a town and its neighboring outposts.

The blond young man finally nodded and extended his hand. "Supplicant of the Nature Cult, Norey Supernatural."

Norey led them into the camp, asking as they walked, "Did you encounter any other merchant caravans on your journey?"

Igor furrowed his brow in thought. "When we set out from Baimang Town, we did come across a group of merchants on motorcycles."

"Were they not on the same route as you?"

"No, they seemed to be heading toward Lilac Town."

Norey sighed. "That's a shame."

"Why so? Perhaps we could be of service."

“Just missed out on a good deal,” Norey said. “If I could have caught those four, I might have saved a few Dragon Array Shopping Cards...”

“A few Dragon Array Shopping Cards!” Igor’s eyes widened. “That big of a deal?”

“Of course,” Norey chuckled. “It’s related to the fall of Nightfall-“

Boom!

At that moment, a deafening explosion erupted from the city in the distance!

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

## Chapter 567: Nightfall

The night shook the earth!

A sound like a collapsing tower echoed from Nightfall City, the ground trembled, flames flickered, and even the night seemed to be scattered.

“What...” Ashe and the others heard the suppliant Norey murmuring in disbelief, “This isn’t what was agreed upon...”

Even without knowing the details of the deal between the Nature Cult and Silver Lantern (they naturally inferred from Norey’s words that they had almost been tricked by Silver Lantern), Ashe and the others could guess some of it-Silver Lantern’s goal was unknown, but what the Nature Cult wanted was undoubtedly for Silver Lantern to collaborate with them from within to breach Nightfall City’s defenses.

But now it was night, and even if Silver Lantern made any moves, the Nature Cult would find it hard to respond. Not to mention that a siege had just ended, leaving everyone exhausted, the sorcerers’ spellforce mostly depleted, and even the divine hosts might not have fully recovered.

If the battle during the day was a straightforward duel, then continuing to attack now would be like dragging both sides into a chaotic melee in the mud.

Moreover, without the Nature Cult’s coordinated assault, could Silver Lantern really break through the city walls?

It wasn’t that Ashe and the others doubted Silver Lantern’s strategic capabilities, but the Twinborn Cult wasn’t made of Lala Fatty.

As the stronghold of the Twinborn Cult, Nightfall City had resisted countless sect raids. The city walls were a hundred meters high, layered with defenses, and from what Ashe and the others could see, they were reinforced with Earth spells, Senlo, and metal from various Spellcasting Sects. Not only was there the Miracle of kinetic transfer to disperse impacts into the ground, but there were also various repair mechanisms. For instance, when a section of the wall was breached not long ago, it was quickly filled with vine-infused concrete, leaving no opportunity for the Nature Cult to expand their gains.

Previously, Igor had gathered much Intelligence on Nightfall, and the most frequent keywords were 'isolated,' 'impenetrable,' and 'enigmatic.' The Twinborn Cult occasionally leaked some highly valuable gray fox heritage, and nearby sects had often targeted them, but at most, they could only occupy subordinate towns. No force had ever managed to breach Nightfall City.

As the oldest wasteland sect, Nightfall's foundation could not be overestimated.

Even if Silver Lantern could destroy the city gates, the Twinborn Cult could repair them with a Miracle within minutes.

And it wasn't as if the Twinborn Cult lacked divine hosts. Even if the divine hosts couldn't defeat her, would the Twinborn Cult really adhere to any code of honor when dealing with someone like Silver Lantern?

Yes, Silver Lantern had six lives, but the Twinborn Cult numbered in the thousands, if not tens of thousands.

The most striking characteristic of the Senlo Sect was that its disciples truly feared no death.

If Silver Lantern had been fighting a guerrilla war outside, few in the Senlo sect could have captured her. But if Silver Lantern was trapped, any sect could exhaust her Demi-God power through sheer numbers.

While divine hosts possessed combat strength that surpassed legendary sorcerers, they were essentially just super soldiers on a larger scale. Unlike legendary sorcerers, they couldn't wield the Miracles that could twist the tide of battle. Not to mention, aside from Ashe, other divine hosts had time limits-they might have to flee after less than three minutes.

Therefore, Silver Lantern's chaos could only turn into a significant outcome if the Nature Cult launched a strong offensive in coordination. Even if the Nature Cult moved immediately, by the time they reached the city walls, Silver Lantern might already have been captured and beaten by the Twinborn Cult.

Compared to Norey's grim expression, Ashe couldn't help but feel a sense of glee. If Silver Lantern's plan was exposed and she was caught and beaten by the Twinborn

Cult, he would naturally be delighted, even feeling a refreshing sense of “you’ve got what you deserved.”

However, Igor’s expression also turned grim.

Seeing that Norey wasn’t paying attention to them, Igor stepped back behind the group and whispered, “We might actually have to help Silver Lantern escape.”

“Why?”

“If Silver Lantern dies, you’ll become the complete Tactile Sense,” the Con Artist said. “I have no interest in dealing with an evil version of you.”

Tamashi suddenly placed a hand on Ashe’s shoulder. “Although I deeply despise Four Pillars Cult members, as long as you promise to kill Mercury Trojan Horse and disband the Four Pillars Cult, I won’t hunt you down.”

Raven Annihilation’s words were spoken with absolute seriousness, as if he were the sanctuary sorcerer and Ashe the mortal. Yet Ashe didn’t doubt the weight of this threat-through their days of working together, Ashe had come to fully understand just how deadly this mortal could be.

In fact, Tamashi had once come dangerously close to killing Mercury Trojan Horse, standing just five steps away from her. But within those five steps, each one was filled with ‘traitors’ from the Raven Annihilation Cult.

On that day, only two remnants of the Raven Annihilation Cult remained.

On that day, Mercury Trojan Horse never appeared in public again.

Sometimes Ashe wondered if Mercury Trojan Horse’s ‘possession of others’ ability as the Tactile Sense was a self-defense mechanism born out of her fear of Tamashi’s assassination.

Tamashi’s reason for traveling with Ashe and the others was simple-he was willing to cooperate as long as it involved killing bad people, and Silver Lantern was undoubtedly near the top of the list of evildoers in the Four Pillars Cult. Not to mention, capturing Silver Lantern might bring them closer to Mercury Trojan Horse. Even if Ashe refused Tamashi’s company, Tamashi would still follow behind like a Death Raven.

However, to pursue Silver Lantern, Tamashi was almost indispensable-before Ashe and the others mastered the Advanced Reconnaissance Miracle, Raven was the only one who could see through Silver Lantern’s delusions. Even with the prophecy miracles of the Mercury Trojan Horse, without Tamashi’s eyes, it would be difficult for Ashe and the others to track Silver Lantern.

But it was also because of this unwavering faith that if Ashe and the others turned into evil ravens, Tamashi would show no mercy. Tamashi never demanded they follow any rules or commandments, just silently sharpened the blade behind them.

It was then that Ashe realized why Igor was so wary of Tamashi.

It wasn't just caution towards a stranger.

"Alright," Ashe laughed, "If I really become a bad Tactile Sense, then the three of you will have to stop me together."

"Can I defect to you?" Harvey asked.

Boom!

The commotion in the city didn't subside over time; instead, it grew fiercer, and the tremors gradually spread, even shaking the ground where Ashe and the others stood!

Crack!

A shocking fissure appeared in the distant thick city wall, rapidly spreading and branching like countless insects emerging. Seeing this, the Nature Cult couldn't remain idle. Norey unfurled his golden and silver Twin Wings, his body erupting into roaring flames, instantly transforming into the Immortal Flame Bird, emitting a clear and melodious cry!

What the Nature Cult excelled at was mimicry miracles, transforming into fantastical creatures!

At the same time, various other Nature Cult camps also erupted with different cries, all disciples Armored and armed with guns, ready to march into hell!

Before Ashe and the others could decide what to do, they saw the fissures in the city wall come to a halt, spreading outwards along the ground like a virulent poison.

And the ground's tremors had reached a level where it was impossible to stand steadily. Ashe and the others saw fine cracks forming at their feet, watching as sand was quickly sucked into them.

In a flash, Ashe immediately grabbed Tamashi by the hand!

Boom!

With a deafening roar, the earth shattered like a mirror.

The city, the camps, and even the ground further away... everything seemed to be built on a fragile pane of glass, and now that the glass was broken, everything fell through.

Countless golden and silver Twin Wings unfurled and ascended, the flying sorcerers escaping the earth's maw. Their gazes passed over chunks of soil, reaching a vast underground space, discovering a city that surpassed the times.

Skyscrapers, rivers of vehicles, and lighting like stars, reflecting the galaxy.

It wasn't a ruin left from the past, nor a town surviving after Doomsday. It was a complete, aesthetically designed, fully functional city from the divine era.

The underground dwellers looked up, gazing at the collapsing ceiling. Neither the dirt and rocks nor the falling city debris harmed them, because above the city were layers of protective membranes. These membranes were undoubtedly connected to the earth, capable of dispersing the pressure even from the weight of the city's remains.

Not just the Nature Cult, even Ashe and the others were stunned.

Indeed, everything needed context. If they had seen this city in the Gospel, Ashe and the others might have nodded in acknowledgment, but they wouldn't have been overly impressed. However, after experiencing the camps at the bathhouse, the mental hospital, the Food Factory Town, and various other ruins, suddenly encountering a proper city, how could Ashe and the others remain indifferent?

No one had expected that the impenetrable fortress above ground was merely a facade. The true Nightfall was actually an underground city.

Not just a single building like the Transcendent Cult, but a complete city!

At that moment, Ashe and the others saw a flicker of firelight emerge from the falling city debris.

It was a firelight they were all too familiar with.

The flames grew increasingly intense, eventually turning nearly milky white, as if trying to dye the night into day. But this fire didn't represent light; it symbolized the Inferno of Tribulations.

Pop.

When the Inferno of Tribulations descended, the protective 'membranes' shielding Nightfall shattered like bubbles. The city debris, sand, rocks, and the over hundred thousand Natural Legion fell like an exposed calamity, plummeting straight into the city.

Boom!



Skyscrapers toppled, sending up clouds of dust.

Falling rocks rained down, scarring the face of Nightfall!

Back in the Gospel Kingdom, Ashe had imagined how spectacular it would be if the city on the second level collapsed. He never thought he'd witness it in the Senlo Kingdom.

The Immortal Flame Bird, the Golden Lion Ape, the Frost Peacock, and the divine hosts of the Nature Cult-four upper-tier combatants led the two-wings sorcerers into Nightfall.

Their fanatical roars swept through the night of Senlo like a gale.

"Born of nature, shaped by nature, returning to nature, transcending nature!"

"Perfect Twinborn, Fate Spiral. The Path of Redemption lies within it."

There were no threats or provocations. The war of faith was too pure to allow for any compromise. Nightfall was vast, but it couldn't accommodate two sects. It had become an arena with no way out.

The Twinborn Cult wouldn't flee; behind them was Nightfall. The Nature Cult wouldn't flee either; if they couldn't bring back these hundred thousand troops, the Nature Cult might as well disband.

In other words, when the earth collapsed, only one sect would climb out of this abyss.

Almost instinctively, Ashe and the others wanted to get as far away from here as possible. Despite all they had been through, at their core, they were ordinary sorcerers who had never experienced war-products of a peaceful era, like greenhouse flowers. Even Igor, not to mention Harvey, felt little excitement at the sight before them-Harvey only enjoyed the aftermath of war, the corpses strewn across the battlefield, not the war itself.

Yet, they couldn't escape.

As the earth collapsed, the night had silently crept closer, now pressing against the edges of the pit. If Ashe and the others tried to fly out, they would inevitably face the test of Choking Green.

However, even if it meant expending the energy of their atonement vouchers, Ashe was willing to flee the war.

But there was another reason-they had come here to find the Reconstitution Elixir.

“This is our chance,” Igor said. “To resist the Nature Cult, the Twinborn Cult’s defenses on key resources must be weakened. If the Reconstitution Elixir truly exists, it must be in this city.”

“But they won’t see us as just passing by for a midnight snack,” Ashe replied.

“It’s fine. We have Sanctuary. We don’t need to fight them head-on.”

“It’s Ashe and me,” Harvey reminded him. “You haven’t mastered Sanctuary yet.”

A few days ago, after their souls had recovered, Harvey and Igor underwent the Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon for the second time. Harvey succeeded in constructing Sanctuary, while Igor was still working on it. Besides talent, their personalities also played a significant role in their progress: Harvey thoroughly enjoyed stepping into death during the ritual, while Igor, well... he was a bit afraid of pain.

“I’ll just hide in your Sanctuary,” Igor said. “Sometimes, you have to take risks.”

The three of them looked at Ashe, who nodded. “Alright, but how do we find the elixir?”

“Hospitals and treasure vaults are the most likely places, maybe even near the Demi-God,” Igor mused. “We can’t just search randomly. We need to find a key figure to guide us...”

“The guiding Silver Lantern has appeared,” Tamashi, who had climbed onto Ashe’s back, suddenly pointed into the distance.

Following Raven’s direction, they saw Silver Lantern, her body wreathed in white flames, racing in the distance. Behind her were two trailing streaks of purple and blue light—clearly, the divine hosts of the Twinborn Cult!

“A chance to get the Reconstitution Elixir, and Silver Lantern on the brink of failure,” Ashe said, torn between laughter and tears. “Did all the good things just pile up at once?”

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

## **Chapter 568: Twin**

Silver Lantern would never cooperate with the Nature Cult just for a few Dragon Array Shopping Cards.

In fact, she might not have planned to cooperate with the Nature Cult at all from the start. It was likely a spur-of-the-moment decision to ambush Ashe and the others. Even though Ashe and Harvey possessed sanctuary powers, if the Nature Cult launched a sudden attack, it would be difficult for them to ensure the safety of Raven Annihilation and the Con Artist.

The sudden collapse of the ground also revealed that Silver Lantern had no regard for the interests of the Nature Cult.

Her goal was simply to drive the two cults into an arena, forcing them to fight to the death to divert attention, while she seized the opportunity to pursue greater gains.

From the very beginning, the Nature Cult and the Twinborn Cult were nothing more than pawns in her plan.

Her actions were like a player advancing the main quest, discovering that two hostile targets needed to be dealt with. She pretended to be a mercenary serving one of them, not only securing an extra quest reward but also tricking the target into helping her eliminate four elite enemies with permanent hostility. Then, in a twist, she betrayed everyone, trapping them all together.

Though it's unclear how she managed it, from the Observer's perspective, one couldn't help but marvel at her audacity and precision-she had nearly achieved the impossible, manipulating two ancient cults single-handedly.

She was almost successful.

If only she could escape alive.

The moment they saw Silver Lantern, Ashe and the other three immediately reached a consensus-find a way to capture her first. Whether it was to interrogate her about her goals in hopes of finding the Reconstitution Elixir or to simply take her away and gift-wrap her as a birthday present for Mercury Trojan Horse, it didn't matter!

Ashe and the others spread their golden and silver Twin Wings and flew toward her, but they were quickly intercepted. It wasn't the Nature Cult this time, but a pair of twin sorcerers.

They were rare gun sorcerers from Senlo, and the guns they wielded were not the crude wasteland firearms but the glowing purple-blue Gray Fox fantasy guns!

Though the beams they fired couldn't penetrate the sanctuary, the sheer kinetic force actually pushed the sanctuary back. Despite Ashe and the others dodging left and right,

the twin sorcerers' seamless coordination created an impenetrable web of fire, effectively trapping the sanctuary sorcerers within a confined area!

If they really wanted to fight, they could win, but Ashe and the others had no intention of getting bogged down here.

"No choice," Ashe said, pulling out an atonement voucher and inserting it into his divine hosting belt. "Raven Annihilation, you take care of it."

"Got it."

A background sound echoed from the belt as a stream of information flowed into Ashe's mind-

"Transcendent Point Card: Activating!"

"Transcendent Mad Wolf Knight Form, Transform!"

As golden lightning coiled around him, Ashe's virtual wings also crackled with electricity. His speed surged instantly, and in a flash, he appeared behind the twin gun sorcerers. Though the twins reacted quickly, Tamashi struck them one by one, numbing half their bodies and sending them plummeting downward.

But Ashe's flashy display drew even more attention-a group of two-wings sorcerers, who had been locked in battle with the Nature Cult, split off and turned their gaze toward him. To his surprise, there were five more pairs of Twinborn Sorcerers!

Wait, the rate of twins here is absurdly high. Does your Infant Incubator come with a "double yolk" setting?

"That rumor is actually true..." Igor gasped. "The Twinborn Cult really has mastered the art of duality."

He quickly explained, "They're not actually twins. The Twinborn Cult's philosophy is that everyone is incomplete, and only by finding their other half can they form a perfect 'Fate Spiral.' It's said the Twinborn Cult possesses a technique that allows someone to create another 'self'-either opposite, complementary, or similar. The outside world calls them the Fate Twins."

"I don't know about the rest, but the combat power of the Fate Twins likely far exceeds that of ordinary sorcerers, especially when paired with the right Gray Fox weapons..."

"You two go after her," Ashe said. "Tamashi and I will catch up."

With that, he transformed into a streak of golden lightning and charged toward the Fate Twins, with Raven clinging to his back, ready to strike. Though the Twinborn Sorcerers

tried to track his movements, all they could see was the trailing light of the golden lightning. Before they could react, they were disarmed.

After being utterly humiliated in aerial combat in the Virtual Realm, Ashe and the others had specifically dedicated time to practicing their aerial skills. Not only were they now proficient in basic techniques, but they had also attempted to master the pinnacle of aerial combat-the Nightfall Maneuver.

The enemy would only ever see the afterimage of your flight, and you would always remain in their blind spot-hence the name, Nightfall Maneuver.

This skill was naturally extremely difficult to master, and Ashe's group had only grasped the theory, not yet applying it in actual combat. However, with the power of the Transcendent Demi-God technique enhancing his speed, Ashe could effortlessly execute the Nightfall Maneuver, easily outclassing these Twinborn Sorcerers.

Haha, you guys haven't practiced aerial combat, have you?

When it came to the last Twinborn Sorcerer, the opponent actually managed to react to Tamashi's sudden attack, his hands coiling like snakes around Raven's arm.

Ashe immediately recognized it-this was a Counter Miracle, similar to Moonlit Water!

Tamashi showed no fear, using one hand to dismantle the opponent's moves. But the Twinborn Sorcerer's target was never Raven-it was the golden lightning Hell Mad Dragon that Raven was riding!

Crack!

Ashe blocked his kick, locked his wrist, and waited for Raven to numb his body before tossing him aside. Then, he quickly caught up to Igor and Harvey in the distance.

"Why didn't you just counterattack earlier?"

"If I had, they'd either be dead or fatally injured. You handled it perfectly-just enough to disable them without killing them."

"You actually care about that?"

"Do I look like someone who kills without blinking?" Ashe chuckled. "They're fighting against invaders, while we're just opportunistic thieves... If we went all out, I'd feel too ashamed to face certain people."

"You're just trying to survive," Raven's distorted voice seemed to offer comfort. "Even the Raven Annihilation Cult wouldn't blame a desperate soul for stealing to stay alive."

“Desperate souls, huh...” Ashe glanced at the city below. Though Twinborn Sorcerers were few, they were enough to create a local advantage and overwhelm the Natural Legion. However, because the divine hosts of the Twinborn Cult were pursuing Silver Lantern, the Nature Cult held the upper hand in high-tier combat.

This city, which Ashe had never set foot in-perhaps the most intact divine-era city in Senlo-had now become a blood-soaked meat grinder.

Ashe turned his head. He had already caught up with Igor and the others, and not far ahead were three entangled streaks of light.

Without a doubt, the divine hosts of the Twinborn Cult were also Twinborn Sorcerers. Even though their divine hosting wasn't at its peak, their seamless coordination was enough to overwhelm Silver Lantern.

After waiting for so long, the perfect opportunity to strike while she was vulnerable had finally arrived!

“Harvey, you carry Tamashi. The rest of you, help block Silver Lantern's escape routes.”

“No,” Raven bent his elbow, revealing the Grey Fox Blade. “I'll deliver the fatal blow for you.”

“Good.”

Ashe acted decisively. The horn on his forehead flickered with lightning as he joined the chaotic battle like a mad wolf. When enemies meet, their eyes burn with fury-no words were needed. The moment Ashe clashed with Silver Lantern, it was like thunder meeting fire, sending shockwaves through the air!

Though the Twinborn divine hosts didn't know Ashe's origins, seeing his formidable strength and his attack on Silver Lantern, they silently coordinated with him. I don't know who you are, but if you're fighting Silver Lantern, we're brothers from different mothers.

Under the relentless assault of the three divine hosts, even with the vast space to maneuver in the air, Silver Lantern was quickly forced into retreat, fleeing almost blindly. The white flames around her grew weaker and weaker, like a candle flickering in the wind. Just as it seemed her first life bar was about to be depleted, she suddenly accelerated, charging straight toward the palace below!

Ashe and the other two immediately charged downward, but one of the Twins intercepted Ashe, his eyes filled with unyielding determination. “You can't go in!”

“But she-“

“She’s almost finished! Borell can handle her!”

In that split second, Ashe realized he had also been manipulated by Silver Lantern. “But she possesses multiple Demi-God techniques! If you don’t chase her, she’ll use a divine host to restore her full power and kill your other half!”

If Ashe hadn’t shown up, it would have meant they had been dealt with by the Nature Cult, and the chase would have ended. But by appearing, Ashe had unwittingly diverted the attention of the Twin divine hosts, making her main task easier!

The Twin divine host’s expression remained unchanged until a thunderous roar echoed from within the palace. Only then did his face pale.

They rushed inside to find not only the palace guards all dead but also the other Twin lying in a pool of blood, his finger pointing toward the end of the palace corridor.

There, a massive circular hole had abruptly appeared in the center of the palace, and Silver Lantern stood at its edge. Noticing their gaze, she waved at them with a hint of amusement before leaping into the void.

Whoosh.

Ashe transformed into a bolt of lightning, streaking across the entire palace corridor. Tamashi used Ashe’s shoulder as a springboard, launching himself like an arrow toward Silver Lantern as she fell into the hole!

Crack!

An invisible barrier covered the hole, and Raven slammed into it, unable to fall through. Only the Grey Fox Blade pierced the barrier, but by then, Silver Lantern had already vanished into the lightless Abyss below.

Ashe stepped onto the surface of the hole, feeling as though he were walking on one of those glass-bottomed observation decks at tourist attractions. He reached out and touched it, feeling something like cold, unyielding steel.

“How did she get through...?” the Twin divine host muttered behind him. Compared to the severe injury of his other half, Silver Lantern’s leap into the hole seemed to shock him even more. “How is this possible...?”

“What’s down there?” Ashe asked.

“That’s the origin of the Twinborn Cult, the starting point of the perfect fate,” the Twin divine host sighed. As he spoke, his body visibly weakened, while the other Twin, who had been gravely injured, began to heal rapidly-they could share life between them!



At that moment, the Con Artist and the necromancer entered the palace. Ashe nodded at them and asked, "Is there any way to get down there?"

"No, we've tried many methods, but at most, we can only harness some of the energy that leaks through. We can't enter... Who are you?" The Twin divine host looked at these Uninvited Guests, realizing they weren't from the Nature Cult, and couldn't help but feel puzzled.

"We're just passing Travelers," Ashe said casually, running his hand over the barrier. "Really no way to get in? Then how did Silver Lantern..."

As he spoke, a spark of electricity flickered at his fingertips. With a sharp crack, the barrier shattered, and Ashe and Tamashi plummeted downward.

Thanks to their days of aerial combat training, Ashe instinctively tried to unfurl his Twin Wings.

They wouldn't open!

Just like in Black Robe Town's Kaleidoscope domain, his spellforce had been completely suppressed!

Not only that, his Divine Hosting state was forcibly canceled, and he automatically exited his Hell Mad Dragon knight form.

In that split second, Ashe kicked Tamashi hard, sending him crashing into the wall of the hole. Then Ashe reached out, trying to grab the edge to stop his fall.

He couldn't reach it. He was in the center of the hole, too far from the edge.

The walls were also impossibly smooth, with no cracks or handholds to grip. For anyone else, without the use of spellforce, it would have been impossible to catch themselves.

So when Igor and Harvey rushed over, all they saw was Raven clinging to the wall with one hand, staring down into the Abyss.

Somehow, he hadn't fallen to his death.

Ashe felt his descent slow after a certain point, until he was drifting down like a feather, as if the air itself was cradling him, gently lowering him to the ground.

The moment he landed, he immediately began moving, staying alert to avoid any ambush from Silver Lantern. But what he found was an empty underground hall, with passages leading in all directions. There was no sign of anyone.

Silver Lantern went to such lengths to come to this place, where spellforce is suppressed. What is she planning?

As Ashe pondered this, he suddenly heard clear footsteps echoing from a nearby passage.

Tap.

Tap.

Tap.

He immediately pressed himself against the wall, counting his breaths. The moment the footsteps drew close, he struck first, using the Witch's joint techniques to incapacitate his opponent!

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Amid the muffled sounds of flesh hitting flesh, the other party seemed to anticipate Ashe's every move. Ashe gained no advantage and was forced to retreat several steps to reset his Stance.

But when he finally got a clear look at the other person, Ashe froze.

"Who are you?"

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

## **Chapter 569: Divine Fire Trial**

Ashe felt like he was looking into a mirror.

The same Raven Annihilation feathered cape, the same Twisting Mask, the same hairstyle, the same steel-soled boots, the same Blade Fish Dragon undershirt, and even the divine hosting belt was identical-could you also transform into the Transcendent Hell Mad Dragon Knight?

The only difference was his eyes, which revealed a complex yet familiar hue. It was something he had seen in Igor's eyes, in Harry's eyes, in Empress Yisuo's eyes, and even... in Silver Lantern's eyes.

"You've already made your judgment," he said calmly. "Why do you still need me to give you an answer?"

"The origin of the Twinborn Cult, the starting point of the perfect fate, and the fact that they regard this Abyss as their exclusive domain..." Ashe said. "Are you my Fate Twin? My other half?"

"Just someone who happens to share the same memories and appearance as you," he replied. "When you fell, I was born from this place."

"So, we're not completely the same after all," Ashe said. "At least our birthdays are different."

"But I'm also Ashe, and you're Ashe. How should we address each other?"

"No special titles are needed. You're not schizophrenic, and neither am I. As long as you speak loudly enough, I'll naturally know whether you're talking to me or being sarcastic."

"No, even though names are used by others and not ourselves, without a name, we truly have nothing of our own." Ashe counted on his fingers. "Our corpses will enter the cycle of the world, our souls will become part of the Virtual Realm's legacy, and after countless years, all traces of us will be erased. Only our names might endure into the future."

"The corpse philosophy of a necromancer? The nihilism of a mental sorcerer? Or perhaps the influence of the Dramatic Poet and Raven Annihilation?" he said. "So, you've been hiding such thoughts all along?"

"Not really, I just used it as a reason to persuade you to choose a name." Ashe was enthusiastic. "Who hasn't thought about giving themselves a new name? Something simple, like Ashe Heath, and just call you Heath? No, no, that feels like it carries an ominous premonition... Do you remember the names we thought of when we were kids? Ashe Soul, Ashe Mourn, Ashe-"

"Call me Observer," Observer interrupted.

"How about Ashe Weeper? I feel like names with more characters sound better-"

"I'm Observer, and you're Ashe."

Ashe shrugged helplessly, his face filled with disappointment, and walked over to sit on the steps. After a moment of thought, he asked, "You said you have all my memories-"

“Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook, the Sword Princess, the Witch, Vesser, before the time travel, after the time travel,” Observer replied. “I know all your secrets. To me... you’re transparent.”

As he spoke, Observer’s voice grew deep and resonant, like a demon’s whisper emerging from the darkness, carrying an indescribable coldness.

The next second, Ashe grabbed Observer by the shoulders and pinned him against the wall. Observer remained calm, even feeling a sense of relief. But when he looked up, he saw Ashe’s face brimming with uncontrollable joy and excitement.

“Did I really die suddenly? Will my parents be okay? Will the insurance I bought pay out? They won’t go through my computer files, right? And... and...”

As Ashe rambled on like a floodgate had been opened, Observer was momentarily stunned. Then, he replied calmly, “If even you don’t know the answers, how would I?”

“Still, with your older brother and sister-in-law around, and your nephew, your parents will recover quickly even if they grieve for a while. You’ve always been working away from home, only returning for the New Year and rarely calling them... they’ve already gotten used to your absence.”

“It’s our absence!” Ashe corrected. “What’s the point of calling? There’s no good news to share. Should I tell them I stayed up late working on a project again and barely slept four hours? But I never thought working away from home would have this benefit—even dying can be so straightforward...”

Observer said, “The insurance payout won’t be an issue. You specifically bought it for sudden death. As for your computer files, they’ll definitely go through them.”

“Sigh...”

But it had been so long since the time travel that Ashe quickly pulled himself out of the emotional quagmire. He looked at Observer and grinned. “They say Fate Twins come in three types: similar, complementary, and opposite. You don’t seem too similar to me, so that means...”

Ashe slung an arm around Observer’s shoulders, grinning. “You’re the complementary type, right? Let’s get along well from now on!”

“I won’t take care of you,” Observer replied coldly. “You’re on your own.”

“So, what do we do next?” Ashe glanced around, his gaze eventually settling on the massive circular hole he had fallen through. “How do we get out of here? Is there an elevator or something?”

Observer pointed to a wall across from them.

Ashe blinked and quickly noticed something unusual: in the circular Underground Hall, there was a passage at regular intervals. The direction Observer pointed to should have had one too, but now it was blocked by a wall.

Observer explained, "There should be 16 passages here, but now only 15 remain. Silver Lantern and her companion likely chose this passage to continue deeper."

"Her companion?" Ashe asked. "Just like us?"

If one Silver Lantern could turn the Senlo Wasteland upside down, Ashe didn't even want to imagine what two could do.

"Since they chose to go deeper, it means the way out can only be found by continuing to explore," Observer said, turning to him. "Do you want to choose, or should I?"

Ashe glanced at the indistinguishable passages. "They all look the same. You pick."

Observer nodded and led the way into the nearest passage. The light source in the passage was mysterious, with a bright beam shining in the far distance. After Ashe followed him for a while, he heard a loud rumbling behind him. Turning back, he saw the entrance had been sealed shut.

"Well, even if Igor and the others come in, they won't be able to find us now..." Ashe muttered. "Speaking of which, do you think they'll be okay?"

"Since the Twinborn Cult has freed up their hands, the Nature Cult's defeat is inevitable," Observer replied. "The Twinborn Cult takes this Abyss very seriously, and the Twins personally saw you fall into it. Even if it's just to gain your favor, they won't harm your companions."

"Our companions," Ashe corrected. "It's not like you didn't go on adventures with Igor and the others."

"The definition of companions isn't based on shared experiences in the past, but on aligned interests in the future."

"And it's because of shared experiences in the past that our interests align in the future."

Observer didn't continue the discussion, either because he wasn't interested or because a door had appeared ahead in the passage.

When the two of them stood in front of the door, a crystal block above them emitted a green light, and the alloy door automatically opened. Inside, an enthusiastic female voice announced: "Welcome, Trial Taker 2, Twin. Please select suitable equipment as

soon as possible. The Rebirth Channel will close in 8 minutes and 36 seconds. The Trial will officially begin in 18 minutes and 36 seconds.”

Trial Taker? Rebirth Channel? Equipment selection?

The room was divided into three sections: the weapons area, the equipment area, and the appearance area. The equipment area was filled with sets of combat attire, each with a unique but undeniably stylish design. The weapons area was stocked with sharpened melee weapons, and while there were guns, they weren’t just any guns—they were bolt-action rifles. Faced with these, Ashe felt confident that within seven steps, he could be faster and more accurate than them.

While Ashe was looking around, Observer had already changed into combat attire and equipped himself with two long swords.

“You know dual swordsmanship?”

“Golden-level swordsmanship allows me to master all basic sword techniques,” Observer said calmly. “Not just dual swordsmanship. Try triple or even eight-sword techniques, and I’d pick them up quickly. Dual swords are just better for rapid strikes.”

Ashe also changed into combat attire, but instead of picking up a weapon, he pulled out the Honey Sword from his mouth. Observer glanced at him and immediately knew what he was thinking. “Everything you gained from Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook—I don’t have it. All I have are memories and skills.”

“I was hoping we could exploit some kind of system bug together...”

They moved to the appearance area, which was unlike the equipment area. It was filled with cloaks, masks, capes, accessories, cosmetics, and even hair dye—all flashy but seemingly useless except for boosting one’s appearance. Ashe naturally stuck with his dark red trench coat and Twisting Mask, while Observer casually draped a black trench coat over himself. When they returned to the entrance, they saw a counter rise from the ground, holding two wristwatches.

In this unfamiliar place, with their spellforce suppressed, even Ashe knew it was wise to follow instructions. After putting on the wristwatches, they saw a countdown appear on the LCD screen: 14 minutes and 12 seconds.

“What now?” Ashe asked. “Do we wait here until the countdown ends?”

“Trial,” Observer said simply, then continued down the corridor.

Since it was a trial, it couldn’t possibly be about testing their ability to hide in the room. If Ashe had to guess, they probably needed to go as far as possible before the countdown

ended. If they dared to hide in the room, punishment would likely follow-like the Expel Secret Toxin in the Sea of Knowledge.

“You really are my complement,” Ashe remarked as he walked beside Observer. “You prefer dual swords, I’m good with a single sword. You’re decisive, I’m good at thinking. You...”

As Ashe chattered away, analyzing their strengths and weaknesses, time flew by. When the countdown reached ten seconds, Ashe instinctively quickened his pace, as if boulders might roll in from behind or a swarm of Blade Fish Dragons might appear at any moment.

However, when the countdown reached zero, another 30-minute timer appeared, accompanied by a small indicator labeled “Trials: 1.”

Ashe glanced behind him but detected no movement.

Observer also stopped in his tracks. “Up ahead.”

Ashe turned his head and noticed a figure gradually emerging from the light at the end of the passage. The figure’s shadow stretched long and thin, reaching all the way to Ashe and Observer’s feet.

As Observer gripped the hilts of his twin swords, Ashe still couldn’t believe what he was seeing. “Are you-“

A Mental Scream, beyond the range of human hearing, reverberated through the passage, marking the start of the trial!

Meanwhile, in the underground city of Nightfall.

Hearing footsteps behind him, Igor turned and saw the divine hosts of the Twinborn Cult approaching. “The sounds of battle outside have ceased. Have you dealt with the Nature Cult?”

“There’s still a small group resisting stubbornly. After all, their Demi-God isn’t here, so a fight to the death is their only outcome,” the Twins replied. “I heard there was some unusual activity here-“

The Twins froze.

The change in the circular pit was visible from a distance.

It had been sealed.



What was once a deep pit had now become a flat, level surface. The Twins rushed over, running their hands over the texture of the ground, their voices trembling. “Will it... will it revert back?”

Harvey said, “It should return to normal once the trial is over.”

“What trial?”

Harvey pointed, and the Twins noticed Raven crouched nearby, examining an area with several lines of text. They moved closer to look, and their faces immediately filled with disbelief and... ecstasy.

“The Divine Fire Trial?” they murmured. “Does the Divine Fire System exist beneath Nightfall?”

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

## **- Chapter 570: Observer, Ashe, Yolan, Vesser**

### **Chapter 570: Observer, Ashe, Yolan, Vesser**

Igor has been so good to me.

At the moment when his eardrums were shattered by the Mental Scream, Ashe suddenly had this thought. When he tried to charge forward, he found that the continuous Mental Scream also had a repelling effect. Unable to use spellforce or spirits, it was extremely difficult for him to even get close!

Appearing before Ashe and the other was a black-clad figure who closely resembled Igor. To distinguish him from the original, let's call him Phantom Rust Crow.

After Phantom Rust Crow unleashed the Mental Scream to seize the initiative, he actually pulled out two handguns from his chest. When the gun barrels were aimed at him, an intense fear, like a wild beast, tore at Ashe's heart, causing his body to stiffen, sweat to pour down, and his legs to go weak!

Being a seasoned sorcerer in the Virtual Realm, Ashe would not be so easily unnerved by the mere sight of gun barrels. This was Phantom Rust Crow's Miracle, amplifying Ashe's fear through the event of “being aimed at by a gun,” causing hormonal secretions to affect Ashe's control over his body!

Bang! Bang!

Ashe timely swung his weapon to deflect the bullets. Observer didn't even block, simply tilting his head to dodge the bullets, then rapidly running and leaping along the wall, attempting to breach Phantom Rust Crow's alert zone!

Instead of retreating, Phantom Rust Crow charged forward, firing at Observer.

Seeing this, the lingering fear in Ashe's heart once again surged and boiled-it was the 'Fearless' spirit! Igor had once mentioned to Ashe that if the Fearless spirit was paired with his Fear Miracle, it could ignite the fear in others' hearts when he appeared fearless!

In addition, Phantom Rust Crow opened his mouth again, unleashing a second Mental Scream!

But Ashe and Observer's eardrums had already been destroyed by the first Mental Scream. Would this Miracle still be effective?

Of course, it would.

A Mental Miracle is not such an inconvenient thing.

In fact, it was even more terrifying-as long as the memory of the Mental Scream lingered in Ashe and Observer's minds, when Phantom Rust Crow made this gesture, it could directly trigger a second scream!

That's right, Phantom Rust Crow didn't actually cast this Miracle; he merely mimicked the mouth movement, and the memory, like a potent poison, infected the minds of Ashe and Observer, shaking their very souls!

Ashe had never truly been Igor's enemy before, so he had never had the chance to enjoy the double scream!

At this moment, the Miracle Phantom Rust Crow was truly casting was the "Boiling Blood," which enhanced courage!

Target: Observer.

Effect: Will not evade any attack, actively confronts all difficulties!

Mental Miracles have no distinction between strengthening or weakening effects; it all depends on how the mental sorcerer utilizes them.

Stunned by the false Mental Scream and fueled by boiling blood, Observer was almost rendered a helpless target against the barrage of bullets from Phantom Rust Crow!

However, Observer recovered from the scream almost instantly. His twin swords moved like a Rain Curtain, not only deflecting all the bullets but also executing a Perfect Counterattack, sending one bullet back to strike Phantom Rust Crow's left wrist!

Phantom Rust Crow released his left hand and retreated swiftly, his right hand aiming at Ashe, who was charging in for an opportunity. As the gunshot rang out, Ashe didn't block but instead ducked low to evade, then thrust his sword toward Phantom Rust Crow!

The third Mental Scream erupted. Though Ashe had already developed immunity, the scream itself could repel objects at a certain distance-only those within the scream's core were immune to the repelling effect!

Ashe was naturally pushed back, but in the brief moment Phantom Rust Crow shifted his attention to him, Observer had already breached the Phantom's alert zone, and then-

Whoosh!

A flash of sword light swept by, and a fountain of blood spurted. A headless corpse crumpled to the ground, the golden-haired head rolling to a stop beside Ashe.

From the corpse, two flames emerged, flying into Ashe and Observer, instantly healing all their injuries and replenishing their stamina, even filling their stomachs with a sense of fullness.

Ashe sat on the ground, breathing shallowly, then stood up and exhaled a heavy breath. Without even glancing at the remains on the ground, he asked, "What's going on here?"

"You already have your judgment. Why do you need me to give you an answer?" Observer wiped the blood off his sword with the fabric of his elbow and sheathed it.

"Because I hope you can give me a different answer," Ashe said. "So I can know I'm just a fool who got it wrong."

"Our next Trial targets are likely Copies selected from your memories," Observer said, showing no regard for Ashe's fragile feelings. "Igor Bukin, Archibald Harvey, Gerard Wessminster, Annan Dolan, Banjeet Dolan, Freya Hoyle, and... the Sword Princess, the Witch, Vesser."

"...That's too much."

"They're just Copies, not the originals," Observer said, kicking the headless corpse. "They only use the Miracle abilities you've seen before."

"Don't do that," Ashe said seriously. "And it's not just me. It's us."

Observer's expression remained impassive as he pulled down his Mask and spat out a mouthful of blood. Ashe glanced at him. "Did you bite your tongue earlier?"

"Intense pain can break most Mental Miracles," Observer explained. "It's an instinct even a silver-level practitioner of the Mental Sect can master."

"But we're not even silver sorcerers yet," Ashe sighed. "Is there an option to give up on this Trial? We can't use spellforce, yet we have to fight against full-fledged sorcerers?"

"The damage intensity of the Trial enemies should be suppressed within the level of a One-Winged Sorcerer," Observer said. "If it were a two-wings Mental Scream, the kinetic repulsion alone would shatter our ribs."

"But even a One-Winged Sorcerer is--"

Observer ignored his chatter, adjusted his equipment, and continued forward. Ashe hurried to catch up, complaining, "Others aside, but Sword Princess, Witch, Annan--" search the [NôvelFire\(.\)net](#) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"No matter how powerful the Trial left by the Gray Fox Divine Era is, it can't surpass the strength of a prime Gospel deity," Observer said calmly. "Even Gospel couldn't peek into your Virtual Realm situation, so the Trial shouldn't be able to replicate your operators either."

"But there's also Bewitcher and the Young Lady..." Ashe said. "Could you really raise a hand against them?"

Observer didn't respond, just glanced at him.

Ashe was left to worry alone about how to face them, but soon he cheered up, clenched his fist, and said, "The two of us, mere mortals without using spellforce, actually defeated a mental sorcerer using only melee weapons! We're so strong!"

"But this Trial is too sinister. Why not throw some disgusting monsters at us as Trial enemies? That way, we could hack away with a clear conscience. Why does it have to replicate from our memories?"

"Speaking of which, those appearance-altering artifacts in the cosmetic section, could they be prepared for this?" Ashe suddenly realized. "If I dress up like others, it could reduce the psychological pressure of killing acquaintances?"

Observer calmly said, "Changes in appearance can lead to changes in personality. Uniforms, combat attire, and such all have this effect. This is an intuition that even a silver-level Mental Sect sorcerer can grasp."

“But as long as you can see through the illusions, you don’t need these external aids.”

“I’m not Silver Lantern, who treats everything as a delusion,” Ashe said. “Speaking of which, Silver Lantern would probably have no psychological burden at all going through this Trial, right?”

“Doesn’t it feel like they’ve crawled out of hell to seek revenge on you?”

Vesser wiped the blood from her face and picked up the fox mask from the ground. Though she didn’t have the delusion spirit to conceal her appearance, she was now dressed in flamboyant attire with her hair dyed purple. Even Raven Annihilation would struggle to see through her disguise.

“I’m starting to wonder if you’re my opposite or my mirror image,” she said. “What’s the fun in mocking me, Yolan?”

“Can’t I be your complement?” Yolan laughed, her outfit identical to Vesser’s, save for slight differences in color. “You’re still plagued by doubt, while I have no hesitation at all.”

Yolan was Vesser’s Fate Twin. But Vesser couldn’t quite figure out if she was her complement, opposite, or mirror. Sometimes, Yolan shared the same thoughts as Vesser; other times, she took pleasure in taunting her. And she had casually claimed the codename “Yolan” as if it were hers.

If anything, Vesser felt she resembled the avatar of the Mirror Dragon from not long ago.

“I don’t have any hesitation either,” Vesser said, forcefully kicking aside the corpse on the ground. “If I could kill them once, I can kill them again.”

“But this isn’t the reunion you were hoping for, is it?” Yolan said. “You were hoping that in the Virtual Realm, those who died by your hand would sincerely thank you for your kindness, and those who misunderstood you would genuinely appreciate your greatness... You were really looking forward to strangers applauding you.”

“Especially him.” Yolan glanced at the corpse on the ground. “He admired you so much, adored you, was willing to share the maze with you, to share the Vortex Secret Toxin. And what did you repay him with? Cold-blooded death, just because-“

“Just because hoarding spoils would bring the wrath of the Tribulation Fire Temple, and I’d be implicated; just because the fewer people infected by the Vortex Secret Toxin, the better; just because I needed an opportunity to enter the Temple’s sight,” Vesser said calmly. “Don’t tell me, after all this time, you think I care about that?”

“Of course not. I brought it up because, back then, you actually considered finding companions,” Yolan said. “It’s too hard to persevere alone.”

“No one would understand me. Everyone’s gone mad, content to drown in delusions rather than look up at the night sky. My only mercy was to free them from it,” Vesser said. “But perhaps this situation is about to change.”

The two women continued down the passageway. Vesser glanced at her wristwatch. Aside from the 21-minute countdown, her Trial count had risen to 3. With one Trial every 30 minutes, it meant they had been in the passageway for over 90 minutes.

Suddenly, the countdown stopped. Vesser looked up and saw they had reached the end of the passageway, where a radiant light door awaited.

When they stepped through the light door, they found themselves in another underground hall.

However, they weren’t the first visitors here.

In the brief moment it took for their eyes to adjust to the change in light, two figures in the center of the hall rushed toward them!

Vesser immediately stepped back, only to find her back pressed against a cold, hard wall. She never expected that, despite being the first to enter the Trial path and possessing the silver dragon blood that granted her formidable strength even without spellforce, her overall progress would lag behind those who came after her.

She watched Ashe charging toward her, her heart neither sad nor glad.

Yolan, on the other hand, looked at Observer rushing toward her and playfully winked at him.

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