

SORCERER'S HANDBOOK

Chapter 621: Idealistic Sen Luo

In the Sanctuary of Heritage, the orc Chikara carried a coffin on his shoulder, observing Ashe and the others with a growing sense of seriousness, though he was somewhat puzzled.

Was Sen Luo's unreality really that surprising? What difference did it make to know this? Would it get you a discount on fruits?

Besides, wasn't this common knowledge?

The world was never truly real; what each person perceived was merely a 'facet' of the world. For instance, Chikara had discovered he was somewhat colorblind to blue and green, yet his hearing surpassed that of other races in high frequencies, which seemed to be a trait of the orc race.

This also meant that the world he perceived was different from others.

Later, the orcs realized that beyond the senses, the same event appeared differently to each person. Some saw war, others saw opportunity, some saw evil, and others saw kindness... Each person's eyes reflected only a facet of the world, meaning the world each perceived was false.

His surrender to the Four Pillars Cult, and now to Ashe and the others, was for this reason-he lacked the pride of a sanctuary sorcerer and didn't care about others' opinions, as long as his own needs were met.

Because the orcs had long understood that people could not truly understand each other, each could only be responsible for themselves.

This perhaps was the most significant difference between the Four Pillars Cult and other sects: the former tried to make everyone understand this point, while the latter mostly tried to deny it.

Thus, Chikara didn't overthink but instead focused on Gwen beside Igor. As the saying goes, love your work, and Chikara quickly embraced his role as a subordinate, pondering how to elevate his status-currently lower than the quartet and Alice, but on par with Gwen, who was also a trophy. The urgent task was to demonstrate his usefulness and surpass Gwen!

"I, Chikara, can't possibly have a lower status than that two-wings woman!"

Everyone glanced at Chikara, who was completely unaware he was speaking his mind, thinking the influence of the Four Pillars Cult on orcs was indeed profound.

After Ashe gave him a sip of water, Igor finally calmed down completely. He handed his draft paper to Ashe, saying, "Look here, we've never connected the dots, but if you think about it, Sen Luo is really strange."

"The Gospel Kingdom has the Gospel system because the Yisuo royal family worships the Gospel deity, but what about Sen Luo? Civilization is severed, it's a wasteland Doomsday, yet the Demi-God system still functions. What maintains this system?"

“A deity? Deities require energy to be driven, and Sen Luo has no unified government to worship a deity.”

“We’ve known about the Demi-God since we arrived in Sen Luo, and over time we’ve gotten used to it. But if you told others, they wouldn’t believe such a system exists: it defies the laws of death, allowing people to avoid descending into hell after death, instead condensing into stronger obsessions to continue existing!”

“It gives death a second outcome-this is undoubtedly a divine intervention!”

Igor was right.

The Blood Moon is the most ‘primitive’ Kingdom, with no plugins, at most the Blood Moon Sovereign forcibly supporting two new races;

Gospel, on the other hand, has a ‘Gospel system’ plugin, but running this plugin requires dozens of legendary sanctuaries as maintenance personnel, which is understandable, and the ‘Gospel system’ does not interfere with the underlying logic of the world;

Sen Luo is truly baffling. Ashe and the others have yet to see any maintenance team, yet the ‘Demi-God system’ plugin that interferes with the fundamental laws of life and death is still operating!

People die and become Demi-Gods, Demi-Gods ascend to deities, and in Sen Luo, this is a natural upgrade system.

But why?

In other Kingdoms, whether you're a legendary sorcerer or a sage, you must obediently take a trip to hell after death, then become learning material for future generations in the Virtual Realm.

Death is the ultimate fairness, and Sen Luo breaks this rule.

"Moreover, you've realized the effects of the divine era heritage are too outrageous, haven't you?" Igor pointed to his draft paper, "The 'Mirage Prism', 'Twin', 'Sanctuary'... these heritages, though their effective range is inferior to the Gospel system, are on the same level in terms of impact. Especially the 'Sanctuary', even divine intervention might not extend 10 hours to thirty thousand years, right?"

Ashe glanced at the draft paper and nodded slightly, "Indeed."

"But these aren't the main issues; the biggest issue is the Abyss!" Igor looked around, "Do you know how the Abyss is formed?"

Naturally, the people of Sen Luo couldn't answer this question. Harvey thought for a moment, "I remember, it's said that where sorcerers gather, there will be an Abyss."

“Exactly,” Igor nodded, “because the Abyss is a product nurtured by sorcerers.”

He paused, “When sorcerers die, their souls are pulled by gravity into the earth until they reach hell. But during the journey to hell, the negative energy of the sorcerer’s soul already pollutes the earth. Death is a fate that all things cannot avoid, whether you’re a legend or a hero, at the moment of death, immense fear, unwillingness, and even despair are inevitable, so souls after death are almost always dark and filthy.”

“Only by experiencing the Sixfold Hell can a purified soul reach the Virtual Realm.”

“The Abyss is the gap between reality and hell. So, the more sorcerers there are, the stronger the Abyss becomes.”

“Sen Luo has no Abyss, only two possibilities: either the souls of Sen Luo’s sorcerers don’t traverse hell to enter the Virtual Realm-“

“Impossible.” Ashe shook his head, “I’ve seen the projections of Sen Luo sorcerers in the Virtual Realm.”

“So, there’s only the second possibility,” Igor said, “the earth is fake. Even if a sorcerer’s soul falls into the earth, it can’t pollute an inch of soil.”

Everyone fell silent for a moment, and Harvey stomped on the ground, “Are you saying, if I stomp hard enough, the ground will break like paper?”

“Igor.” Ashe reminded, “We’ve seen more than one underground city.”

“Areas observed by people will collapse into reality, but places unobserved by people are fake.” Igor pulled out a third draft paper, pointing to it, “There’s another crucial clue—there’s no starlight in the night.”

“This is because the people of Sen Luo have never seen the starry sky; they can’t imagine a night lit by stars.”

Ashe vaguely grasped Igor’s keyword, “Imagine?”

“Exactly.” Igor had spoken too much in one breath, feeling a bit thirsty, and Gwen beside him immediately handed him some water. “Sen Luo is not a real world, but an idealistic world where willpower determines matter.”

“Here, sorcerers can transform into Demi-Gods through strong obsessions, ascend to deities through the faith of countless people; sorcerers can rely not only on technical power but also infuse imagination into fantasy creations, hence the ability to create so many heritages that rival deities; the people of Sen Luo are united in their pursuit of ideals because they too are swept by the power of idealism.”

“We should have realized this earlier,” Igor looked at Ashe and Harvey, “why is Sen Luo so powerful, yet we’ve never heard of it?”

Indeed.

Sen Luo had the production capacity of millions of legendary sorcerers two hundred years ago, at a time when the Blood Moon Kingdom was just entering the industrial era, and the Gospel Kingdom hadn’t yet entered the electrical age. If the Sen Luo Kingdom had a virtual realm passage with other Kingdoms, even if it only allowed two-wings sorcerers through a Level 2 virtual realm passage, as long as Gray Fox sorcerers equipped heritages like the ‘Sanctuary’, or dispatched divine hosts, they could still crush other Kingdoms.

However, Ashe and the others could find traces of other Kingdoms’ technology in Sen Luo but found no evidence of Sen Luo’s advanced development in other Kingdoms.

“Because the divine era civilization is a civilization unique to the Sen Luo Kingdom,” Igor said, “heritages, divine hosts, Demi-Gods... these local specialties are meaningless once they leave Sen Luo; they can only be effective within Sen Luo. Unless other Kingdoms invade Sen Luo, Sen Luo has no advantage over other Kingdoms.”

“Don’t forget, if Sen Luo sorcerers were truly exceptional, other Kingdoms’ sorcerers could also gain knowledge of Sen Luo sorcerers from the Virtual Realm.”

Ashe had a slight realization: the Virtual Realm is an online game, but each Kingdom is a single-player game. The Divine Sovereign can add various elements to their single-player Kingdom, and others entering the single-player Kingdom must abide by the rules of different single-player Kingdoms, such as Sen Luo having Demi-Gods and divine hosts, and Gospel having the Gospel system.

But in the online realm (Virtual Realm), only the most primitive laws can be effective. And the knowledge that can be passed on in the Virtual Realm must be universal knowledge applicable to all regions.

Raven suddenly spoke, “But couldn’t these be the Divine Sovereign’s aid to the Sen Luo Kingdom?”

Indeed, the Demi-God system, idealistic creations, and the absence of the Abyss could be seen as the Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo’s care for the Sen Luo Kingdom. If the Omniscient Weaver can install the Gospel system for the Gospel Kingdom, can’t the Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo install a few more plugins?

“Let’s not discuss whether the Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo has the means to directly interfere with reality, but if it were the Divine Sovereign’s aid, would they intentionally harm you?” Igor asked, “Then what about the Choking Green?”

Raven was taken aback, then after a moment of silence, said, “It’s a harsh system meant to spur us to keep striving and eliminate the lazy and weak.”

“There’s no need for that. In the wave of united faith, even without the Choking Green, everyone would ultimately follow the Demi-God path.” Igor said, “The Choking Green is actually a variant of the Abyss.”

“Although the sorcerer’s soul eventually goes to the Virtual Realm, the despair of the soul remains in this world. There’s no soil to form an Abyss here, so the negative energy

gathers in the unseen night, transforming into the Choking Green that devours the will, turning all weak-willed individuals into monsters.”

“Whether or not the Choking Green was part of the Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo’s plan, it happens to complement the Demi-God system, so they didn’t interfere with this mechanism.”

“They just needed a Kingdom that could steadily produce deities.” Igor said, “Everything in the Sen Luo Kingdom serves this purpose.”

By now, everyone understood Igor’s deduction process.

Perhaps the Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo initially just wanted to create an idealistic environment for mortals to ascend to deities, but changes in the world’s fundamental laws led to endless variations, with the Choking Green, fantasy creations, and waves of faith being effects of the idealistic world. The Chasm Sovereign of Sen Luo may have intervened, or perhaps not, but the fact is that the Sen Luo Kingdom has indeed produced four generations of deities, and they succeeded.

Ashe and the others could quickly accept this outcome, as they were not locals. But for others, it might be harder to accept this truth.

Ashe patted Raven’s shoulder, “Even if the world is idealistic, it’s still yours.”

“Don’t worry, I’m not shaken at all.” Raven said, “I will never give the world to those hideous evil ravens.”

A chuckle escaped.

The orc suddenly laughed, and everyone looked at him. He quickly explained, “I just thought of something funny.”

“If it’s not funny, you’ll carry the coffin upside down.” Igor said.

Seeing Harvey nod, Chikara quickly said, “I just thought, according to Mr. Bukin’s theory, the Sen Luo Kingdom is like those dream phantoms with affixes. Sigh, I’ve never been good at deciphering affixes, usually relying on brute force to break through the phantoms...”

Igor was taken aback, murmuring, “Dream phantoms...”

“There’s really no need to take it seriously, what difference does it make to know these things?” Ashe seemed calm despite hearing this shocking secret, clapping his hands, “The essence of the world doesn’t really concern us, does it?”

Harvey glanced at him, “Ashe, we’re already sanctuary sorcerers.”

Even in the Sen Luo Kingdom, sanctuary sorcerers were considered researchers capable of exploring the essence of cutting-edge technology.

“More importantly, Igor, do you recognize your own writing?”

Ashe handed the draft paper back to Igor, and the Con Artist nodded, “Of course, I’m not you.”

“Then what does this word mean?”

“This word means ‘Gospel Kingdom’...” Igor immediately realized, his face showing confusion, “How is that possible...”

Ashe had noticed earlier that the draft paper wasn’t written in proper text, but it wasn’t exactly gibberish either. With Igor’s explanation, he realized it was multiple words merged into one.

It was likely a side effect of the “Link of Truth,” where Igor’s writing speed couldn’t keep up with his thought process during deduction, so he subconsciously compressed the text further, creating recognizable but incomprehensible merged characters.

Harvey suddenly said, “Silver Lantern might be related to this place.”

He glanced at the others, “Her ‘delusion’ ideology seems to overlap with this truth to some extent.”

Having clashed with Silver Lantern for a long time, everyone had always wondered-where did Silver Lantern’s worldview originate?

No cult in the wasteland aligned with her worldview, not even the Four Pillars were as extreme as her. A person’s thoughts couldn’t be rootless; consciousness must be influenced by the environment, and now, they seemed to glimpse a corner of Silver Lantern’s hidden iceberg.

Although ‘Sen Luo isn’t real’ is still a distance from Silver Lantern’s ‘reality is just a delusion,’ they’ve only cracked the first Fog Wall, and the subsequent ones might provide more detailed answers.

“Perhaps,” Raven interjected, “but so what?”

“At most, it shows she’s not a madwoman without reason, but it doesn’t change the fact that she’s still an evil raven with countless murders to her name.” His distorted voice was full of solemnity, “We can understand her to find her weaknesses, but we must not develop any sympathy for her through understanding.”

“Only the souls in hell have the right to forgive her.”

“Do I look like someone who would have any sympathy for the living?” Harvey glanced at Raven.

Igor squinted at Raven, “I think, as sorcerers, we don’t need a literate to lecture us-“

“Alright.” Ashe interrupted them, leading the way through the Fog Wall, which no longer blocked someone who knew the truth, “Tamashi is right.”

“Let’s continue exploring.”

Chapter 622: Anticipation

In the ruins of the Dead City church, as the blue door appeared once more, six figures and a coffin were pushed out.

“So, if you can’t solve the answer within a certain time, you get kicked out...” Ashe chuckled wryly. “No wonder no one dies in there.”

Beyond the Fog Wall, there was indeed another Fog Wall.

However, unlike the first Fog Wall, upon seeing the golden ‘Link of Truth’ on the second Fog Wall, only one question arose in their minds: “What is the greatest factor influencing the Demi-God to initiate the divine era?”

None of them, including Igor, could think beyond this, and after ten minutes of intense pondering, they were all expelled.

Clearly, they didn’t possess the key intelligence needed to deduce the second Truth. As the saying goes, even a master chef can’t prepare a feast without ingredients, and L’Hôpital’s Rule requires at least elementary mathematical knowledge to deduce. To unravel the second Truth, Ashe and his group needed to know historical knowledge related to the divine era.

Yet, in the wasteland, only tales of the Fire Cat Divine Era, Bluebird Divine Era, and Gray Fox Divine Era’s glory were passed down, never mentioning how these Demi-Gods initiated the divine era.

Now, they were all at a loss-the only way to escape the Dead City might lie beyond the Fog Wall, but without sufficient intelligence, they couldn’t deduce anything, unable to break the ‘Link of Truth’!

They tried to enter the blue door again, only to find it displayed “You are not qualified,” meaning they couldn’t re-enter this hidden Sanctuary within the spatial crevice until they deduced the second Truth.

“Thinking about it, this is quite strange.”

Ashe watched the blue door vanish and said, “Why would Gray Fox sorcerers build such a hidden Sanctuary in the highest-level time crevice?”

“It is indeed strange,” Igor mused. “And inside, they set up ‘Link of Truth’ related to the essence of the world, as if they knew we would come and left information specifically for us.”

“Why didn’t the Gray Fox sorcerers just leave the information directly? Why go through all this trouble?” Chikara complained. “They should be dragged out and punished.”

Everyone ignored the orc’s comment, likely because they secretly agreed.

At this moment, Gwen seemed to recall something and tugged at Igor’s sleeve. Though annoyed, Igor bent down to listen.

After a moment of contemplation, the Con Artist nodded. “That could be possible.”

“Hmm?”

“Isn’t it said that over two hundred years ago, a ‘cataclysm’ occurred, wiping out all adults, destroying most fantasy creations, leaving only children, and thus entering the wasteland era?” Igor explained to the group. “If the ‘cataclysm’ happened suddenly, there must have been people in the Dead City.”

Ashe immediately realized, “If the ‘cataclysm’ was a sudden disaster, the people in the Dead City would have triggered the ‘Sanctuary,’ entering the highest-level time crevice!”

“But the ‘Sanctuary’ only affects the Dead City area, and they couldn’t leave the Dead City, while the ‘cataclysm’ affected the entire Senlo Kingdom, leaving them no escape.”

Igor nodded. “There must have been sorcerers in the Dead City, possibly even sanctuary sorcerers and legendary sorcerers. They created a hidden Sanctuary and, like us, pondered where the ‘cataclysm’ came from, what it was, and how to solve it...”

“They ultimately didn’t escape the ‘cataclysm,’ but those ‘Link of Truth’ are likely the answers they left behind.”

Chikara scratched his head. “But even if we break the ‘Link of Truth,’ it’s useless. We need to solve the current crisis, not the ‘cataclysm’... No wonder no one has survived the Dead City in the past two hundred years. They probably cracked the ‘Link of Truth’ only to find it was all for nothing!”

Igor shook his head. “That’s why I asked earlier if you knew the true history of the Dead City. If the Dead City became a place that pulls people into time crevices after the ‘cataclysm,’ then the crisis we face might be an aftershock of the ‘cataclysm.’ And...”

“Not necessarily no one survived the Dead City,” Ashe added, suddenly moving to the side, staring at the wall thoughtfully.

“Come take a look.”

Everyone gathered around to see runes carved into the wall.

It was mentioned before that the Dead City was filled with strange runes no one could understand. They had wondered who had the time to do this, but after their minds were activated by the ‘Link of Truth,’ these runes were no longer meaningless, incomprehensible symbols.

“In 286, there were three forces on par with the Fire Cat cult...” Ashe murmured as he traced the runes. “So, these writings throughout the city are information left by predecessors.”

The orc was puzzled. “Why didn’t they leave normal-“

“Because they couldn’t. The ‘Link of Truth’ causes gestalt collapse effects on people. We can’t write normal text now either; we can only leave these merged characters!” Igor became excited. “The Dead City holds the intelligence needed for the second Truth!”

“Should we split up to search?”

“No need,” Ashe replied. “We have unlimited time, so efficiency isn’t a concern.”

Despite saying this, they mostly separated within one area to read. The Dead City contained too much written intelligence, some even overlapping chaotically, with a large volume of information. Each person took charge of a portion, extracting meaningful information to compile together.

Moreover, the more Ashe and the others read, the more they understood that the predecessors didn't leave this information solely for future generations. They had no paper, so they used their fingers as pens, everything as paper, to record their deduction process.

Igor was responsible for compiling the information, but soon he encountered a problem: they were running out of paper.

Sorcerers rarely used paper, and it was a daily necessity, not something they kept in stock, so it quickly ran out. However, Gwen suggested she could use the Starlight Spirit to carve on the walls, which was fast and consumed little energy. Igor adopted the idea.

While Ashe was reading, the Round Cicada suddenly appeared, circling him a few times before nodding its head in another direction.

Feeling a connection, he flew over to see, discerning from the clarity of the writing that this was a relatively new record-the longer it existed, the more it was eroded by wind and sand, naturally making the writing more blurred.

The newer the record, the less likely it was to be covered, not only improving reading efficiency but also increasing the information volume of the record itself. Ashe patted the Round Cicada, praising it for its good work.

After Ashe finished reading this wall, the Round Cicada circled again, guiding him to another nearby relatively new record. Ashe was a bit puzzled, but since the Round Cicada was a Time Sect Demi-God, it wasn't surprising it could identify new from old, so he didn't think much of it.

Not far from Ashe, Vesser hid in the shadow of a tall building, the Square Cicada perched on her head, looking tired despite having no expression-it had spent quite some effort rubbing its aura on the wall, otherwise it couldn't have lured the Round Cicada over.

Vesser peeked out, staring at Ashe's profile, feeling both anxious and expectant, even pacing in small steps to suppress her excited heartbeat and continue observing.

She thought, the past is about to end.

She thought, the future is about to begin.

Soon, she would no longer be alone.

Chapter 623: Igors Misdeeds

Igor gradually understood why the Gray Fox sorcerers used the cumbersome yet seemingly insignificant mechanism of the "Link of Truth."

It was because they didn't just want the successors to 'know'; they needed them to 'believe.'

Knowing is far too easy, like knowing that the far north has icebergs that feel like burning fire, knowing the deep sea has whales as large as mountains, knowing a girl's lips are soft. But if you haven't experienced these things yourself, you'll only remain at the level of 'knowing,' and soon forget.

People know many truths, yet often fail to live well because they don't truly believe from the heart. The most fascinating aspect of history is its tendency to repeat itself.

From this perspective, the practicality of the "Link of Truth" is evident, rivaling that of the "Sanctuary" and "Twin System": it allows the young to grasp social truths that usually take decades of experience to understand, without having to live through them.

Simply put, it truly can prevent successors from repeating the mistakes of their predecessors.

Now, the intelligence Gwen recorded had already filled several walls.

Igor was initially worried, considering that the intelligence they 'copied' in the Dead City was unverified, akin to hearsay without any distinction from 'rumors.'

Can such unverified rumors serve as fuel for deducing the Truth?

Of course, they can.

The intelligence compiled in Igor's hands slowly unfolded the scroll of the past divine eras. The information left by predecessors wasn't definitions like "What is the Fire Cat Divine Era?" or "How was the Bluebird Divine Era?" but rather chaotic and unstructured world view intelligence like "I saw a mural inherited from the Fire Cat Divine Era in some ruins" or "The customs of the Gray Fox Divine Era," which, upon careful examination, could corroborate each other.

Historical records and observations from different eras and people constructed a real past in Igor's mind. Even though he had never seen firsthand materials or the relics mentioned, the tight logical relationships between the data were enough to dispel his doubts.

This is the significance of the "Link of Truth": it doesn't tell you that the Truth itself is worthless; it requires you to convince yourself.

"Which Demi-God can initiate the divine era has nothing to do with the number of disciples or the strength of the factions."

In the ruins, Igor looked around at everyone and said, "The most influential factor is solely the will of the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo."

"Whatever deity He needs, the land will have that Demi-God to unify Senlo."

Gwen's face turned pale, and though Chikara's orc face didn't show details, the disappointment in his eyes was visible; the masked Raven seemed unaffected, but when Ashe patted his shoulder, he couldn't help but tremble.

They didn't refute because the information was organized by them into this room.

Over a thousand years ago, the Fire Cat cult was just an insignificant cult on the land, but at some point, cults opposing it began to encounter accidents, and even disciples defected to the Fire Cat cult. When it was in the limelight and faced surrounding attacks, major cults like 'Circle Cicada' and 'Light Chaser' proactively allied with it, eventually leading the Fire Cat cult to dominate the northern Senlo.

Meanwhile, in the southern Senlo, there was a Golden Law Sect that dominated its surroundings, with a rise similar to the Fire Cat cult, going from obscurity to dominating the south within ten years. Its philosophy was 'let spirits work automatically,' which, though different from the Fire Cat cult's 'let ordinary people drive spirits,' resulted in the same outcome-maximizing spirit production efficiency.

If this example isn't enough, there's also the Bluebird Divine Era and Gray Fox Divine Era examples-because of the divine fire system, the Kingdom of Senlo no longer needed wars to decide the divine era but used a method similar to elections. Initially, the Bluebird Demi-God and Gray Fox Demi-God were at the bottom of the election ranking list, but the competing Demi-Gods all encountered accidents.

Even if the populace preferred other beliefs, the divine fire election saw Demi-Gods extinguished on the spot, which was blatant black-box manipulation.

Thus, the shock to Chikara and others was immense: they always believed that although Demi-Gods would ascend to deities, which Demi-God and cult could unify Senlo was decided by the disciples' will.

They thought they were merely trading fairly with the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, believing they still had the freedom to choose their faith.

However, the information left here told them-no, which Demi-God would initiate the divine era had nothing to do with the people of Senlo; it solely depended on what direction of deity the Chasm Sovereign needed.

Ashe and others felt this deeply.

Whether it was Blood Moon, Gospel, or Senlo, the Divine Sovereign would influence the people's thoughts from all aspects. Perhaps it was for better harvesting, like Senlo; perhaps it was for easier governance, like Blood Moon; perhaps it was for social experiments, like Gospel.

But without exception, the Divine Sovereign would turn His heart into the will of heaven, and indeed, He had the ability to create the world He needed.

It's impossible to judge whether this is good or bad because even without the Divine Sovereign, other entities would fill the power vacuum-power doesn't have a fixed owner, but it always has an owner.

“...That little brat, the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, should just say what Demi-God He wants instead of making us compete endlessly. If He just said it, wouldn't we kneel?” Chikara quickly emerged from the mire of worldview collapse, grumbling, “He should be spanked with a cane.”

Harvey suddenly laughed, “Isn't our situation the best example?”

“Exactly.” Igor glanced at Raven, his tone filled with malicious pleasure, “If the truth were directly revealed, would anyone believe it? If your faith were directly assigned, would you not resist and refuse? This is a Kingdom of idealism; your will can determine fate.”

“Just like the ‘Link of Truth’ makes us deduce slowly to believe the truth. The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo makes your cults slaughter each other to purify your faith, helping the Demi-God ascend.”

Igor's voice was filled with the cruelty of slow torture, “Ideals have never been in your hands; everything is futile. You can only burn yourself in the void, unable to illuminate the darkness; only the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo has the right to choose which candle to ignite.”

Igor seemed to be speaking to all Senlo people, but everyone knew he was talking to Raven.

Because among those present, the only one still holding onto ideals and faith was Tamashi.

The mental sorcerer was so blunt because these words were the most lethal.

Raven, your cult is extinct; Raven, the Raven Annihilation Demi-God has already perished; Raven, you're not even a sorcerer, and after death, you'll only become a pile of bones; Raven, no one will follow you... Tamashi had heard these words until his ears were calloused, yet he could still continue.

Because he believed in the direction of people's hearts, because he believed there would be someone to follow his justice.

So he hoped others would remember him, hoped others' Sorcerer's Handbooks would record him, so even if he fell into Sixfold Hell, there would surely be someone in reality to inherit the will of Raven Annihilation and initiate the divine era of justice...

Though the night is long, though the road is far, he could at least genuinely believe that there was a light of hope at the end of the darkness.

Now, it's gone.

There's no direction of people's hearts, only interests and compromises.

As long as the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo doesn't need Raven Annihilation, there will never be a divine era of Raven Annihilation, and his persistence is meaningless; if the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo someday needs justice, then other Demi-Gods will initiate the divine era of justice, and his efforts will go unnoticed.

Ashe looked at Raven, saying nothing.

"I'm fine."

Raven's voice suddenly became thin and sharp, but quickly returned to its usual distortion, "I never expected I could initiate the divine era; I'm fine."

Igor glanced at Raven and said, "Then let's go back and see what else awaits us."

The group spread their Twin Wings and flew away. Ashe gestured for Raven to ride, but the next second, his waist bent-so heavy!

"Sorry," Raven said, "I forgot, I'll reduce the weight."

After a few seconds, Ashe only felt Raven kicking, with no decrease in the weight on his back.

He already understood what was happening and sighed slightly, thinking he must give Igor a beating when they returned.

He organized his words and said, “Even if the Demi-God divine era is chosen by the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, it’s not without hope for Raven Annihilation. Maybe the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo will suddenly have a change of heart one day? Besides, pursuing ideals, the focus is on the process; the result isn’t important, since you’re destined not to see the result...”

“So what?” Raven said, “Whether or not there’s a divine era of justice has nothing to do with me, has nothing to do with Raven Annihilation... Everything we’ve sacrificed is futile.”

“How can it be futile? Haven’t you saved many people and killed many bad ones?”

“If we can’t realize the ideal, then it’s just our actions to please ourselves through eliminating evil, no different from other cults.” Raven said, “We’re not madmen; we can find pleasure in fighting evil, but not in torture. Yet for ‘Raven Annihilation,’ to deter evil ravens, to grow the cult, to reach the ideal, we had to dirty our hands, enduring nausea and disgust, ensuring every evil raven died in agony...”

Raven’s body trembled slightly, “Igor once pointed out that most of us in Raven Annihilation have psychological issues... Of course, I know we have psychological issues! Grinding human hand bones into powder, peeling human lungs from the back to make blood ravens, injecting mercury into scalps to peel skin-how could there not be psychological issues? Are we made of meat? Are we truly monsters?”

“But we believed it was worth it, as long as we could unify the divine era, as long as we could annihilate evil ravens, then there would no longer be any ravens responsible for judgment... We were willing to be the price, yet, yet...”

“Qieshu, Arnoi, Ye Lu... They left all hope to me, yet I can’t accomplish anything...”

Ashe: “You can rebuild Raven Annihilation-“

“I can’t.”

“You can, you haven’t tried, how do you know-“

“I can’t!” Raven interrupted firmly, “I’m not a sorcerer, nor literate, how could anyone want to follow me!? I’m just a tool for killing! Would you follow a knife, an axe?”

“I can only place hope in successors... But even if there are successors, it’s meaningless now.”

Igor, look at the mess you’ve made.

Ashe understood that Tamashi’s psychological pressure had existed for a long time, or rather, it would be strange if he didn’t have pressure. As the sole survivor of Raven

Annihilation, he carried a sea of blood and hatred, walking the world, with enemies being both past companions and the rulers of Senlo's strongest force, and now his ideal was completely shattered...

The truth revealed by the second "Link of Truth" was merely the last straw.

Even if not now, Tamashi would eventually collapse.

Even the Death Raven needs a branch to rest.

Ashe spread his Twin Wings and forced himself to fly up. Raven was slightly stunned and tightened his grip on Ashe's shoulder.

"Tamashi, do you know I'm afraid of you?"

"Huh?"

"You've eavesdropped on my psychological counseling with Igor, right? You should know my emotional relationships aren't exactly... pure."

Raven said, "I agree with Harvey's assessment of you."

“He’s completely slandering me; I don’t have Bewitcher Lineage, those words are more fitting for Igor.” Ashe grumbled, continuing, “So do you know why I’m afraid of you? I’m afraid if I mess around with relationships, you’ll strip me of my tools as an evil raven.”

“In this regard, it usually depends on whether the woman pursues it. If she doesn’t, we generally won’t intervene.” Raven said, “If she does, we won’t harm you.”

“Fines?”

“No, we’ll tie you up and send you over, and whatever happens afterward, we won’t care.”

“Terrifying.”

“Just don’t mess around, and you won’t need to be afraid.”

“Everyone has thoughts of doing wrong.” Ashe said, “You know Igor and Harvey aren’t exactly good people, right?”

Raven didn’t answer, accepting it.

“They’re so well-behaved in Senlo, mainly because they’ve been influenced by my noble character,” Ashe shamelessly said, “But surely it’s also because of your presence.”

“A ruthless, brutal embodiment of justice who can threaten sanctuary sorcerers, before they do anything, they’ll surely weigh it carefully.”

Ashe said, “Perhaps no one would follow a knife, but if that knife hangs above their head, anyone would be afraid.”

“You refuted that spear sanctuary sorcerer by saying ‘don’t forget you’re stepping on the path of light,’ but you forgot-you yourself are walking every step on the path of light.”

“The path of light isn’t paved by the Divine Sovereign, but walked by the disciples.”

“Your mere existence is already deterring evil ravens.”

Raven was slightly stunned, saying nothing.

Ashe exhaled, “If that’s still not enough, you should seek psychological counseling from Igor. I’ll beat him up first to make sure he takes it seriously-after all, he’s the one who pissed you off, why do I have to comfort you...”

“I won’t go to him.” Raven shook his head, “Only you would trust him.”

“Then I’ll keep an eye on you all. If any of you show signs of becoming evil ravens, I’ll stop it in advance.” He said, “I won’t allow you to become evil ravens.”

Ashe blinked, feeling like he had shot himself in the foot, “Ah... By the way, haven’t you mastered the weight-reduction technique yet?”

“I have.”

“Then hurry up! You’re so heavy!”

“You can still fly, can’t you?” Raven said, “Besides... I’m a bit tired too.”

Ashe and the others returned to the church ruins last, and Igor didn’t say anything. This time, they all successfully entered the hidden Sanctuary, except for one person.

“Why am I still not qualified?” Chikara stood before the blue door, shocked, “Is this the legendary racial discrimination?”

Everyone was puzzled too; Chikara knew the truth, so why couldn’t he enter?

Ashe suddenly recalled the nature of the secret toxin and asked, “Do you not truly believe ‘the Demi-God divine era is determined by the Divine Sovereign’ and still have doubts?”

To be infected by the secret toxin, it’s not enough to know; one must truly believe, similar to the effect the “Link of Truth” aims to achieve.

“Uh...” Such questions are generally hard for the person to determine, but Chikara quickly nodded, “Yes, I still have some doubts.”

Before everyone could discuss what to do, the orc slapped himself, spinning several times, then shook his head, “Okay, I have no doubts now.”

Seeing Chikara successfully walk into the blue door, everyone was stunned-does your brain consist of water? Can a slap really expel some of it?

At this moment, Igor thought deeper.

When cracking the first Fog Wall, he wondered-if the hidden Sanctuary contained a way to escape the time prison, why hadn’t anyone left the Dead City?

The possibilities were either there or not.

But now he discovered that the “Link of Truth” test wasn’t just about deducing the truth; it also required acceptance and belief.

Which means there’s a third possibility-

Perhaps someone deduced the final “Link of Truth,” but no one could accept the deepest truth.

With this thought, Igor walked in and found that the third Fog Wall was the last one; they could vaguely see some equipment behind the wall.

Upon seeing the third “Link of Truth,” everyone had the same question in their minds:

“What is the ending?”

Chapter 624: The Fate of Senlo

Whose fate are we talking about?

“The three ‘Links of Truth’ should be progressive.”

On the rooftop, Igor sat on the coffin lid, pondering the third link, when Gwen softly spoke beside him.

Indeed, they should be progressive.

The first link revealed the truth of the world.

The second link pointed out the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo’s influence over reality.

So the target of the third link should be...

At this moment, Harvey flew over and said, “A mental sorcerer discovered that even after a Green Beast dies, its soul doesn’t disappear. Instead, it attaches to crystal fragments, retaining some consciousness and cognitive ability...”

Gwen quickly inscribed this intelligence, and after Harvey finished speaking, he looked at Igor on the coffin. “Get down.”

Igor stood up, noticing Ashe preparing to fly back to consolidate information. He spread his Twin Wings and flew to another side, saying, “Come over.”

The relationship between a necromancer and a con artist was quite nuanced: Igor always looked down on Harvey's death aesthetics, and Harvey wasn't interested in Igor while he was alive. They didn't have much to say to each other.

Friends, companions, fellow travelers... none of these terms quite captured their relationship. If anything, they were like two freshwater fish in the sea, simply drifting together because they encountered the same current.

Igor flew to a shadowy ruin, glanced at Raven standing guard on the tower, and said, "Ashe just loves to create trouble for me..."

Harvey sat on a stone block. "Haven't you gotten used to that by now?"

"Don't act like you don't cause trouble yourself."

"I don't need you to clean up after me."

Igor stopped bantering. "If I'm not mistaken, the third Link of Truth likely points to Silver Lantern's secret. More directly, it might justify Silver Lantern's past actions."

"That's unlikely." The necromancer shook his head. "Even by my standards, I can't think of any reason to rationalize Silver Lantern's actions. Even if, as she claims, death leads to eternity, to gloss over her actions... I might not mind, but Ashe certainly would."

“But Silver Lantern believes it’s possible,” Igor said. “She may have other motives, but her main goal in coming to the Dead City is likely to make us-or rather, Ashe-understand her actions. Given her exposed intelligence, I don’t think this is wishful thinking or self-deception. Perhaps she knows some mental flaw of Ashe’s...”

Earlier, Ashe had mentioned how Silver Lantern’s stillness when trapped by the Four Pillars Cult until nightfall was unusual. After deciphering the first ‘Link of Truth,’ Igor vaguely understood the woman’s intentions.

She’s probably somewhere in the city now, waiting for them to uncover the final secret.

Harvey lazily said, “So why did you call me over? I’m not interested in understanding the scheming of you high-IQ folks.”

“Tamashi Raven Annihilation.”

Igor softly uttered the name. “No matter what truth we uncover, that stubborn Raven won’t give up opposing Silver Lantern. It’s not just about his beliefs; it’s about his revenge. As long as he wants revenge on the Mercury Trojan Horse, he can’t show any leniency to villains. Otherwise, the Mercury Trojan Horse will find a way to break his mental defenses.”

“‘Why target me and let Silver Lantern go’... A normal person might laugh it off, but that stubborn Raven can’t accept such accusations.”

“I had already broken his mental defenses, turning him into a useless Raven. Without principles, it would have been easier to handle him. But Ashe had to meddle...”

“I’m not surprised at all,” Harvey said leisurely. “I even find it amusing that you dared to overlook Ashe as a variable.”

“In any case, if it comes to it, I need you and your new servant to drag Raven away,” Igor said. “Two sanctuary sorcerers and a necromancer should have no problem binding an ordinary person who’s not even a sorcerer, right?”

“Though I take issue with the term ‘ordinary person,’ there’s no problem,” Harvey said. “So you’re hoping to cease hostilities with Silver Lantern?”

“We’re already struggling to deal with Silver Lantern,” Igor said. “The Blood Seed curse is troublesome, but it’s not wise to confront an enemy like Silver Lantern just for the Blood Seed.”

“Now that we’ve broken with the Four Pillars Cult, we’ve lost the capital to pursue Silver Lantern unless we’re willing to cooperate with the Mercury Trojan Horse. I have no problem with that, but can you, Ashe, and Tamashi swallow your pride?”

“Moreover, our main reason for pursuing Silver Lantern was to resolve Ashe’s Half Tactile Sense. If we cease hostilities, we can focus on finding heritage leading to other kingdoms. Once we leave Senlo, the Half Tactile Sense issue naturally resolves.”

“And...”

Igor’s face was hidden in shadow. “There’s no need to make it difficult for him.”

“I’d like to see his expression after he personally kills Silver Lantern,” Harvey said. “It would be quite interesting.”

Igor looked at the necromancer. “Archibald...”

“Just teasing you,” Archibald Harvey said, patting his behind and spreading his Twin Wings to leave. “Next time, don’t sit on the coffin.”

With this matter arranged, Igor returned to the rooftop, where Gwen had already recorded much intelligence.

“The wasteland has persisted for over two hundred years...”

“Though they can be promptly exterminated, the frequency of Deep Sea Level Green Beasts is increasing...”

“Due to the growing power of the Choking Green at night, merchant caravan frequency is decreasing.”

“During the Fire Cat Divine Era, there were two ‘Great Dizziness’ incidents where everyone lost consciousness for a minute. The Bluebird Divine Era experienced it once.”

“Compared to a hundred years ago, daylight hours have decreased by an average of 30 minutes.”

“With the start of the divine era, Green Beasts were completely eradicated.”

Unlike the first two ‘Links of Truth,’ the third required highly complex and seemingly unrelated intelligence. Igor’s deduction process was arduous, only vaguely deducing that the living environment in the Senlo wasteland seemed to be deteriorating. However, with so many cults fighting, it would be unreasonable for it not to worsen...

The increase in Green Beasts was also expected. With more deaths came more despair, naturally strengthening the Choking Green.

What caught Igor’s attention was that Green Beasts seemed to lack the concept of death.

Even when destroyed, devoured, or ground to powder, their souls persisted in other forms. Igor wasn’t sure if they felt pain in this state, but the mere thought of eternal exile, unable to do anything, was an unimaginable torment.

However, this despair wasn't endless. Once a divine era emerged, and the people's hearts aligned, the Green Beasts would be completely eradicated, ending their eternal exile.

As the intelligence was compiled, Igor's doubts deepened-this intelligence couldn't be further deduced. What did it have to do with the conclusion? It seemed like a crucial puzzle piece was missing, leaving the logical chain broken.

Boom!

A distant explosion suddenly sounded. Igor's first thought was, 'Why can we hear sounds in slowed time?' but he quickly realized-just as they could affect objects, sound was the result of their impact on the air, naturally having a certain effective range.

He looked up and saw the scene he least wanted to see: in the distant skyscraper ruins, Raven was chasing Silver Lantern.

That Raven, not even a sanctuary sorcerer, wasn't afraid of being taken down by Silver Lantern-oh, he wasn't afraid because Ashe was nearby.

At this moment, Harvey was returning to submit intelligence. Seeing this scene, he knew things were troublesome, so he slowly spoke the effective clue he had found: "The interval between the first divine era and the Fire Cat Divine Era was 30 years, between the Fire Cat and Bluebird Divine Eras was 5 years, and between the Bluebird and Gray Fox was 3 years."

Igor's mind stirred, realizing this was an important puzzle piece. But without the crucial piece, he still couldn't-

Suddenly, Igor recalled his exploration method in the Distant Sky Domain.

Ordinary sanctuary sorcerers exploring the Distant Sky Domain either engaged in direct combat like Chikara or probed for affixes like Ashe and the others. But Igor was different-

He sought the Dream Master.

The Dream Master, the owner of the dream phantom, once the Dream Master died, the phantom would shatter.

Sometimes, sorcerers and virtual realm creatures' battles inadvertently killed the Dream Master, directly breaking the phantom.

But few knew that the Dream Master also knew the affix of the phantom, or rather, the affix arose from the Dream Master's special desires.

However, the Dream Master was indistinguishable from most passersby, making it challenging for sorcerers to identify them. But Igor was different; he could analyze the phantom environment, passerby appearances, and surrounding scenery to gradually

narrow down the Dream Master's range until he found them and used a mental miracle to control them.

This method naturally took time, but as his proficiency increased, Igor could determine the difficulty of finding the Dream Master within 5 minutes. If it was within 30 minutes, he continued searching; if it exceeded 30 minutes, he moved to the next phantom.

He could now explore nearly ten phantoms in one night, which was why he had gained combat power shortly after entering the Distant Sky Domain-he had no secret like Ashe or the Ghost King Shackles like Harvey; it was all through his own efforts.

During this process, Igor discovered that besides death, the Dream Master could have other impacts on the phantom. For instance, when the Dream Master was injured, passersby would feel pain; when the Dream Master bled, the phantom environment would begin to deteriorate; when the Dream Master was near death, passersby would no longer maintain normalcy but become...

Mad.

It was as if the iceberg in his mind suddenly melted completely. Igor looked at the record-covered ground, and all the connections became clear, the deduction process crystal clear-

First, "Senlo is idealistic" and "the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's will can directly interfere with reality" were two truths already deduced.

The reason for the “short intervals between divine eras” was straightforward, indicating the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo wanted to quickly enter the next divine era to gain new deities.

The “wasteland era lasting over two hundred years” could only point to one conclusion: the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo’s influence over reality was weaker than before, unable to even initiate a divine era! Otherwise, there was no reason to abandon this fertile land capable of producing deities!

While “Senlo’s environment worsening” was reasonable from a realistic perspective, it was highly unreasonable in the Idealistic Senlo-here, the will of the people could interfere with reality. Moreover, everyone was fervently devout, and their collective will could even create divine interventions. In a place where everyone pursued beauty, the natural environment of the Idealistic Senlo should only improve, not decline.

Yet the environment was deteriorating, which could only mean the people’s will was being overshadowed by a grander will.

The ‘Great Dizziness’ and ‘cataclysm,’ events affecting the entire nation, must be divine interventions. But under the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo’s protection, even if other Divine Sovereigns wanted to cause trouble, there should have been other coordinated actions. Why did they only cause the extinction of the Senlo people without occupying the Land of Senlo?

Therefore, the ‘Great Dizziness’ and ‘cataclysm’ could only have been orchestrated by the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo.

All this evidence pointed to two truths: the Kingdom of Senlo was both an idealistic kingdom and a dream phantom jointly created by the Senlo people and the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo.

Because it was a dream phantom, the people of Senlo could become Demi-Gods, and absurd fantasy creations could appear. But because the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's will surpassed the people's will, His commands became Senlo's fate, and His original state was closely tied to Senlo.

The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo was the Dream Master of this phantom; everyone else was a passerby in the phantom.

The second truth was-the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo was on the brink of death!

Only on the brink of death would He be unable to maintain the divine era enterprise of the Kingdom of Senlo, and even the 'cataclysm' itself was likely due to His original form suffering a fatal injury, leading to the extinction of billions of Senlo people!

He was bleeding, so Senlo's environment worsened year by year; He couldn't initiate a divine era, so the wasteland persisted for over two hundred years!

Therefore, the third 'Link of Truth' asking 'what is the conclusion' referred to 'what will happen to the Kingdom of Senlo when the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo steps into death.'

When a person dies, they instinctively unleash the most intense despair. Igor didn't believe a Divine Sovereign could resist the despair of death, and because He was trying to save Himself, stretching the moment of death unbearably long, it would ultimately breed extreme malice.

He had likely been in a state of severe injury and near death for two hundred years, yet there were still no signs of improvement.

If the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's death would lead to the destruction of the Kingdom of Senlo and the extinction of all beings, it would be an unstoppable Doomsday. But Igor recalled Silver Lantern's actions and suddenly realized another more terrifying possibility-if the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo died, but the Kingdom of Senlo still existed, what would happen?

As the Dream Master of the 'Idealistic Senlo,' the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's despair would be enough to taint the entire land, turning the Choking Green into a constant presence even during the day, strangling everyone, and then-

All would enter the most despairing conclusion.

In a flash of insight, the con artist fully grasped Silver Lantern's intentions. Though lacking the most crucial puzzle piece, he was confident this was the truth Silver Lantern wanted Ashe to know.

He abruptly stood up and grabbed Harvey. The necromancer said, "Alright, alright, I'll have Alice come out and go with me to stop them-"

“No.”

Igor firmly pressed down on the necromancer’s shoulder, his eyes filled with chilling intent. “We need to kill Silver Lantern.”

Harvey was slightly taken aback, his expression unchanged, but his eyes clearly questioned, ‘This isn’t what we agreed on.’

“She isn’t self-deceiving, nor is she wishful thinking; she’s just selfish.”

“Silver Lantern must die,” Igor said, enunciating each word. “There’s no need to make it difficult for him.”

Chapter 625: Just a Little More

Just a little more.

Above the ruins of the Dead City, Vesser unfurled her golden and silver wings, soaring out of the high-rise, with a terrifying Raven monster hot on her heels. The Raven stomped on the edge of the tile, shattering it into dust, yet it remained in its original shape, suspended in the temporal rift.

Using the recoil, he transformed into a blur, crossing several meters in an instant, the Gray Fox Blade slipping from his sleeve, turning him into an arrow aimed at hunting the evil raven!

Smack!

The Gray Fox Blade pierced through the Sanctuary, yet it couldn't touch Vesser in the slightest, leaving the Raven himself blocked outside the Sanctuary.

Vesser reversed her grip with her right hand, transforming the 'Thousand Changes' spirit into a 'Wind Blade' spirit, and all the surrounding air turned into blades, slicing towards the Raven!

The Raven's speed outmatched the casting speed of the spirit. Using the recoil from attacking the Sanctuary, he swiftly repositioned, and in a sudden motion, he tossed a handful of crushed stones in all directions.

The stones halted in mid-air after flying a meter, and then the Raven stomped on them, propelling them another meter, using them as stepping stones to launch another attack on the Silver Lantern!

After creating a ripple outside the Sanctuary, the Raven continued to step on the suspended stones, dodging Silver Lantern's counterattacks, becoming a shadow darting back and forth in the air, sealing Silver Lantern like an ink mark!

Even Vesser had to be impressed by Tamashi's combat prowess-technically, as a 'normal person,' the Raven should only be able to briefly reposition in the air, lacking any aerial combat capability.

Yet, once pulled into the "Sanctuary," he astutely noticed that the characteristic of 'inanimate objects being suspended in mid-air' could be leveraged as a combat factor!

The stones he threw entered the normal time scale, their speed reduced to 1/31,536,000, causing them to 'suspend' in the air. When he collided with them again, it was as if he found a foothold in the air. As long as there were enough stones spread widely, the Raven's combat artistry allowed his aerial maneuverability to surpass even that of flying sorcerers!

Vesser was certain that this was the Raven's first time entering the "Sanctuary," and until just now, he hadn't thought of this tactic; otherwise, he wouldn't have needed Ashe to carry him. So, the Raven must have had a sudden inspiration and applied it directly in combat.

A monstrous combat talent...

But you've angered me.

Vesser was exceptionally skilled in reconnaissance Miracles, partly because she needed to find her enemies' weaknesses, and partly because... her reconnaissance was the prelude to her attacks!

Miracle: Wind Whirl Thread!

A tornado suddenly appeared around her, and the Raven couldn't avoid it, his clothes leaving trails of smoke-like threads as they were caught by the wind.

Without even looking, Vesser pulled with her right hand.

Miracle: Thread Retrieval!

Just as he was about to be shredded into pieces by the threads, the Raven's body became as flexible as a cat's, slipping through the gaps between the wind threads like liquid, only his arm was severely cut, blood dripping and suspended in mid-air.

The Raven, having narrowly escaped, didn't retreat but continued to weave through the air. Even though his expression was hidden, Vesser knew that beneath the Raven mask, a pair of eyes filled with killing intent were fixed on her.

Watching Ashe reach the Raven's side, Vesser couldn't help but bite her lip, a wave of bitterness and grievance rising uncontrollably in her heart.

She didn't want to be exposed.

She had remained invisible, but the Raven could see through her disguise... If it weren't for the Raven, everything would have gone smoothly!

“I saw Silver Lantern wiping the text on the wall earlier,” the Raven said. “She wants to destroy the key clues to the third Link of Truth.”

No, she just wanted Square Cicada to rub against it, making it easier for Ashe to find that crucial piece of the puzzle! Once that piece was found, once the third “Link of Truth” was deciphered, Ashe would understand everything about her!

“Silver Lantern!”

Chikara appeared on the other side, flames entwined around the Sanctuary, the fur on his upper body almost entirely ablaze, clearly in battle mode, his voice a mix of tension and excitement: “I knew you would appear! Seeing us about to uncover the secrets of the Dead City, you couldn’t resist trying to stop me! I knew the genocidal Silver Lantern wouldn’t just give up the treasures of the ‘Sanctuary’! I knew it!”

You know nothing, ‘Fire of Ignorance’ Chikara! Even without me wiping you out, with your brain, the Fire of Slaughter you lead would be the first to perish in the Temple! The battle to annihilate the Fire of Slaughter was my easiest victory!

If being wronged by the Raven was merely a grievance, then Chikara’s accusation was enough to make Vesser furious-how could a half-witted orc like you ‘predict’ me?

Whoosh.

Vesser sidestepped, dodging a streak of starlight. She turned to see the female Star sorcerer, a Substitute for the Mercury Trojan Horse, charging at her.

Foolish-

But at that moment, Chikara and the Raven attacked her simultaneously, forcing Vesser to retreat rapidly.

Though the Raven was immune to her delusions, Chikara was not, nor were Chikara's spirits!

And she excelled in chaotic melee!

Delusion Miracle: Strike the Illusion!

Her figure darted between Chikara and the Raven, and then Chikara's explosive flame bizarrely curved towards the Raven!

But the Raven was prepared; their previous encounters with the Silver Lantern had taught them that in battle, they had to guard against not only Silver Lantern's attacks but also 'friendly fire' from those around them! The Raven flicked his cloak, creating a buffer of air to disperse the flames, deftly avoiding Chikara's Sanctuary Miracle!

At this moment, Ashe pulled Gwen back: “Go back, this isn’t a place you can-“

Ashe’s words were cut short because he saw in the eyes of this timid, weakened Star sorcerer, a fervent and desperate hatred.

Though there was no evidence, Ashe had a strong sense that Gwen’s thoughts within the Four Pillars Cult leaned towards the Lord of Myriad Glories. But unlike the Spear spell Sanctuary’s burning rage, what burned in her was a seething hatred.

No wonder the Mercury Trojan Horse chose her as a vessel for descent;

No wonder, even when facing death at the Raven’s hands, she never spoke ill of the Mercury Trojan Horse, accepting her fate.

Because the Mercury Trojan Horse gave her a chance.

A chance for revenge against the Silver Lantern.

Perhaps when the Silver Lantern led the Four Pillars Cult to annihilate the earth, she slaughtered Gwen’s cult; perhaps when the Silver Lantern fled the cult, she turned Gwen’s friends into Blood Seeds; maybe even when the Silver Lantern was still in the Tribulation

Fire Temple, she and the Silver Lantern Saintess were on opposing sides... but it didn't really matter.

Gwen wasn't the only one who hated the Silver Lantern, and the Silver Lantern's enemies weren't limited to the Four Pillars Cult.

Did the Transcendent Cult forget the Resonance String Demi-God taken from them? Did the Twin Cult forget how the last Nightfall City fell? The remnants of the Nature Cult, besides hating the Twin Cult, didn't forget the mastermind Silver Lantern?

And many more...

They had hunted the Silver Lantern for nearly two months, crossing half of Senlo, bringing disaster to half of Senlo as well.

The mobile disaster Silver Lantern, not only highlighted her combat power but also her... actions.

Ashe released his grip, and Gwen silently spread her wings. To maximize power and accuracy, she recklessly approached the Silver Lantern, unleashing her weak and feeble Star Miracle.

At this moment, the Con Artist and the necromancer finally arrived.

Harvey, merged with Alice, entered the Frostfire state, transforming into the “Nether Knight” form-during chaotic battles, the Dragon Lich’s Decay Breath was too prone to friendly fire-raising the crescent scythe to strike the Silver Lantern’s Sanctuary!

Igor unleashed “Visualization Overlap” without reservation, and the Silver Lantern’s Sanctuary was instantly battered by a storm, rippling with countless waves!

Ashe closed his eyes, drawing the Honey Sword from his mouth.

When he gripped the Honey Sword, his eyes were filled with resolve.

A streak of light shot from his body, like a meteor towards the Silver Lantern.

Boom!

Vesser once again used “Strike the Illusion” to make Harvey and Chikara attack each other, but when she saw the ‘Heart Sword’ slice through her Sanctuary, the bitterness in her heart was so intense she could barely breathe, nearly biting through her lip.

Most of Ashe’s Miracles were launched with the ‘Heart Sword,’ nothing represented his intentions more than the ‘Heart Sword.’

Just a little more, just a little more, and he would know everything, why was it always just a little more...

Vesser took a deep breath, no longer dodging while fighting, but instead diving into the fray, taking on six opponents alone!

You want war, I'll give you war!

Chapter 626: Youll Regret This

In the suspended time, the “Sanctuary,” meant for refuge, had now turned into a battlefield of mutual slaughter.

Chikara suddenly withdrew from the fray, realizing he was the most susceptible to Silver Lantern’s Miracles. Every attack he launched was almost entirely ineffective, often redirected to others. He needed to change his approach.

Among all present, Chikara, the fire spell Sanctuary sorcerer, harbored the greatest fear of Silver Lantern. If he hadn’t been standing slightly farther from Mond and Sartapal earlier, he would have been among those nearly killed by her. The “Sanctuary” might not trap them, but Silver Lantern had almost succeeded in killing him! And he was still on her hit list!

Now that there was a chance to corner Silver Lantern, Chikara had to give it his all, if only to save himself!

He reached out into the air, conjuring two whips of black flame, the Void Flames capable of burning space itself. However, these flames acknowledged no master, and to wield the black flame whips, he had to encase his hands in a Sanctuary, constantly burning spellforce.

Seizing the moment, Chikara lashed out with the whips, wrapping them around Silver Lantern's Sanctuary, binding it tightly. Silver Lantern attempted to break free by contracting her Sanctuary, but the black flame whips tightened with every contraction, until they were firmly bound to her!

Miracle: Void Flame Shackles!

A rare restrictive Miracle from the Fire Sect, its uniqueness lay in its ability to continuously burn the Sanctuary, consuming the enemy's spellforce. If the enemy released their Sanctuary, they'd be bound and burned by the black flame whips. If they tried to distance themselves, the spellforce consumption increased due to the 'Separation Fire' spirit, which inflicted more damage the farther they were from Chikara!

Though Chikara also expended spellforce, as a fire spell Sanctuary sorcerer, for every unit he spent, Silver Lantern had to spend at least two. This tactic wasn't feasible in a duel, but in a group assault, it was an excellent support strategy!

Silver Lantern recognized the peculiarity of the Void Flame Shackles and had to temporarily abandon rapid movement to counter it.

But she faced more than one enemy-amidst the chaotic night sky, Raven's shadow flitted around her Sanctuary like ink strokes, attacking with the ferocity of a storm!

Among the six, Raven wasn't the strongest, lacking even flight capabilities, but he was the most troublesome for Silver Lantern. Sanctuaries could be moved by kinetic force, and while Raven couldn't harm or drain Silver Lantern's spellforce, he could use sheer force, like a mountain or storm, to block her escape!

On another front, Nether Knight Harvey circled in the air, the ghostly green flames on his body surging, turning his armored form into a blazing torch.

The flames extended his beheading crescent scythe by a full length, transforming his undead steed into a burning motorcycle!

Harvey wasn't content with merely unlocking the ten necromancy troop types within the "Ghost King Shackles." He integrated his own Miracles, developing a unique Miracle to enhance necromancy troops. This advanced state he named the Soul Reaper Knight!

With the motorcycle roaring with fire and steel, Harvey charged at Silver Lantern like a reaper!

Simultaneously, Igor bit his tongue, the pain spreading to his pituitary gland, altering his perception of the world. The 'Ashe' he visualized was no longer in normal form but the 'Nightmare Ashe' he had once seen in dreams, slaughtering deities and reveling in Doomsday!

Miracle: Nightmare Visualization Overlap!

By harnessing intense pain to heighten his imagination, Igor could turn his unreal fantasies into reality, destroying enemies!

With the Void Flame Shackles' restraint, Raven's relentless assault, the Soul Reaper Knight's onslaught, and the mental sorcerer's nightmare descending, Vesser showed no fear. She glanced at the Heart Sword's gleam, shielding others, then released her Sanctuary.

As the black flame whips were about to bind Silver Lantern and other attacks were poised to overwhelm her, Igor felt no excitement, only a profound dread and disbelief: "Could she even--"

Delusion Miracle: Trial by Illusion!

Vesser's body suddenly became ethereal, glowing like a Silver Lantern for approximately 0.4 seconds.

Then, all attacks aimed at Silver Lantern rebounded onto the attackers themselves!

The least affected was Chikara, merely bound by his own black flame whips, which he could easily dispel.

Raven's abdomen was slashed, sending him plummeting like a fallen crow.

Harvey was knocked out of his Soul Reaper Knight form, reverting to a regular Nether Knight, his Frostfire significantly weakened.

Igor's Sanctuary was riddled with ripples, his spellforce reserves, already thin, were halved in an instant!

The only effective attack came from Gwen, the weakest in combat power. Her starlight, arriving late, grazed Vesser's face as she exited Silver Lantern's state, leaving a mark on the mobile disaster.

Silver blood trickled from the wound, suspended in the air.

That was the sole outcome.

The sorcerers were incredulous. Though this was a hidden card of Silver Lantern, its effect was terrifying-reflecting all attacks back at the casters without suffering any harm herself!

No, it wasn't that simple. Igor quickly discerned the flaw in this Miracle: its duration was only 0.4 seconds. If the moment wasn't seized, it would be ineffective. Moreover, after 0.4 seconds, Silver Lantern didn't immediately raise her Sanctuary, instead being struck by Gwen's starlight, which was likely no coincidence.

Reflection was reflection, immunity was immunity. Silver Lantern's immunity suggested a complete severance from the outside world for those 0.4 seconds-she had cut off space!

Reconnecting the severed space with the outside world caused minor spatial tremors. If she raised her Sanctuary during this time, it would be like inviting an attack, severely draining her spellforce, hence the delay!

Despite its flaws, in the hands of a sorcerer like Silver Lantern, with flawless intellect and experience, this Miracle remained perfect-she wouldn't give them any opportunity.

"No Miracles."

Ashe caught the falling Raven, placing him on a nearby rooftop, and said, "Long-range attacks will be deflected, powerful Miracles redirected. The only effective and safe tactic is close combat."

Harvey immediately switched from "Eighth Troop Type: Nether Knight" to "Sixth Troop Type: Blood Count," wielding a blood-stained Chain Sword, his armor transforming into a black trench coat-unmistakably modeled after Kaimon City's hunter captain, Gerard Wessminster.

Chikara raised his fists, covered in black flames-unsurprising for an orc adept in the Fist-Claw Sect.

Close combat wasn't Igor's forte. He glanced at Gwen, capable of emitting starlight, and had an idea, flying over to ask, "Can you release a large area of blinding starlight?"

"I can."

"Follow my lead, get ready to blind Silver Lantern!"

Clang!

With a sword cry piercing the air, Ashe, wielding the Honey Sword, was the first to engage Vesser. Vesser contracted her Sanctuary to cover only her body, parrying his blade with her hands!

But Ashe didn't raise his Sanctuary. Among the Sanctuary sorcerers, he was the only one without it, making him the only one Silver Lantern could instantly kill-or rather, he intended to use himself as bait, to exhaust Silver Lantern's final casting opportunity, then rely on 'Three-Second Cicada Lurk' to resurrect on the spot.

As sword met hand, Vesser couldn't suppress a thought-this was just like their previous encounters in the Divine Fire Trial-yet seeing Ashe's cold, expressionless face, she knew he didn't share her sentiments.

Her nose tinged with sourness, but her martial skills grew fiercer, actively engaging Ashe!

Indeed, her delusion series of Miracles relied on the enemy using powerful Miracles to counterattack or even reflect them.

True hand-to-hand combat was the best way to deal with her.

But the problem was, in close combat, Vesser could simply take flight and leave the battlefield. This wasn't the enclosed Divine Fire Trial; why engage in melee when she could exploit her advantage?

Facing Ashe, Harvey, and Chikara in close combat, Vesser should have flown away, fighting while retreating.

But this time, she didn't retreat a single step, as if determined to settle the score here!

You'll regret this.

Vesser leaned back to dodge Ashe's blade, grabbed Chikara's wrist, and slammed the two-meter-tall orc to the ground, then turned to punch Ashe, her eyes glaring at the Cult Leader, tears of grievance welling up.

You'll regret this!

Harvey swung his Chain Sword, executing a double slash, the blade dancing like a blood shadow, as if to carve a path through a sea of corpses. Yet Vesser swiftly slipped through the sword shadows, kicking Harvey away, then performing a split to dodge Ashe's horizontal slash, springing up to close in on Ashe!

You'll definitely regret this!

As the battle dragged on, Ashe, Harvey, and Chikara's coordination improved rapidly, and under their combined assault, Vesser was pushed back repeatedly. Harvey and Chikara began to prevent her escape, but Vesser showed no intention of retreating, gritting her teeth to fight to the end!

She focused intently on Ashe, each move seemingly aimed to kill, yet every technique was one they had used countless times in the Divine Fire Trial, easily evaded by Ashe. In contrast, she never dodged Ashe's blade, allowing her Sanctuary to be continually depleted.

She didn't reveal the truth, knowing no one could accept the real outcome; they had to deduce it themselves.

So...

Keep going, keep going!

The harder you fight now, the deeper your regret will be later!

The more indifferent you are to me now, the more unattainable I'll be soon!

Hmph!

Once the third “Link of Truth” is deciphered, Ashe, you'll understand me, because...

I've always been right!

Chapter 627: The Taste of Rust, Lemon, and Sweet Orange

Silver Lantern was right.

Watching Silver Lantern being besieged, Igor was acutely aware of this fact.

But he couldn't say it, at least not while Silver Lantern was still alive.

Silver Lantern's correctness didn't mean her worldview was right. "Reality is a fleeting illusion, and the Virtual Realm is the eternal future"-whether true or false, it couldn't justify Silver Lantern's rampage.

So, was there a reasonable justification for Silver Lantern's actions?

There was.

This was the truth of the third Link of Truth, the conclusion brought about by the impending death of the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo.

Although the Chasm Sovereign was the Dream Master of the Idealistic Sen Luo, his death wouldn't destroy it. Because besides him, there were millions of potential Dream Masters in the wasteland who could continue to maintain this dream phantom.

This should have been a good thing, but it became the root of despair.

The despair unleashed by the Chasm Sovereign's death would unreservedly taint the entire Kingdom of Senlo. His will could bring about the divine era of Senlo, and his despair could determine Senlo's fate.

Senlo, tainted by despair, would see the Choking Green surge to unbearable levels, resulting in only one outcome-everyone would be greened into Green Beasts.

But Green Beasts were immortal. Even if they slaughtered and devoured each other, their bodies ground to dust, their souls would continue to wander.

In the past, only the divine era could eradicate all Green Beasts. Igor suspected that the greatest significance of the divine era was to unify everyone's will, making everyone aspire to the light. In the mechanism of the Idealistic Sen Luo, this positive energy was enough to destroy all negative entities.

But if everyone turned into Green Beasts and the Chasm Sovereign died, it meant there would be no divine era, and the Green Beasts wouldn't be destroyed. Worse, millions of wandering monster souls would become the next generation of Dream Masters, continuing to sustain the dream phantom of the Idealistic Sen Luo, perpetuating the existence of this kingdom.

Unless external forces intervened, the Kingdom of Senlo would head towards... eternity.

Immortal, eternally exiled.

Unable to die, unable to live, unable to speak, unable to act, unable to sleep, unable to scream...

Igor and the others couldn't bear the thought of being imprisoned in the Temporal Cage for thirty thousand years, but at least they had the option of death to end their suffering. Those turned into Green Beasts had no choice, and their sentence was infinite.

It was a despair that made one's scalp tingle just thinking about it.

And this was enough to make Silver Lantern's actions seem incredibly right-

Every person she killed meant one less person to endure this despair.

If she were to destroy Senlo, everyone in Senlo would find peace.

Compared to eternal exile, death was indeed the greatest mercy.

Killing to save, saving by destroying.

Igor had no objections to this conclusion. He didn't care about the survival of the Kingdom of Senlo, nor did he care if Silver Lantern was a good person, as long as Ashe could accept it.

So, the question arose-if Ashe truly accepted this truth, what would he do?

Igor knew Ashe well. He was the type who would be happy for others' happiness and sad for others' sorrow, much like Lise. But he was also self-aware, never burdening himself excessively.

So, if Ashe had the ability but didn't know about the bad things happening, he would mourn but not blame himself; if he knew about the bad things but lacked the ability, he would sigh but not force himself.

But what if Ashe had both the ability and the knowledge of impending suffering?

Igor's concern was not unfounded-Ashe and Silver Lantern had almost identical setups!

Silver Lantern had the citizenship of Resonance String, and Ashe had the citizenship of Transcendent; Silver Lantern was a divine fire seed, and Ashe was also a divine fire seed; Silver Lantern had Half Tactile Sense, and Ashe had Half Tactile Sense... Igor didn't know Silver Lantern's specific plan, but if Silver Lantern could destroy the world, Ashe could certainly do it too!

More importantly, Silver Lantern's intention was undoubtedly to get Ashe to support her.

But how would Ashe support her?

Support Silver Lantern in slaughtering millions?

Support Silver Lantern in destroying the world?

Even commit world-ending crimes that would be etched in the Virtual Realm for countless years? How many difficulties would they encounter along the way? How many dangers would they face? And when the world ended, could they still escape?

Could Ashe bear such responsibility? Could he endure such pain? Did he have the ability?

Igor didn't know, but as he had said, there was no need to trouble Ashe.

They were merely passersby in Senlo, with no need to sacrifice for this foreign kingdom—they weren't here to be saviors, and neither was Ashe.

Silver Lantern wasn't deluding herself, nor was she being wishful. Ashe would indeed understand her, and might even support her.

This was her selfishness, dragging Ashe into a desperate dilemma—whether to personally kill everyone to grant them mercy, or to watch everyone fall into eternal despair.

But as long as Silver Lantern wasn't around, even if Ashe knew there was a task to save the world, he wouldn't know the method. As long as Silver Lantern wasn't around, Senlo would follow its predetermined fate, but they would find a way to escape before that.

So...

It was time to put an end to this.

Igor suddenly focused on Chikara, his lips moving slightly to transmit a distant message, then pointed to Silver Lantern's rear. Gwen immediately shot out a blinding starburst.

At that moment, Vesser, who was violently attacking Harvey, was about to turn to face Ashe's sword, but as soon as she turned her head, her vision was seized by the blinding starburst.

The next second, Chikara let out a tearing roar from behind and delivered a black flame punch!

The orc's full roar, even without a spirit, was enough to stun a human!

With her vision and hearing both impaired, Vesser couldn't dodge and was sent flying by the blow.

When she finally regained her sight, she saw the terrifying Death Raven descending upon her.

Boom!

Raven's long-prepared kick, powerful enough to create a sonic boom, sent Vesser crashing into the ruins of a high-rise building!

It was the area most restrictive to flight!

Even without Igor's command, Harvey seized the opportunity, rushing in to unleash a series of corpse mountain and blood sea slashes! Vesser couldn't dodge, only managing to counterattack and knock Harvey away, using her Sanctuary to absorb all the damage!

Ashe followed closely, his long sword raining down on Silver Lantern, breaking through the dilapidated floor, layer by layer, as if trying to send Silver Lantern to hell!

Yes, just like that.

Igor watched the debris suspended in mid-air within the high-rise, unable to help but let out a long breath.

Gwen noticed this and asked, "Is she dead?"

"Not yet," Igor replied, "but soon."

Silver Lantern's spellforce was nearly depleted, and in the Sanctuary, spellforce couldn't regenerate automatically. She must be running on empty.

In truth, Silver Lantern should have fled long ago, but Igor could vaguely understand why she hadn't. She had kept this secret hidden in her heart for so long, finally able to reveal it to the one she loved. Why would she run? It was like a little girl wanting to give a gift, only to be wronged and filled with grievances. Anyone would be furious.

She wanted to stand her ground and watch him regret.

In a way, Silver Lantern and Raven were quite similar. Both bore a fate that no one could endure, both carried out tasks that no one could accept... So perhaps, deep down, Silver Lantern was also hoping... hoping for someone to come and relieve her pain.

So, please.

Igor silently prayed as he watched the high-rise continue to erupt with noise.

Don't redeem, don't clarify, don't understand.

Just die here as the evil Silver Lantern.

At the bottom of the high-rise ruins, amidst the floating debris, Ashe and Vesser locked eyes.

Ashe's body was covered in countless wounds from the fall, with blood floating around him. But he had already cast a Joy Sword on himself, rapidly healing his injuries.

He wasn't the only one injured.

Vesser was also covered in wounds, her beautiful clothes torn, her fair skin cut open, with pride.

Vesser couldn't understand her own thoughts now. She only knew that if she had to bow to Ashe to survive, she would rather die-even if Ashe was just a step away from understanding her.

Then let it be just a step away.

Boom!

Seeing the sword coming, Vesser instinctively deflected it, then sidestepped and elbowed!

Ashe raised his palm to block the elbow, retreating while slashing downward. Vesser tilted her head to dodge the sword, then moved in to attack his torso. But Ashe seemed to anticipate her move, tossing his long sword upward and engaging Vesser in close combat!

Vesser's heart trembled, but her hands didn't waver, skillfully dismantling Ashe's offensive and catching the long sword to counterattack.

But after one round, Ashe found an opening to block Vesser's attack and reclaim the long sword.

Everything flowed so smoothly,

Everything was so natural.

Because this was the countless times they had fought in the Divine Fire Trial, the countless times they had sparred.

As Vesser moved, she suddenly realized that the air was filled with their blood.

The air was thick with the scent of rust, lemon, and sweet orange.

Chapter 628: Opposite Emotions

Yolan Vesser was conceived in an Infant Incubator.

Her biological parents were ordinary people, but her maternal grandfather was a sorcerer. Thus, her mother received a good education from an early age, although she never excelled enough to step into the realm of sorcerers.

In the Tribulation Fire Temple, while the basic social unit of the family still existed, the closer one got to the Demi-God, the more devout their faith became, leaving less room for other emotions. Ordinary people who were only responsible for production labor could instead nurture genuine familial affection. However, nuns and knights, who were almost entirely devoted to the Demi-God, would leave their children to be cared for by the Temple, nearly severing the parent-child relationship.

Vesser's mother, though an ordinary person, was highly educated and had a sorcerer for a father, so she smoothly took on the role of a nun in the Temple, which was the best treatment a mortal could receive. Her having Vesser had nothing to do with love; it was simply because her genes matched well with those of another knight. Thus, she handed over her genetic material to be nurtured by the Infant Incubator-she never met Vesser's biological father.

Logically, she should have had no feelings for Vesser, but from the moment Vesser could understand, she saw her almost every day. She would only let Vesser call her by her name: Weina-tongue touching the lower palate, moving upwards, lightly touching the teeth on the third syllable, Weina.

This was the first phrase Vesser learned.

Yolan Vesser's name was also given by Weina. In Vesser's childhood, Weina would occasionally bring her food, sometimes take her out to play, but mostly introduce her to the world.

The knowledge enlightenment of the silver lantern saintess began with a bedtime story every night.

Little Vesser wasn't fierce back then; on the contrary, she was a bit dazed. She wouldn't speak up when bullied by other children, only hiding in a corner, crying pitifully. But the daftest moment was when Weina took her to the commercial center managed by the Temple. Weina picked out a beautiful outfit for her, and seeing that Vesser was already five, encouraged her to go into the fitting room alone to change.

Within a minute, Weina heard crying from the fitting room. She went in to find little Vesser tangled in the clothes, having tripped and fallen, crying on the floor. Weina couldn't help but laugh at her clumsiness.

After helping Vesser change, the little girl was still sniffing, tears streaming down her face. "S-sorry, I couldn't find the, the hole..."

"Why are you apologizing?" Weina laughed. "Didn't I teach you to find the sleeves first? Don't rush next time, take your time."

"I was afraid," little Vesser lowered her head, "I was afraid you wouldn't wait for me."

Weina cupped Vesser's face, wiping away her tears with her thumb.

"If I wasn't going to wait for you, it wouldn't matter how quickly you changed." Weina ruffled Vesser's hair and said to the confused girl, "If I'm waiting for you, I'll be here even if it gets dark."

"So, don't rush. Take your time. I'll wait for you."

Clang! Swish! Clang!

In the ruins of the lower level, two figures moved as fast as lightning, their sword blades slicing through the air, and their Fist-Claws striking fiercely. They clashed multiple times within a second, like a storm facing thunder and fire, the battle so intense it seemed they wanted to kill each other!

However, upon closer inspection, it was clear that neither of these sanctuary sorcerers had activated their Sanctuaries. Despite the high-intensity fight, they hadn't inflicted any new injuries on each other. Their movements were perfectly synchronized. Rather than acting, it was more like an alternative form of communication.

He's waiting for me.

Vesser caught the long sword in mid-air, casually swinging it down in a thrust, only to have Ashe seize the opportunity to grab her wrist. She almost seemed to hand the sword hilt back to him.

He doesn't even know the truth yet.

Vesser moved in close, grabbing his wrist with her left hand and pressing her right arm against his neck. This move was meant to suppress the enemy by applying pressure to the throat, but Vesser's right arm merely brushed against Ashe's throat, not causing any pressure, almost gently caressing.

She stared at Ashe with wide eyes, no longer hiding the smile in her eyes, her lips curling into a victorious grin. Even though Ashe remained expressionless, countering her attacks as if she were an enemy, Vesser wasn't angry at all, continuing to play this fighting game with him.

In his eyes, I am still the Silver Lantern, a murderer, a villain, and a cunning adversary. We still have irreconcilable differences, and his companions are still relentlessly pursuing me.

But he is still willing to wait for me.

He doesn't even know what he's waiting for.

Compared to Ashe understanding and supporting her after knowing the truth, this moment made Vesser even happier. The grievances and bitterness she felt earlier vanished, leaving only sweet bubbles bursting in her heart, turning into a rain of fireworks.

Vesser knew Ashe's character well. Although it had nothing to do with virtues like integrity, honesty, or perseverance, he genuinely despised evil. He was the type to feel guilty for a long time after doing even a small bad deed.

It was only in the closed environment of the Divine Fire Trial and under the threat of the Circle Cicada's death crisis that they could coexist peacefully. Even then, it was only when they were on the brink of death that he would set aside their grudges and principles to comfort her. But at that time, it was probably more out of pity and sympathy.

That's why Vesser was so happy.

She realized she wasn't alone. Someone would wait for her even after dark. She never hid the fact that she was a bad woman, so what she loved most was making the person she liked willing to break their principles for her, even if it was just out of the bond of Shared Life.

Vesser was now content and didn't want to stubbornly hide the truth anymore. She knew that if she confessed, Ashe would definitely stop and listen to her defense. Then, finding the last piece of the puzzle, Ashe would understand her, support her, and even regret wronging her.

Vesser had been a bit angry earlier, but now all her anger had dissipated. However, she wasn't in a hurry. This battle, which felt like a game, held special meaning for her. She wanted to enjoy this unique tenderness between them a little longer-

Crack.

Maybe it was her wandering thoughts, maybe it was her physical exhaustion, but more likely, it was her relaxation-Vesser's heel stepped on a stone, causing her to lose balance and almost fall.

At the same time, a sharp sword blade sliced through the air, aiming for her throat.

But Vesser wasn't worried at all. She even turned to look at Ashe, hoping to see a panicked expression on his face-

Sss.

Silver blood droplets scattered in the air, frozen in time.

Vesser spread her Twin Wings, retreating rapidly like a diving bird, narrowly avoiding the sword blade. Although the sword had slowed down at the last moment, it still grazed her throat.

But Vesser didn't care about the small wound. She stared blankly at Ashe's expression.

She saw Ashe biting his lip, his right hand gripping the long sword tightly, veins bulging, his face contorted, his eyes filled with sadness, anger, guilt-these conflicting negative emotions swirling and merging, forming a rusty, jagged dagger. But Ashe didn't aim the dagger at her; he aimed it at himself, tearing open his chest, ripping through his flesh, and sawing through his bones.

She wasn't the only one hurt.

She wasn't the only one in pain.

She was happy because Ashe was willing to break his principles for her.

But this was also the source of Ashe's torment.

Suddenly, the voice and wind of the necromancer came from above: "Ashe, let me help you!"

"Okay."

Ashe replied with just one word, then continued to swing his sword.

But this time, it wasn't the gentleness Vesser was familiar with.

Chapter 629: The Demon Lords Choice

Harvey arrived late to the battlefield for a reason.

His “Five Consecutive Corpse Mountain and Blood Sea Slashes” left too many openings, and Silver Lantern seized the opportunity to kick him away, sending him flying. As he regrouped and prepared to charge back, Igor called out to him.

Igor only had one request-if Silver Lantern intended to stop and explain, and if Ashe was willing to listen, then Harvey should feign stopping and then, with the advantage of surprise, kill her.

Harvey didn’t ask why, nor did he agree or disagree; he simply returned to the battlefield. He saw Ashe and Silver Lantern still fighting and joined in the onslaught.

Although Silver Lantern could no longer maintain her Sanctuary due to a lack of spellforce, having used it to block damage, she still had a bit left to cast

spells. Facing the combined assault of Ashe and Harvey, she seized an opportunity to use a delusion spirit to create an opening, and with her close combat skills, she managed to hold on, barely.

It was fortunate that Raven had been severely injured earlier; otherwise, she wouldn't have lasted even a second.

But Vesser didn't need to persist-she knew well that if she simply surrendered and confessed the truth, Ashe would protect the malevolent Silver Lantern until the "Link of Truth" was broken.

Wasn't letting Ashe know the truth her goal?

What was she still holding on for? What was she considering? What was she... afraid of?

At that moment, Vesser suddenly realized something. She had been so focused on letting Ashe know the truth, on being understood, supported, and having companions, that she never considered what this meant for Ashe.

She understood that Ashe's current restraint was mostly due to their shared life-and-death experience at the Golden Flow. This reason was logical enough that even Raven couldn't blame him.

But even so, it was torturing Ashe.

He couldn't accept letting the murderous Silver Lantern go, yet he couldn't bring himself to kill the Silver Lantern he cared for. These conflicting desires tore at him, forcing him to wear an expressionless face to mask the turmoil within.

If Silver Lantern were purely evil, he could join forces with Raven and act as a champion of justice; if Vesser were just an ordinary girl who happened to love him blindly, he could struggle alone with his entangled relationships.

Unfortunately, the overlap of these identities meant that Ashe suffered constantly in battle-remembering Silver Lantern's kindness at the Golden Flow and her concessions during their half-month pursuit, but also recalling the people she had killed, the disasters she had caused, and her cold, cunning cruelty towards life...

He couldn't be as decisive as Raven in cutting ties, nor could he betray his own moral principles.

Vesser should have foreseen Ashe's feelings. Why hadn't she considered them?

The third "Link of Truth" was truly about understanding that the people of Senlo only had two outcomes: enter the Virtual Realm early for eternal freedom, or face eternal death in Senlo. Vesser could accept the former because she believed death was not the end, but for Ashe, death was just death.

To him, these were just a bad ending and a worse one. Worse still, once he knew this, it meant he also had to make a choice.

Because Vesser had already chosen an ending and acted on it, even if Ashe did nothing, it amounted to supporting Vesser's massacre of millions-something Igor or Harvey might not think so, but people like Ashe and Raven would blame themselves.

Perhaps 'blame' was too mild a word-it was more like they would drown in their own incapacity for a lifetime.

What if he stopped Vesser? But did Ashe and his companions have a better way? Were they hoping for a miracle to save the Kingdom of Senlo, or did they expect to become divine and save the world themselves? What if the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo couldn't hold on for five or ten years? It wasn't feasible to just prevent Silver Lantern's firm beliefs with empty promises of 'there must be another way.'

In a daze, Vesser suddenly remembered that when she mistakenly entered the Dead City, it only took her three days to unravel the mystery of the third "Link of Truth." Yet, it took her three months to accept this truth, inheriting the legacy of the Gray Fox Divine Era from over two centuries ago, becoming the first person to leave the Dead City.

Why had she forgotten this?

Swoosh!

Taking advantage of Silver Lantern's momentary distraction, Harvey swung his Chain Sword, unleashing two Corpse Mountain and Blood Sea Slashes!

Vesser hastily dodged, but her thigh was still grazed, flesh torn away, blood spraying in an arc, the wound deep to the bone! At that moment, Ashe's sword blade came from the side. Vesser, unable to heal, continued to fight!

At this rate, she really would die here. Her spellforce was depleted, and the necromancer and Ashe still had combat strength, and there was also Chikara's "Fire of Ignorance"-

A chill ran down Vesser's spine. Alarm bells rang in her mind.

Where was Chikara!?

Just then, the nearby wall was suddenly smashed open, and Chikara, wrapped in thick black flames, charged in like a speeding dump truck, charging headlong at Silver Lantern, Ashe, and Harvey!

On the rooftop outside, Gwen whispered, "Such a small space on the lower level, others probably can't avoid it..."

“That’s the point,” Igor said, watching the high-rise ruins. “Ashe and Harvey still have enough spellforce to raise their Sanctuaries, but Silver Lantern doesn’t. Even if they can’t raise their Sanctuaries in time, Ashe can heal himself; at worst, Harvey and Silver Lantern will be crushed together.”

“So, please, Silver Lantern,” Igor murmured. “As a monster, you’ve lived long enough.”

Boom!

In the pitch-black ruins of the lower level, Harvey and Chikara crawled out of a human-shaped pit. The necromancer spat out a mouthful of blood, his figure unsteady, while Chikara’s spellforce was completely depleted, unable to maintain even his Sanctuary.

Just as Chikara had crashed in, Silver Lantern immediately rushed towards Harvey, who instinctively launched a double slash at her, and then-

Harvey collided solidly with Chikara.

Chikara's fire spell miracle, Harvey's Mountain of Corpses and Sea of Blood, and their respective Sanctuaries shattered with tremendous kinetic energy in the collision. Silver Lantern almost turned the crisis into an opportunity in an instant.

But just almost.

Perhaps she was too late, or perhaps she lacked enough spellforce, but Silver Lantern couldn't completely transfer the damage. Her body was grazed by Chikara's impact, crashing into the rubble like a kite with its string cut. Now, she could only stand shakily, her body drenched in blood, her right hand skin flayed, all her exposed skin marred by wounds.

On the field, only one person was unscathed.

As Silver Lantern twisted away from Chikara's impact, Ashe had completely avoided the collision-he was so untroubled he hadn't even raised his Sanctuary.

Without a word, he surged forward, sword raised towards Vesser. Vesser suppressed her pain with a delusion spirit, rallying her spirits to continue the fight.

But as soon as they crossed swords, Vesser sensed something was amiss—not only because they had rehearsed this routine countless times, but more importantly, Ashe’s sword was feeble, with no intent to harm her.

After a couple of exchanges, Ashe tossed his sword upwards, switching to hand-to-hand combat, Vesser quickly grabbed the sword.

Here, Ashe’s next move should be to attack offensively, trying to reclaim the blade by attacking Vesser’s wrist to prevent her from gaining the upper hand. But this time, Ashe suddenly broke from the routine.

He suddenly moved closer, his right hand reaching for Vesser’s throat, his left hand blocking her escape routes. If Vesser didn’t counterattack quickly, she would be subdued by Ashe.

But Ashe’s reckless advance also exposed many flaws, and with a sword in her hand, she could easily injure Ashe to escape!

What was Ashe really trying to do-

When Vesser saw the deep, pond-like gaze in Ashe's eyes, she suddenly understood his intention.

Just like at the Golden Flow, Vesser had given him two choices, so now he was giving Vesser two choices: either give up resistance and be captured, or escape by injuring him.

There was a deeper meaning here-if Vesser chose the latter, it meant she was cutting off their karmic ties, and Ashe would have repaid his debt from the Golden Flow; the next time they met, there would be no more affection between them.

But Vesser could choose the former. Regardless of whether Ashe intended to protect her, as long as she guided them to critical intelligence, she could absolve herself of her sins.

No matter how she thought about it, she should give up resisting here, let Ashe capture her, then wait for the truth to be revealed, and even see Ashe's regretful expression. She could then stand by Ashe's side, overtaking the Sword Princess and Witch, securing a victory ahead of schedule...

But what then?

Did she really want to drag Ashe into a catastrophic choice between two evils? Forcing him to choose the lesser of two evils he could accept?

If it were before Nightfall, Vesser would have made her choice without hesitation, because she was eager to see what kind of person Ashe would become when tortured by humanity, to see if he would be tormented into another 'real Ashe' she needed more.

If there had been no Divine Fire Trial, if there had been no Golden Flow, if...

Vesser had never thought that she, with her resolute mind, would give up halfway. She had been preparing for so long, she was so close to completion, yet she was about to destroy her own achievements.

Perhaps someone will wait for you until it gets dark.

But you shouldn't go looking for him after dark.

Vesser gripped the long sword, actively meeting Ashe's charge, as if it wasn't a lethal grapple but a tender embrace. Suddenly, Vesser remembered the bedtime stories Weina had told her, many of which were fairy tales about princesses and princes.

When planning to come to the Dead City, she had thought Ashe was her prince. But she had never realized that she was a Demon Lord who could not be accepted by the prince.

A Demon Lord should be purely evil, universally despised, without a single redeeming quality, making the story clear and the other characters untroubled, everyone else able to be happy.

Then, the long sword pierced through the prince's back.

Chapter 630: You Do Not Deserve

Love and hate kill each other!

Blood is spilled!

The Honey Sword pierces through Ashe's chest, emerging from his back, bringing with it specks of blood!

Harvey's eyes seem to burn as the frostfire around him flares up again, and he charges towards Silver Lantern with the Chain Sword in hand! Chikara hesitates but chooses not to move; he's not brain-dead, knowing that starting a fight now might accidentally harm Ashe. If it had been before, he wouldn't have cared about accidental killing, but now he has to consider his future career environment. It's better to step back in situations that might cause offense.

Seeing Harvey charging at her, Silver Lantern, with an expressionless face, draws her long sword, causing secondary damage to Ashe and then kicking him towards the necromancer. Harvey has no choice but to catch Ashe and helplessly watches Silver Lantern escape through a wall hole made by Chikara!

As soon as Silver Lantern leaves the lower level and breathes the fresh air outside, the night creatures, responsible for slaughter, descend from the sky, their hand axes ready.

She looks up, seemingly seeing a pool of unobstructed killing intent.

Black Raven Tamashi!

His abdomen, severely injured by Silver Lantern just moments ago, has been forcefully stopped from bleeding using a muscle repair technique. Even though he hasn't regained all his strength, tasks like ambushes are a piece of cake for him.

Using the "heart method" learned in Blind Town, Black Raven almost blends into the environment, making him nearly undetectable by Silver Lantern, even with the Reconnaissance Miracle. He raises his hand axe and strikes down, giving Silver Lantern no chance to defend herself!

This is the law of Raven Annihilation, and it is Tamashi's wish.

As an evil raven, as Silver Lantern, she has no chance to defend herself or clear her Charge. The only outcome waiting for her is a bloody and screaming death – disemboweled!

Clang!

The axe and sword blade clash, creating an angry explosion of sound. Black Raven focuses on Silver Lantern, who is countering with Ashe's sword-why is it in her hands?

A moment's confusion and a subtle panic response in Black Raven's injured body slightly delays his actions, almost half of his killing intent dissipating. Silver Lantern seizes the

opportunity to dart away, unfolding her golden and silver Twin Wings attempting to fly away!

But hesitation only lingers in the heart of Raven Annihilation for a moment. Black Raven, without looking back at the ruins below, aggressively follows Silver Lantern through the air!

From their brief encounter, he could feel that Silver Lantern was out of strength!

He grabs the iron chain of his connected hand axe and swings it like a rope while quickly approaching, dodging Silver Lantern's backward slash, and slaps her!

Silver Lantern, fearless, slaps back!

Snap!

In the moment of the clashing palms, Black Raven is shocked to see Silver Lantern's expressionless face.

He had just used his unique spellforce technique "Dysfunction." If Silver Lantern was still at her peak, it would be fine, but now, with her drained spellforce and physical strength, she shouldn't have been able to resist the "Dysfunction," which would have made her body limp and dizzy for two seconds.

However, Silver Lantern was unaffected because she also used the “Dysfunction” technique, and the two soft forces canceled each other out!

More importantly, Silver Lantern could still use techniques, which meant she had been pretending to be out of strength-

Silver Lantern suddenly rolls and kicks forcefully, sending Black Raven flying, and turns to flee. Then she sees a hand axe swung at her from the side, and with a flick of her sword, she misses as the axe weirdly curves. Instead, the chain behind the axe wraps around her arm.

“That sword-“

The chain tightens abruptly, pulling Silver Lantern back with explosive force.

Black Raven, holding the chain with one hand, appears like a wronged soul crawling out of hell, dragging the soaring Silver Lantern into despair.

“You do not deserve!”

Black Raven clenches the Grey Fox Blade, stabbing towards the falling Silver Lantern!

Hearing these words, Silver Lantern's face contorts with boiling rage and resentment. She raises her left arm to block the Grey Fox Blade!

The blade is caught between her ulna and radius, causing specks of silver blood, but its piercing trajectory is altered, sparing her head. Silver Lantern doesn't let go of the Honey Sword, nor does she try to distance herself from Black Raven; instead, she pulls him closer and kicks repeatedly!

Each kick lands on Black Raven's injured abdomen, each kick pulling more blood from his wounds!

Black Raven, without uttering a sound, endures Silver Lantern's brutality, only tightening his grip on the chain. The chain, sharpened into a point at the tail of his hand axe, is pulled tight by him, and it wraps around Silver Lantern's arm like a shredding spiral, cutting into her flesh, causing silver blood to flow and flesh to turn inside out.

Yet Silver Lantern still doesn't let go; she holds the long sword inverted and stabs at Black Raven's face. Black Raven dodges this weak counterattack, suddenly pulls back the Grey Fox Blade, but he doesn't aim for another part of Silver Lantern that might dodge; instead, he stabs at her sword-holding palm!

The blade pierces through the palm, the hand holding the sword trembles slightly.

"Let go!"

In this threat filled with venom, Black Raven could hear a plea for mercy.

Black Raven sees tears in Silver Lantern's eyes, she clenches her silver teeth, her face showing a sadness that doesn't fit her identity.

However, Black Raven doesn't hesitate; the Grey Fox Blade continues to move, harshly tearing her palm apart, slicing between her middle and index fingers, nearly splitting her hand in two!

Silver Lantern weakly releases her right hand, then forcefully kicks Black Raven away, the chain wrapped around her arm unwinding like a spiral cutter, leaving only a strip of torn silver flesh.

Black Raven, too injured to continue, catches Ashe's sword as he falls, and then like a raven with broken wings, he falls to the ground.

Snap.

What awaits Black Raven isn't the cold, hard ground, but warm, steady arms. Black Raven turns to see Ashe trying to heal his wounds with a miracle, he shakes his head, "It's no use... I am unaffected by any spirit. Silver Lantern..."

Ashe takes the Honey Sword from him, placing him on a nearby rooftop. Black Raven looks up to see Silver Lantern passing by the exterior wall of a distant building, her wings covering and erasing all recorded text, leaving only chaotic indentations.

“She, she must be destroying crucial clues!” Chikara shouts as he arrives, “Now none of us can escape!”

The only person who had a chance to stop Silver Lantern from destroying these clues was Igor and Gwen, who were guarding outside. But Igor, noticing Silver Lantern’s intentions, hesitates for a moment but does not stop her-he’s not afraid of destroying the clues, he has already deduced the answer-and pulls Gwen to check the situation in the ruins below.

“Being so important to Silver Lantern, that must be the intelligence indispensable for deducing the third Link of Truth,” Harvey says. “Other than Silver Lantern, no one else knows the secrets of the Dead City now.”

Igor asks, “How did Silver Lantern escape from your encirclement?”

Harvey replies, “Ashe almost subdued her, but she found an opportunity to inflict a fatal injury and used Ashe as a shield. I dared not risk harming him.”

Ashe was severely injured by Silver Lantern? Impossible. She did all this for-

Igor’s mind races, turning to look at Ashe, who shakes his head indicating he’s fine, softly saying, “I used the Three-Second Cicada Lurk.”

After being pierced by Silver Lantern, his mind went blank, but his body subconsciously activated the Cicada Lurk, erasing the injury instantly as if it never happened.

Returning to the past, escaping a future injured by Silver Lantern.

Now, Silver Lantern reaches the top of the Tower, their distance sufficient for Ashe and the others to give up the chase. The Dead City is vast and nearly lightless; if Silver Lantern truly intends to flee, they would hardly be able to block a flying sorcerer.

Ashe looks towards Silver Lantern at the tower's peak, her back towards them, holding her severely injured right hand. She slightly tilts her head, seemingly wanting to turn around and see their expressions.

But she never looks back.

The most futile thing in life is to look back.

Silver Lantern spreads her wings and falls from the tower, disappearing into the night.

Igor watches this scene, vaguely understanding something.

