

SORCERER'S HANDBOOK

Chapter 631: An Unspoken Understanding

It was botched, but not completely.

Igor entered the hidden Sanctuary within the Temporal Cage, contemplating his next move.

Had Silver Lantern perished, he could simply reveal the truth. After all, with her gone, people would at most sigh over it, and even if they speculated about her plans, they could never learn the truth-unless, by some chance, they discovered her Sorcerer's Handbook in the Virtual Realm. Otherwise, Silver Lantern would merely die as a 'complex-minded' villain.

Their sole duty was to leave behind fragments of words after Senlo turned into a living hell, so others would know there once was a great Kingdom that spanned four divine eras-ordinary people could only achieve so much.

But Silver Lantern was not dead.

Not only had she escaped, but she had also destroyed key clues, making it impossible for others to unlock the third "Link of Truth." Thus, in their eyes, Silver Lantern remained a murderous natural disaster-neither understandable nor supportable by them.

It's impossible for people to empathize with a monster.

Moreover, following the recent bloody battle, they could only feel disgust, fear, and hatred towards Silver Lantern. Chikara, Gwen, and Raven, Igor noticed, even Harvey had a gloomy expression. The necromancer was silently biting his nails, muttering about making 'skull cups' and 'giving intestines to Alice as snacks.'

This was why Igor had not stopped Silver Lantern from destroying the clues. Since she was still alive, let her continue living as a demonic monster, enduring hatred and wreaking havoc on all.

After all, to her, everything was just a delusion.

However...

Igor frowned slightly as he looked at the shimmering golden "Link of Truth" on the third Fog Wall.

Could it be that Silver Lantern truly intended to trap them here forever? If not for Igor's own effort in solving the last puzzle, they would have no chance to pass through the Fog Wall and the only way to leave the Dead City would be beyond it.

But, the Con Artist still had one final solution: simply explain the deduction process to Ashe and the others.

Now that Silver Lantern had completely fallen out with Ashe, whether she was good or bad, it no longer mattered to him. From the moment Silver Lantern severely injured Ashe, they were clear of each other, returning to being strangers.

Even if Ashe knew the secret, he might only feel slight regret, but as years passed, he'd realize it was just a boring delusion. Nevertheless, it was better than being trapped in the Sanctuary for thirty thousand years.

Unless there really was no other way, Igor did not want to reveal it.

Honestly, the Con Artist was not the kind who liked to make others look good; on the contrary, he preferred to ruin others' meticulous plans. Seeing others helplessly rage in frustration was one of the few pleasures in his life that never bored him.

What could be more interesting than breaking someone's defenses?

So, Igor never thought that a chaotic Con Artist like him would one day help an enemy like Silver Lantern, reach an unspoken understanding with her, and together conceal a secret sealed within the Dead City.

Silver Lantern was like a lonely gardener, nurturing a beautiful flower that was planted in another country, in someone else's garden. Although she had the chance to pluck it, she let it continue to live in a clean and beautiful garden, looking at it from across a country.

Even though she herself had nothing left.

How foolish.

And I, moved by such folly, am also a fool. When did I become so foolish?

Igor sighed internally, hearing Ashe beside him ask, “Would a Gray Fox Sorcerer really trap his kin in the ‘Sanctuary’? Just because they couldn’t solve the three puzzles left behind, they’d have to stay here until death? Even if the students of the Gray Fox Divine Era had no rights, it wouldn’t be so tragic, right?”

Everyone paused, realizing this anomaly-even if a Gray Fox Sorcerer aimed to have his successors know the truth, he wouldn’t leave behind such a merciless testing mechanism.

If the Gray Fox Divine Era was such a dark and hopeless time, then maybe, but according to records, the people of the Gray Fox Divine Era were generally positive and society had a good atmosphere; they didn’t even have prisons-either there were no criminals, or only the death penalty existed.

Ashe was quite curious about what the prisons of the Gray Fox Divine Era looked like, as with his vast experience, he was qualified to judge the quality of prisons. After exploring half of Senlo without finding any prison remains, he felt quite disappointed.

Even if a Gray Fox Sorcerer became hysterical facing a cataclysm, he wouldn’t be cruel enough not to leave any way out for his successors.

“But we are not the kin of a Gray Fox Sorcerer.”

Chikara broke the truth, “Many of the Gray Fox Ruins require citizenship to enter; if you don’t have citizenship, it could even trigger a security mechanism against enemies. To them, only Gray Fox citizens are considered their own kin. If there is any way, it must be triggered by someone with citizenship... Ah! If a Gray Fox citizen came to rescue me, I’d even be willing to be his chair!”

Moments later, Ashe sat on the orc’s back, staring at the Transcendent card in his hand.

If he could successfully perform Divine Hosting, he could use the citizenship from the Transcendent Demi-God era, which had already helped him overcome many obstacles; he guessed it would work here as well.

“There’s a delay in Divine Hosting, and since this is remote Divine Hosting,” Ashe pondered, “Normally, it’s a second at its fastest, three seconds at its slowest. If now one second really equals one year, then we should prepare to live here for one to three years.”

Compared to the terrifying scale of thirty thousand years, being trapped for three years was acceptable to everyone. Moreover, the thought of suddenly having three years of undisturbed free time made everyone’s spirits lift.

Raven stated, “Once I heal from my injuries, I can use this time to hone my battle skills thoroughly. These past two months of running around gave me many insights, just needing time to settle.”

“Although there are no materials here, three years is enough for me to properly fix up Alice,” the necromancer said. “I can also try to unlock the ‘Blood Corpse King’.”

Chikara also expressed his excitement, “With such a long time, I can completely fuse my fire spell with the Spatial Sect. I tell you, I have a fantastic Adventure idea-by enraging others, making them burn in their own anger! Sounds awesome, right? Now I just need a Mental Sanctuary to help...”

Gwen remained silent, and Igor looked at Ashe, who was resting his chin in his hand in distress, “Three years... Although I also want to spend some time organizing the battle system, three years is too long! It hasn’t even been three years since I became a sorcerer!”

As Ashe spoke, Igor and Harvey were somewhat indifferent, but Chikara, Gwen, and even Raven looked at the Cult Leader with surprise.

“Mr. Ashe, you became a Sanctuary in less than three years?”

Chikara was stunned, “One level per year? Excuse my boldness, but is Heath a surname of a Divine Sovereign? Or is the rumor true that you’re a bastard of the Virtual Realm? By the way, Mr. Ashe, are you comfortable sitting? I can adjust the comfort of the back, if you find it too hard, please tell me, I suddenly discovered I have a talent for being a chair!”

Ashe suddenly understood the situation of the sword Princess in the academy.

If you knew I was just an ordinary person half a year ago, would you immediately shift your faith from the Four Pillars and Raven Annihilation to Ashe... Igor thought cynically, approaching the Fog Wall while they were chatting, and quietly reached out his hand.

He needed to confirm whether he could pass through the Fog Wall. If he could, then this was an escape route if 'citizenship' was ineffective. If not-

Igor's pupils dilated as he saw his hand stopped by the Fog Wall, a drop of cold sweat rolling down his forehead.

He had already deciphered the third "Link of Truth," so why couldn't he pass through the Fog Wall?

Could his deduction be wrong? Was it impossible without the key clue destroyed by Silver Lantern? But-

"Igor."

The Con Artist turned his head to see Ashe approaching him, "What's up?"

“Just saw you near the Fog Wall and came to check.” Ashe looked at the golden runes on the Fog Wall, saying, “Since Silver Lantern destroyed the last clue, you don’t need to worry about it anymore.”

“And even if you piece together the truth, it probably won’t matter.”

The Con Artist was stunned, “Why wouldn’t it matter?”

“Because what the ‘Link of Truth’ really wants people to understand is not the ending,” Ashe stated. “If it were just the ending, then wouldn’t some of the people who entered the Dead City in the past two hundred years have the mental fortitude to handle it? It’s unlikely that they were just unable to accept the ending and got literally locked to death in the Temporal Cage, right?”

Right.

These three Links of Truth, with prior records, solving them is just a matter of time; theoretically, anyone could escape the Dead City on their own strength, so why did no one survive?

“So, there must be a gift attached to this ending, and that’s the key,” Ashe speculated. “Only those who accept this gift can walk out of the Temporal Cage. Although I don’t know what the gift is, in these two hundred years, only one person has accepted the gift, and the rest would rather die than accept it... Obviously, we should belong to the latter.”

Igor struggled to control his facial expression, casually responding to Ashe.

That's it.

No wonder no one has gotten out of the Dead City.

No wonder Silver Lantern destroyed key information!

Because the ending isn't important, what's important is the world-saving measure reflected by the ending-world destruction!

Only those who are willing to accept this mission, even seeing it as a life goal, can leave the Sanctuary! Because she chose to face the challenge instead of seeking refuge!

This isn't just the muttering of a delusional teenager or a fanciful daydream, but a belief that one must sincerely accept and strive for from now on. It's too normal that no one could accept this task in over two hundred years; the weak can't bear such a responsibility, and the strong can't accept such a life.

If it was something selfish like ruling the world, it might be manageable, but destroying the world is completely self-sacrificial, benefiting no one, and even requires sacrificing one's entire life. Silver Lantern's acceptance only proves she's a madwoman! She's insane!

Igor didn't know when Silver Lantern last entered the Dead City, but undoubtedly, she was the only successor who passed the Gray Fox Sorcerer's test, and from that moment, she began walking the path of the world-destroying Silver Lantern!

In a daze, he seemed to see that scene: a young Temple nun climbing out of the pit of the Dead City, before dawn, under a dark sky, the lethal Choking Green tightly wrapped around her neck but unable to taint her at all. She was tripped by stones on the ground but quickly stood up again, her entire being bathed in darkness, yet her eyes were brighter and more profound than all of Senlo's people.

This once-in-two-hundred-years will, due to the mechanism of the Idealistic Senlo, could even subtly influence her reality. Besides her extraordinary talent, she would encounter many Adventures, even if she didn't leave home, people would voluntarily offer her assistance... Those who opposed her would face setbacks, and those she targeted would suffer misfortune and folly...

She wouldn't hesitate to kill, because her life was more important than everyone else's; to protect herself, she would eliminate all threats, since this was her mission after all... She would start wars, defect from cults, and prepare to execute her brutal, insane plan...

Considering this, Igor felt fortunate that he couldn't pass through the Fog Wall: If he could, it meant he would also have to accept this mission!

It's better to discuss with Ashe how to spend these three years...

As Igor was about to leave, he saw Raven slowly approaching the Fog Wall. The Con Artist was puzzled, because Raven, being illiterate, hadn't even participated in the intelligence search, only responsible for peripheral security.

Raven seemed hesitant, but still reached out his hand toward the Fog Wall, and then-

His hand passed through.

Chapter 632: Chrono Hourglass

“Speaking of which, Tamashi, why are you affected by fantasy creations like ‘Sanctuary’ and ‘Mirage Prism’?”

Outside the blue door of the church ruins, Ashe was puzzled. “Most mental miracles that don’t cause physical phenomena don’t affect you... and now even the Truth Fog Wall, a Barrier Miracle, seems useless against you!”

Just moments ago, Raven had passed through the Fog Wall under everyone’s watchful eyes and retrieved an artifact from behind it.

This scene left everyone stunned-if you could cheat, why didn’t you say so earlier? Would we look down on a cheater? No, we’d just cling to you for support!

Raven was a bit embarrassed too. “I actually never triggered the ‘Link of Truth’ from the start, but I didn’t think much of it because... well, I don’t have much education... and you all had ways to crack the Link of Truth.”

“It was only just now that I realized, since I hadn’t triggered the ‘Link of Truth,’ maybe the Fog Wall wouldn’t work on me either? I didn’t expect I’d pass right through.”

Tamashi Raven Annihilation, as a virtual realm insulator, couldn’t become a sorcerer despite his talent and wasn’t affected by most spirits, so he had to manually heal himself, something even Chikara knew. But no one expected Raven’s immunity to spirit influence would prove effective in such a situation.

That’s why Ashe had this question-why is Raven sometimes affected and sometimes not?

“Because of the level of fantasy,” Igor speculated. “‘Sanctuary’ and ‘Mirage Prism’ are already Idealistic creations, where spirits probably just serve as ambiance, and can’t have much effect.”

“The more fantastical the creation, the less Raven can resist; the closer to reality the miracle, the less effective it is against Raven.”

Regarding Tamashi’s characteristics, everyone could only guess, unable to confirm, as it concerned not just him but his interaction with the world of Senlo. Comparatively, everyone was more interested in what he brought out from behind the Fog Wall.

Actually, he didn’t bring anything out, just had a faintly glowing hourglass icon on the back of his hand.

According to him, there was a giant hourglass behind the Fog Wall, and upon seeing it, he felt a warmth on his hand, which resulted in the icon. When Ashe and the others saw

Raven's hourglass, they too felt a warmth on their hands and gained hourglass tattoos- this alone made them realize it was definitely a super fantasy creation.

The 'replicating upon sight' characteristic is generally applied in combat scenarios, like as auxiliary means for diseases, curses, and other negative statuses. Applying this characteristic to ordinary artifacts is something only Idealistic Senlo would do so extravagantly.

Upon acquiring the hourglass icon, they also received information about this one-time artifact.

"Sanctuary: Chrono Hourglass: Usable 1/1"

"Effect: Upon activation, body time stops flowing, spirit body becomes dormant, awakening only after 12 hours. During hourglass activation, immunity to all harm is granted, and after the hourglass empties, immunity to all external influences for the next 600 seconds is provided, with spirit body clearing all negative statuses to restore absolute health."

Ashe exchanged glances with Igor and Harvey, eyes filled with surprise.

This artifact not only meant they could escape the Dead City's Temporal Cage- besides 'awakening with 600 seconds of immunity to all external influences,' merely sleeping for 12 hours would allow them to escape the Dead City's night.

More importantly, ‘spirit body clearing all negative statuses to restore absolute health’!

Damaged souls and crippled bodies could be fully restored!

No wonder Gray Fox sorcerers had such a high probability of becoming legends; even if they drowned in the Virtual Realm, were eaten by Blade Fish Dragons, or crushed by the heroic soul legion, they could use these Idealistic creations to quickly recover soul injuries, clocking in for work in the Virtual Realm every night, refusing the Virtual Realm’s malicious leave-of course, if they could create Idealistic creations without limit, they’d prioritize making tools to aid their cultivation and learning!

Gray Fox sorcerers weren’t brainless; regardless of their beliefs and ideals, they knew the higher their strength, the closer they’d get to their goals. And they understood their Idealistic creations only worked in ‘reality’; the Virtual Realm wouldn’t acknowledge their randomly created private server artifacts.

Thus, the correct approach for Gray Fox sorcerers was to use Idealistic creations to offset their disadvantages in the Virtual Realm and their innate shortcomings!

Hence the existence of the ‘Link of Truth’ for forced knowledge comprehension and the ‘Sanctuary: Chrono Hourglass’ for soul injury repair!

Ashe and the others were just two hundred years late; had they arrived during the peak of the Gray Fox Divine Era, they might have seen the ‘Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon Sauna Room,’ ‘Golden Flow Swimming Pool,’ ‘Blade Fish Dragon Fighting Arena,’ and other fantasy facilities aiding sorcerers in exploring the Virtual Realm.

Ordinary people wanting to learn any Spellcasting Sect wouldn't have to fear lacking talent; they'd just forcefully enter through the 'Link of Truth'!

It was a glorious era, a golden age for sorcerers.

Igor, knowing more of the inside story, felt this even more deeply.

Compared to Senlo, the Blood Moon Sovereign's interference with the Blood Moon was minimal, so the Blood Moon Kingdom's development level was the poorest;

The Omniscient Weaver sent deities to interfere with the Gospel, but as a result, the entire nation's civilization was built on the Gospel system, and if this system were destroyed, the nation would collapse and regress;

The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo completely transformed Senlo, even becoming the Dream Master of Senlo's Phantom, resulting in multiple golden ages, with development levels likely the highest among all nations, but when the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo encountered problems, the entire nation would be buried with it.

Perhaps the Divine Sovereigns didn't love the people, but they took the exam of civilization seriously.

However, for Ashe and the others, the fantasy healing effect of the 'Chrono Hourglass' meant they could lift the Blood Seed curse even if they didn't kill Silver Lantern.

After nearly two months of a long pursuit, they finally achieved half their goal.

"Besides the Chrono Hourglass, what else was behind the Fog Wall?" Igor asked.

Raven shook his head. "Nothing, just a giant hourglass. And I've tried many methods, using all my strength, but couldn't take the hourglass down. However..."

He paused, "There were some words floating beside the hourglass."

"What words?" Ashe asked, then immediately realized, "Can you transcribe those words?"

Raven fell silent; although everyone couldn't see his expression, they could imagine the embarrassment under his mask.

He squatted down, scribbling on the floor.

Igor looked over and saw a crooked, bizarre symbol that didn't correspond to any text. Feeling something, he asked, "Do all words appear to be crawling to you?"

Raven nodded lightly.

No wonder!

Igor had long wondered why a combat genius like Raven was illiterate; the Raven Annihilation Cult wasn't without basic education, and Raven's combat talent proved his intelligence was high, making literacy seem easy for him.

Even if he didn't recognize complex text, he should know basic numbers, right? But he couldn't even understand numbers!

It turns out Raven's illiteracy wasn't due to external reasons but because he had severe reading difficulties!

Igor had previously browsed related symptoms, and it was said that people with this condition could understand simple patterns but couldn't read any text with information content. To them, text wasn't a dead object that could be easily recognized but a living thing that crawled!

Do those afflicted also face the Virtual Realm's disdain? Igor didn't know. After all, unless one's talent was so high that 'not being a sorcerer is unreasonable,' no one would find it strange for a person with reading difficulties to not become a sorcerer.

As for whether Raven was truly disliked by the Virtual Realm, no one was sure; perhaps sorcerers just wanted to find a reason for Raven's anomaly, as they couldn't accept being crushed by a 'normal person.' Especially those sorcerers beaten by Raven, they couldn't accept losing to a mortal.

Thus arose the rumors of the 'virtual realm insulator, Raven Annihilation Berserker.'

Igor even suspected that Tamashi was initially just an ordinary person unable to become a sorcerer due to reading difficulties, but as rumors spread, he gradually gained effects like 'immune to spirits,' truly becoming an insulator-in the Idealistic Senlo world, the people's sanctification or demonization of him was enough to become his source of power.

But this meant they couldn't know the message behind the Fog Wall unless Ashe obtained citizenship to check it, yet not only Ashe, they might not be willing to stay here for three years.

"However, we should first test the effect of the 'Chrono Hourglass'..."

Always cautious, Igor naturally wouldn't fully trust this fantasy creation, so he looked at the outsiders in the team: Gwen and Chikara.

The orc scratched his head, having already slid to his knees, naturally prepared to do the dirty work. But Gwen raised her hand, "I'll be the first to test it."

"...Alright."

With permission, Gwen pressed the hourglass icon on her hand, but nothing happened. Until Igor waved his hand in front of her, they realized her hourglass had already activated.

The mental sorcerer checked carefully and found that although Gwen had her eyes open, there was no mental activity in her mind, her spirit body completely dormant. Then he had Raven try, discovering even the gray fox blade couldn't harm Gwen in the slightest, nor could they move a finger of hers.

Gwen seemed to be embedded in time, unaffected by any external influence. Igor laid her horizontally on the ground, saying, "Basically, it's consistent with the description; entering the hourglass countdown makes one ignorant and unconscious but absolutely safe, even Silver Lantern can't harm us."

"In other words, we can leave the Dead City at any time."

"But it's rare to have an environment completely free from external interference and independent of normal time flow," Igor looked around at everyone. "You all probably want to take this opportunity to train, right?"

Everyone nodded, especially Raven, who was already cracking his knuckles.

Only Ashe's face fell, "Uh, I'm kind of sleepy, how about-"

“Ashe, didn’t you say you wanted to learn combat techniques and mental methods from me?” Raven grabbed Ashe’s arm. “We never had the chance before, but tonight I’ll teach you my life’s skills!”

“If I say that was just a polite remark, will I get beaten?”

“You will.”

“Alright, how do you plan to teach me? It’s not going to start with basic physical training, is it?”

“No need, your physical foundation is good; we can go straight into combat training.”

“Combat training, meaning...?”

“You’ll get beaten up.”

Chapter 633: Leaving Senlo

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In the Dead City, everyone trained around the ruins of the church.

Igor placed Gwen on a nearby high platform to observe if the Chrono Hourglass had any other effects.

Then he summoned his spirits, gently teasing, playing, and feeding them with gold and silver coins.

The Spirit Relationship is a rather ambiguous field. While it might seem useful, spirits will serve you as long as you expend spellforce, even if they dislike you. However, if you run out of spellforce, a good relationship with your spirits might prompt them to help you by triggering Spirit Resonance.

Most sorcerers prefer to maintain a good relationship with their spirits, as they often accompany them for years, if not decades. Even without deliberate efforts, such prolonged companionship can foster trust.

Igor, having benefited from Spirit Resonance during his time in Shattered Lake Prison, paid particular attention to this aspect. Even he couldn't wear a mask all the time; only when facing his innocent spirits could he truly let his guard down.

Playing with spirits and soaking in a bath were his only outlets for stress relief.

Ashe could confide in him, but the Con Artist had no one to share his burdens with- perhaps he did, but Igor would never expose his vulnerabilities to anyone, as he couldn't tolerate such weakness.

“Lalala(^ ^), lalalala...”

The relaxed smile Igor showed while playing with his spirits was something neither Harvey nor Ashe had ever seen. Only Gwen, frozen in time, could silently appreciate this unseen side of him.

Boom!

Hearing an explosion, Igor glanced westward, where the orc Chikara was researching his fire spell Miracle.

To the east, Harvey had found a basement, saying he would take this time to perform a comprehensive overhaul on Alice. As for why a basement, Igor initially thought it was for the atmosphere, but the necromancer explained it was to prevent corpse fluid from splattering everywhere.

Recalling the many baths he had shared with Harvey, Igor couldn't help but feel a phantom stench of decay on himself.

To the north, Ashe and Raven were sparring. Raven had initially intended to teach Ashe everything he knew, but after much persuasion from Ashe, he finally abandoned that terrifying idea.

As Raven himself said, “What I struggled to achieve, you can do effortlessly, and even better.” Thus, Ashe didn’t need to learn those complex techniques; what he truly needed to absorb from Raven was combat awareness.

Igor’s training didn’t require much movement. He continued to refine his “Visualization Overlap” Miracle and pondered the use of his new spirit, “Change of Heart.”

“Change of Heart”

“Mental Sect, Three Wings Spirit”

“Active effect: Alter the target’s mindset for a moment. The more focused the target, the more critical the situation, the easier it is to take effect.”

“Passive effect: The sorcerer’s own will becomes more resolute, making them harder to sway.”

“Your mistake is thinking you still have room for error.”

The spirit “Change of Heart” appeared as a gender-neutral beauty in a white tailcoat, resembling a groom at a wedding. Igor had acquired this spirit back in the Gospel Kingdom and had used it to make enemies turn on themselves, but it had mostly been idle.

This spirit couldn't penetrate a Sanctuary.

For targets below Sanctuary level, Igor could simply use offensive Miracles, and he often didn't need to act himself, letting Harvey and Ashe do the dirty work. Against Sanctuary sorcerers, "Change of Heart" was ineffective since it couldn't breach a Sanctuary.

However, after witnessing Silver Lantern's series of "chaos Miracles," Igor had a vague inspiration. Perhaps this spirit wasn't meant for offense but for defense... RÀNŌBÊ

After 12 hours, Gwen hadn't awakened, leaving Igor with no doubts about the Chrono Hourglass's effect.

He retrieved a coat from his Spatial Card and draped it over Gwen, continuing his Miracle research.

On the fifteenth day, Chikara, the extrovert extraordinaire, ran out of topics to discuss with the others. With no progress in his Miracles and his spellforce depleted, he couldn't bear it any longer and activated the Chrono Hourglass to sleep.

On the thirty-second day, Harvey emerged from the basement, completely drained of spellforce. He brought out a coffin, squeezed in with Alice, and closed the lid, warning Igor not to sit on it.

On the sixty-eighth day, Raven had integrated all he had learned during this time and even created new techniques. Ashe and Igor were both amazed; usually, such synthesis and creation were measured in years. But according to Raven, excluding the time spent hunting evil ravens and training his body, he had only been studying combat techniques for less than three years, creating a unique technique every month on average.

This time, it took two months because he was training Ashe and had gained so much during this period that he needed to let it settle.

With Raven as a sparring partner, Ashe not only made significant strides in combat awareness but also fully mastered his long-range attack system centered around the “Heart Sword.”

Raven spent three days scouring the Dead City, unable to find the escaped Silver Lantern, before activating the Chrono Hourglass to sleep. Before sleeping, he curled up and pressed his hands against his raven mask, clearly wary of Ashe and Igor removing it while he slept.

On the ninety-fifth day, Igor approached Ashe, who was still training.

“No wonder others end up as living dead...” Igor remarked. “Our bodies follow normal time flow, and since we were brought in fully rested, we still don’t feel tired-even though not a second has passed in reality, so why would we be tired?”

“But not exhausting the body doesn’t mean not exhausting the Spirit Body. Our spirits have been under constant strain without any recovery, making living death almost inevitable. If we really stayed here for three years, we’d likely lose a significant portion of our lifespan.”

Ashe, well-versed in the Time Sect, had a deeper understanding: “All activities produce Golden Flow Water, and aging is the corrosion of the Spirit Body by Golden Flow Water. The Sanctuary only prevents this corrosion of the body, but the soul’s corrosion is unavoidable.”

“I’ve resolved what I can here; to progress further, I’ll need to recover my spellforce first.” The Con Artist asked, “Do you want to continue training?”

“Yeah.” Ashe flicked the Honey Sword. “I feel like I still have room for improvement.”

“You weren’t this diligent before.”

“Well, Tamashi inspired me. He’s been working so hard to teach me that, even if it’s just to beat him, I have to try my best.” Ashe chuckled. “But can you stop bullying him?”

“Bullying who? Where’s the evidence? Don’t accuse me.”

Ashe suddenly pointed at the Con Artist, weaving a warm yellow barrier like a helmet around his head with the Heart Sword-this was Ashe's achievement over the past few days: the "Sword Body Barrier Armor."

Igor was taken aback-why put a helmet on me?

Then he saw Ashe pull out a frying pan from his Spatial Card.

"Questioning me, huh? Evidence, huh? Accusation, huh?"

With each question, Ashe smacked him with the pan, the bottom clanging against the helmet. Igor couldn't dodge; he was just a backline Con Artist, how could he evade the blows of a Cult Leader trained by Raven?

"Alright." Igor reluctantly agreed. "I won't mess with him anymore."

Even without Ashe's insistence, Igor wouldn't continue to provoke Raven. Firstly, they were in the Dead City together, and Raven had contributed by replicating the Chrono Hourglass pattern, so Igor owed him. Secondly, not even the secret of the "Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's divine era Demi-God" could break Tamashi, and Igor felt he couldn't destroy this raven with ordinary means.

"Then give him some psychological counseling," Ashe pressed further. "Just like how you've been subtly leading him astray, guide him back to the right path."

“I don’t train birds.” Igor replied. “If the raven has psychological issues, let him eat more corpses.”

Seeing Ashe raise the frying pan again, Igor rolled his eyes. “You think I’m brushing you off? Tamashi is naturally strong-willed; he might have already recovered. His lapse was likely due to the sudden influx of information... Let him kill more bad guys, and he’ll naturally find his life’s meaning in the slaughter.”

Ashe thought that made sense and put away the frying pan. “Well... good night.”

Igor glanced at him.

“Get some rest, good night.”

Once Igor lay down, Ashe began training on the high platform where they slept.

On the ninety-sixth day, Ashe practiced swordsmanship.

On the ninety-seventh day, Ashe parkoured across rooftops, training his agility.

On the ninety-eighth day, Ashe found a tall building and carved all the intelligence they had gathered onto its outer walls. Though missing crucial information, it might save future visitors some trouble.

On the ninety-ninth day.

Ashe sat at the edge of the high platform, gazing over the entire Dead City.

The night was ink-black, and silence enveloped everything, as if he were the only one left in the world.

He sat for a full six hours before dusting himself off and walking over to Igor.

Their sleeping positions were quite varied: Raven was curled up, Harvey squeezed into a coffin, Chikara sprawled out like a starfish, while only Gwen and Igor were relatively normal.

Ashe lay down on the cold floor, exhaled deeply, and touched the hourglass pattern on his left hand with his right, becoming completely still.

One second, two seconds, fifteen seconds, a minute... five minutes... ten minutes.

At the ten-minute mark, Ashe suddenly spread his wings and flew up, quickly surveying all the surrounding buildings. After circling once, he returned to the platform, stretched, and lay down.

After a moment of daze, he drew the Honey Sword and placed it beside him, then activated the Chrono Hourglass, letting his Spirit Body fall into slumber.

Half an hour later, Vesser cautiously climbed the tower, peeking to check the situation. Even knowing no one would wake from external forces, she tiptoed over to Ashe.

She studied Ashe's sleeping face intently, perhaps for the first time observing him up close. His lips were a bit thin, his nose a bit high, his eyelashes a bit long, his eyebrows untrimmed... just an ordinary person. Strange, he was just an ordinary person, so why...?

She glanced at the Honey Sword beside Ashe, reached out to touch the hilt, then recoiled as if shocked. Though her right hand had healed, touching the sword brought Raven's voice back to her mind, making her hand ache faintly.

You're not worthy.

Vesser stood and found Raven, stomping on his head a few times, even knowing it was pointless.

Then she returned to lie beside Ashe, turning to gaze at the sleeping man.

“I actually learned how to make Lala Fatty cuisine.”

Vesser whispered, “I’ve studied the games you like, the women you fancy, and tried everything you’re interested in.”

“I feel like we still have a chance, but I know better than anyone that we have no future.”

She sat up, looking up at the lightless night sky.

“It shouldn’t be like this,” Vesser said, “but it can only be this way.”

She raised her hand, gripping the Honey Sword’s hilt beside her. Her obsession with the sword was merely to take it as a memento, or perhaps to seek nonexistent companionship from its lingering warmth.

But the phantom pain in her hand still strongly conveyed a fact.

“Maybe I’m just not worthy.” Vesser took a deep breath, released her grip, and lifted her chin, looking up. “What’s the big deal, it’s all just a delusion anyway.”

She leaned down, gently kissed Ashe’s forehead. A tear fell from her eye, frozen in time.

“Good night.”

When sunlight slipped through his eyelids, Ashe’s first thought was: Is it raining?

He sat up, wiping his slightly damp cheek, then immediately gripped his sword and spread his wings to fly-he wasn’t the only one; the other awakened sorcerers also took to the sky, even Raven clung to Ashe’s back!

Before sleeping, they had discussed the Four Pillars Cult-their camp was just outside the Dead City! If luck was on their side and the cult found them at dawn, they could use the Chrono Hourglass’s ten minutes of invulnerability to give the cult a taste of their morning wrath.

If luck wasn’t on their side and the cult hadn’t found them, they’d have to use their invulnerability to fight their way through the cult’s camp!

However, as they flew up and looked towards the cult’s camp, they only saw a burning encampment.

Harvey stared at the camp for five seconds, using some Reconnaissance Miracle, and said, “No living people there, but plenty of corpses.”

Everyone fell silent, knowing whose handiwork it was.

“Igor, Harvey.” Ashe suddenly asked, “How do you feel?”

The two were taken aback, then realized what he meant, and after sensing carefully, they said, “The Blood Seed curse is gone.” “Same here.”

“That’s good.” Ashe sighed in relief. “The only issue left is my Half Tactile Sense identity... In that case...”

“Let’s find a way to leave Senlo.”

Chapter 634: Dance of Swords and Dragons

①

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Stars Kingdom, Swordflower College.

As night draped over the land, stars twinkled above, and the school's grand field was adorned with lights and decorations. The stage was graced by a masked songstress pouring her heart into her performance, accompanied by a music sorcerer. The central area was a starlit dance floor, surrounded by open-air bars and buffet tables. Students in elegant attire, wearing masks, mingled, danced, chatted, played, or indulged in food, their youthful energy filling the school with the rhythm of flowing music.

July and August marked the self-study summer vacation for universities, as well as the season for various intercollegiate entertainment events. Trajectory College's "Fantasy Summer Frenzy," Fangzhou University's "Crimson Theater," Truth College's "Great Debate," and Phantom Music University's "Campus Idol" were all events designed to let students unwind, concentrated within these two months.

Among these, the most anticipated was Swordflower College's "Dance of Swords and Dragons" Masquerade Ball!

These events were open to all university students, and Swordflower College was renowned for its students' exceptional looks and affluent backgrounds, with a strong romantic atmosphere on campus. Every year, the masquerade ball attracted countless students from other schools, hoping to turn a new page in their youthful love stories. Even students from Truth College were no exception—in fact, the rate of cross-college couples between Truth College and Swordflower College was significantly higher than those within Truth College itself.

While some students were determined to "focus on studies and not on romance," the lack of classes in July and August often led to a lapse in discipline. The approaching masquerade ball would inevitably raise the love fever among university students across Galaxia. Even those who could effortlessly solve math problems might find themselves swept up in the tide of youthful affection.

Many students from Truth College, known for their strict family upbringing and dedication to spellcasting, found themselves unwittingly charmed by outsiders at the masquerade ball, leading to lifelong commitments, regardless of gender.

According to completely unreliable statistics, the number of couples successfully matched at the masquerade ball each year reached four figures. Even though 70% of them would break up within a month, it was enough to excite the love-struck youths.

However, even though Swordflower students anticipated the ball's popularity, they were still surprised by the sheer number of attendees, as if half of Galaxia's university students had squeezed in.

As for why there were so many people this year, everyone knew the reason.

"Why are there so many redheads?"

Outside the dance floor, a wolf-costumed youth was bewildered.

Among the three girls passing by, one had dyed red hair. Though there were various shades like pink, wine, and crimson, and different styles like short, medium, layered, and ponytails, the number of red-haired girls was overwhelming!

"That's normal, young man."

At the bar, a female bartender was mixing drinks with flair, laughing as she said, “When ‘Blade of Shifting Time’ aired, at least eight out of ten young women in Galaxia styled their hair like Delarose. Now that the Red-Haired Sword Princess has shone in the Meteor Trial, it’s no surprise everyone’s following the trend and dyeing their hair red.”

The wolf-costumed youth glanced over and noticed the bartender had also highlighted a strand of red in her hair. Resigned, he accepted the cocktail. “But with so many red-haired girls, I can’t even tell if the Sword Princess is right in front of me... Ugh!”

He took a sip of the cocktail and found it unbearably sour. He wanted to complain but held back his anger, considering the bartender was quite cute. “I asked for a Holiday Storm. What is this?”

“Oh, sorry, sorry.” The bartender pulled out a notebook. “Let me see... No wonder, I mixed it up and accidentally added bitter vinegar. I’ll make you the correct one while looking at my notes.”

“Are you learning on the spot?!”

“There are too many people tonight, and I was pulled in for a part-time job at the last minute.” The bartender muttered, “Blame it on me failing my finals...”

The wolf-costumed youth blinked, suddenly finding the bartender quite adorable. Her cheeks were chubby and rosy like red apples, hitting his sweet spot perfectly. He cleared his throat and said in a magnetic voice, “Then, my lovely lady, may I invite you for a dance later?”

“Thank you!” The bartender chirped, “But no, I have a fiancé.”

“Can’t we dance just for fun, even if you have a fiancé?” The wolf-costumed youth coaxed.

“If it’s just for fun, I can dance with my roommate. Why insist on dancing with the opposite sex?” The bartender giggled, “Besides, you’re not my type.”

“What type do you like?”

“My fiancé’s type.”

“Why do all the girls I like already have someone?!” The wolf-costumed youth lamented, “If I failed in pursuing them, that’s one thing, but why do they all have someone they like already? Am I destined to be the type who seduces married women?!”

“I have two single roommates, both quite pretty, though not as much as me. When they come over, I can introduce you.”

“No.” The wolf-costumed youth firmly refused, “I don’t like encounters that feel too set up. I’m looking for that spontaneous spark.”

The bartender bluntly pointed out, “But aren’t you here for the Red-Haired Sword Princess?”

“Yes, I was moved by the Sword Princess’s resilience during the Meteor Trial Final.” The wolf-costumed youth looked at the grand field, “I was hoping to bump into her at the masquerade ball and win her heart with my charm, or at least become friends... But how can I recognize her now? Even the singer on stage has red hair!”

“I thought you were just here to have fun.” The bartender looked at the wolf-costumed youth with an amused expression, “With your wild outfit, I thought you were here to revoke your dating rights.”

“I heard the Sword Princess isn’t fond of Swordflower’s extravagant style, so I dressed as a werewolf swordsman.” The wolf-costumed youth stroked his chin, feigning depth, “Do you see the lion in my eyes?” He hadn’t given up on charming the bartender yet.

“Honestly, I find you quite cute.” The bartender chuckled while wiping a glass, “Like a fluffy big dog. The Sword Princess might like that.”

“Give it up.”

Beside the bar, another young man wearing a golden mask said, “Didn’t you hear that Lelouch confessed to the Sword Princess a few days ago?”

“Lelouch? Lelouch Valuda?” The wolf-costumed youth was surprised, “The Count of Voidstar’s eldest son? The swordsmanship genius second only to Dimy at Truth College?”

Among the nobility, the Five Pillars of Starlight were undoubtedly at the top, but they weren’t without peers. Recently, five Counts had emerged during the technological revolution, known as the “Little Five Pillars,” whose power rivaled the Five Pillars.

Count of Voidstar, Valuda, was one of them. Their family controlled five major virtual gaming associations, holding 80% of the national gaming market share and continuously expanding and recruiting talent. Almost every young person had played their games. In terms of social influence, job creation, and annual income, Count of Voidstar was on par with the old Dukes. “Virtual Star Games” had become a staple of many young people’s childhoods.

As the eldest son of Count of Voidstar, Lelouch’s family background was impeccable, and he was a swordsmanship genius, achieving two-wings perfection in his third year at Truth College. He was once seen as a rival to Dimy-though no one said that anymore.

Regardless, Lelouch was a top-tier nobleman. If he publicly pursued the Red-Haired Sword Princess, others would have to step aside.

“Lelouch’s confession to the Sword Princess has been the hottest topic these days, and you didn’t know?” The golden mask laughed, “He didn’t confess in private but staged a grand performance at the Swordsmanship Club, with roses covering the ground and fireworks filling the sky... Oh, and Lelouch met the Sword Princess at the Swordsmanship Club.”

During summer vacation, battle sorcerers often didn't train in isolation but participated in clubs for competition and sparring. Lower-level clubs might just be a few students renting a classroom, while higher-level clubs were usually led by professors.

A club attended by both the Sword Princess and Lelouch had to be the highest level, not even needing a name. Only the weak would take pride in saying, "I'm a member of XX club" or "I'm in the same club as XX." For these genius sorcerers, clubs were just ordinary places for sparring and training.

"I didn't know! I spent the first half of the month in the eastern countryside with my old man, who said it was to broaden my horizons, but I just fed mosquitoes for half a month. I only got back yesterday, so I have no idea what's been happening in Galaxia!" The wolf-costumed youth wailed, "The Sword Princess didn't accept, did she? My Sword Princess—"

"She didn't."

"Thank goodness."

"But Lelouch said, 'I know you have someone in your heart, but even if we can't be a couple, we can be friends. I may not be your first good friend, but I hope to be your most important, the one who can help you the most. The path of swordsmanship is long and lonely; we can compete and learn from each other. Although I'm not as strong as Dimy now, I'll catch up soon.'"

“That guy’s up to no good, planning to slowly seduce the Sword Princess under the guise of friendship!” The wolf-costumed youth was indignant, “Such tactics and words are the work of a seasoned player. The Sword Princess should have cut ties with him on the spot! How did she respond?”

The bartender raised an eyebrow—who was it that said if he couldn’t pursue the Sword Princess, he’d at least be friends...

“The Sword Princess’s response might sound familiar to you.”

“Hmm?”

“She said, ‘If I need a rival, Senior Sister Leoni and Sister Trelozan provide enough pressure. Why must I interact with the opposite sex? Lelouch, it’s not that I disdain you for not being in the Sanctuary. In fact, no matter who it is, even if Dimy asked me for a private relationship, I wouldn’t agree. You shouldn’t underestimate yourself.’”

At this point, the golden mask sighed, “They could have just confessed and rejected each other. Why drag Dimy into it?”

“Bravo!” The wolf-costumed youth applauded, “The Sword Princess saw through Lelouch’s schemes at a glance and responded with grace! Wait a minute, those words do sound familiar...”

He turned to the bartender, “They sound like what you said to me earlier.”

The bartender blinked, “That means I have the same discerning eye as the Sword Princess.”

“And didn’t you investigate the Sword Princess’s personality?” The golden mask added, “She’s devoted to swordsmanship and doesn’t participate in social activities outside of acting and recording. It’s said that many noble banquets have invited her, but she’s declined them all. She wouldn’t attend a time-wasting social event like a masquerade ball. She’s probably exploring the Virtual Realm now.”

“I didn’t investigate.” The wolf-costumed youth scratched his head, “I thought sincerity would be enough to win someone over.”

“Just as the rumors say.” The golden mask laughed, “Lan Shile, you’re a child of sincerity.”

“Since you put it so nicely, I’ll pretend you’re not calling me dumb... Wait.” The wolf-costumed youth suddenly realized, “I never said my name, did I? Who are you? My admirer? Or... a secret admirer?”

“In the past half month, only your father went to the east for research.” The golden mask shrugged, “I just happened to know and guessed.”

The wolf-costumed youth made a sound of surprise, “You actually follow my old man? That’s creepy. Are you a prophecy sorcerer? How else would you know so much about Lelouch’s confession to the Sword Princess?”

The golden mask replied, “Because I was there watching.”

“I can vouch for that.” The bartender giggled, “I was one of the roses on the ground.”

The wolf-costumed youth took a sip of the newly mixed cocktail. Though it wasn’t great, he endured it.

Before him were the myriad men and women hunting each other in the dance floor, and in his ears was the gentle, enduring song. After pondering for a long time, he turned to them and asked, “How can I make the Sword Princess like me?”

The bartender seriously asked, “If I knew the answer, what price could I sell it for?”

The golden mask thought for a moment, “Probably something equivalent to the property of a Four-winged Spirit.”

“That much!” The bartender looked at the wolf-costumed youth, “Can you pay a deposit first?”

“I’m not joking!” The wolf-costumed youth said earnestly, “At least give me a direction to work towards!”

“At the very least, don’t lay roses when you confess.” The bartender advised, “According to rumors, the Sword Princess likes tulips.”

“And she probably likes Swordmasters.” The golden mask added, “Lan Shile, you don’t seem to major in the Swordsmanship Sect, do you?”

The wolf-costumed youth said, “It’s not a job application; how can there be spellcasting restrictions in love? I refuse to accept it! Is there any news about the Sword Princess’s crush? I want to know what type she likes!”

The golden mask laughed, “The question of ‘who the Sword Princess likes’ will probably remain an unsolved mystery for countless people during their university years.”

“I think, even if strength isn’t the deciding factor, it’s an important one.”

The bartender finally gave a serious suggestion, “After all, the Sword Princess will surely aim for the legend realm in the future, so her partner should at least be able to keep up with her pace-“

“Aiming for legend? Is she even worthy?”

Everyone turned to see two people passing by the bar, a tall man wearing a Black Tiger Mask and a petite woman wearing a Butterfly Mask. The speaker was the Butterfly Mask.

The golden mask smiled faintly, “Are you questioning the value of ‘half-year Sanctuary’?”

“It’s precisely because she’s a half-year Sanctuary.” The Butterfly Mask said bluntly, “She lacks combat experience and spellcasting accumulation. She’s just an empty vase with levels.”

“She could climb to the Distant Sky Domain through cheating, but can she ascend Ruby Mountain?”

Chapter 635: Dance of Swords and Dragons

②

In recent days, despite Sonya’s low profile, rumors about her have inevitably spread and fermented.

Rebirth theories, heritage theories, talent theories-various hypotheses have emerged, yet no one believes that Sonya reached the Sanctuary through normal cultivation.

Half a year!

Even for a genius sorcerer, achieving a silver full-winged status in half a year is not guaranteed!

Though direct action is impossible, the prophecy sorcerers, Truth sorcerers, and fate sorcerers of the Stars have all attempted to uncover Sonya's hidden secrets. Moreover, reasonable probing within the rules has never ceased.

"The Sea of Knowledge can be navigated by Whirlpool, the Time Continent by Movement Miracle, but the Distant Sky Domain offers no shortcuts or cheats," Butterfly Mask said coldly. "Someone like her, with insufficient strength and a false reputation, probably can't even break a Phantom and will forever be stuck in the Distant Sky Domain!"

The bartender, polishing a glass, muttered, "Insulting our Swordflower at Swordflower College, she may not have strength, but she certainly lacks manners..."

Butterfly Mask's eyes turned cold, and with a casual flick of her finger towards the bartender, the air stirred. She didn't even use spellforce, yet with a mere resonance of spirit, she could carve a small wind blade in the air, leaving a cut on the bartender's chubby cheek-

Smack.

The Wolf Costumed Youth swatted it away like a mosquito, dispersing the forming wind blade with his bare hand.

He turned to stare at Butterfly Mask and Black Tiger Mask, pondering, “Trying to stir up trouble to draw out the sword Princess?”

Golden Mask was somewhat surprised-though Lan Shile was simple and kind-hearted, he was remarkably quick-witted when faced with malice, which explained the rumors that Count Stardust intended to elevate him, the third son, as his heir.

Black Tiger Mask remained silent, while Butterfly Mask said, “I just want that coward who avoids battles to relinquish the honor that doesn’t belong to her-The First Swordmaster Under the Stars.”

At first glance, this title seems overly arrogant, especially since there are legendary sorcerers above. Isn’t it a slap in the face for a sanctuary sorcerer to claim this title?

However, this title is specifically prepared for the champion of the Meteor Trial, requiring the champion to be a Swordmaster and to have widespread public support.

Among these three points, the last is actually the hardest. For instance, Dimy has already won the Meteor Trial once, but his status as a Duke’s son means that public jealousy and admiration are equally weighted.

Simply put, it’s expected for Dimy to win the championship, and not winning would be disgraceful.

However, Sonya is different. Her background as a village girl from an agricultural town has become the key to her skyrocketing popularity. What could resonate more with the public than a grassroots success story? Coupled with such a legendary experience, the public doesn't care about the vast difference between 'Sanctuary' and 'Legend,' and they directly bestow the honor of 'The First Swordmaster Under the Stars' upon her.

With the entertainment media fanning the flames, Sonya's fame is about to overshadow the top ten sword saints. Perhaps legendary sorcerers don't care, but many Swordmasters find it hard to accept-especially the sanctuaries who see through Sonya's facade.

"The sword Princess's swordsmanship realm isn't even at the sanctuary level, not even touching the golden level ceiling," Butterfly Mask said coldly. "If Dimy hadn't been serious from the start, the sword Princess would have lost long ago."

Golden Mask chuckled, "No need to embellish Dimy like that. The sword Princess's original Miracles are still quite tricky. Rather than saying Dimy wasn't serious at the start, it's more like he was gathering intelligence."

Butterfly Mask continued, "The sword Princess has refused all sanctuary challenges these days, which is the best proof. She reached the Distant Sky Domain, but with her insufficient strength, she finds it even harder to benefit from virtual realm exploration. Once she clashes with other sanctuaries, everyone will easily see how undeserving she is of her reputation."

The bartender retorted, "Those challenging her are shameless! The sword Princess just ascended to the Sanctuary a few days ago. How could she agree to spar with those old-timers who've been in the Sanctuary for years or even decades? That's just asking for a beating!"

“What about ‘Hyperbola Blade’ Yardas then?”

At the mention of this name, even the bartender fell silent.

Because ‘Hyperbola Blade’ Yardas is also a newly ascended sanctuary in recent days!

Yardas is an Abyss adventurer. During the Meteor Trial, his team fell into a trap in the Abyss and was trapped in the lower levels for half a month. Forced into a desperate situation, he advanced to the Sanctuary, and after entering the Distant Sky Domain, he learned to construct a Sanctuary with just one Ritual of Prohibited Synchronization of Wind, Flower, Snow, and Moon, then led his team to fight their way back to the surface from the Abyss!

But at that time, Galaxia was still immersed in the shock brought by the sword Princess, and Yardas’s brilliant achievements were overshadowed by this starlight.

It’s worth noting that Yardas is only 27 years old now. Although not from an agricultural town, he is just an ordinary resident of a small city, with resources far less than Dimy. At this age and with this talent, he is undoubtedly a prodigy of the Stars!

Therefore, while sanctuaries merely invited Sonya for ‘friendly exchanges,’ Yardas directly issued a battle invitation, intending to determine victory or defeat with the sword Princess!

However, Sonya refused all exchanges and remained in school to cultivate and study.

With repeated refusals, naturally, rumors of ‘the sword Princess being all show,’ ‘the sword Princess exhausting her potential at the Sanctuary,’ and ‘a vase sword saint’ began to circulate.

While they were arguing at the bar, a crowd gathered nearby, with some supporting the sword Princess and others mocking her. As the voices grew louder, they even drowned out the music from the stage, and the students in the dance floor curiously looked over.

“The sword Princess is busy consolidating her strength. It’s only natural she doesn’t accept challenges. Those old sanctuaries just want to suppress her!”

“Oh, then why doesn’t she accept Yargas’s challenge? If the sword Princess is truly that talented, how could Yargas, who just ascended to the Sanctuary a few days ago, be her match?”

“Actually, if she were to fight Dimy again, the sword Princess might not win, especially since Dimy now knows her trump cards...”

“Ridiculous, hiding trump cards is a tactic. Why don’t you ask Dimy to hide ‘Annihilation Vibration’ until the last moment to catch the sword Princess off guard?”

“‘Hyperbola Blade’ Yardas has ten years of Abyss experience, having slain countless monsters. His combat experience is incredibly rich. The sword Princess can’t beat Yardas, at least not now.”

“Not just now, but in the future as well,” Butterfly Mask said loudly. “The sword Princess’s swordsmanship sect doesn’t have a sanctuary realm. She’s too weak and wants to explore the Distant Sky Domain. Does she have the ability? The classes she skipped will eventually need to be made up. Even if the sword Princess can cheat her way into the Distant Sky Domain early, she still needs to slowly elevate her swordsmanship realm. But does she really have that talent?”

Suddenly, someone asked, “How can you be so sure the sword Princess’s swordsmanship isn’t at the sanctuary realm?”

At this moment, Black Tiger Mask, who had been silent, finally spoke, “When you are a swordsmanship sanctuary, you can naturally discern the realm of others’ swordsmanship.”

In the crowd, several hot-blooded students who were ready to rush forward and beat up these two troublemakers were suddenly doused with cold water upon hearing this.

Many in the onlooking crowd also noticed that Black Tiger Mask had two curved blades at his waist, not at all ornate, but rather weathered and simple, clearly not mere decorations.

The scene suddenly quieted down, and the ethereal singing once again filled the night.

At this moment, Golden Mask suddenly asked, “Since Hyperbola Blade couldn’t challenge the sword Princess, the next target must be...”

“Naturally, it would be to experience Vlozrada’s Vibration Sword,” Black Tiger Mask said, his words few but his tone sharper than the venomous Butterfly Mask.

“I came here tonight just to relax, but it seems you won’t let this opportunity slip by.”

Golden Mask sighed and stood up, suddenly drawing a decorative sword from the waist of a burgundy-haired girl imitating the sword Princess. He lightly flicked the blade, “Beautiful lady, may I borrow this sword for a moment? I’ll return it with a victory, okay?”

The burgundy-haired girl was flattered, “Of course-but this isn’t a good sword-no, I’ll immediately help you borrow one-“

“No need, this one will do.” Golden Mask smiled, walking with Black Tiger Mask to the center of the dance floor. Other students instinctively made way for them, and many two-wings sorcerers flew up to watch from above. Even those who were unaware quickly realized who the two on the field were.

The Masquerade Ball suddenly turned into a sword arena, but no one dared to object, except for the masked Songstress on the main stage, who continued to sing with all her heart.

“My Rainbow spellforce is greater than yours. Going all out would be unfair to you, and this isn’t a battlefield. Let’s not use spirits or sanctuaries,” Golden Mask said. “Just swordsmanship.”

Black Tiger Mask nodded, drawing his Hyperbola Blades, “Let’s determine the superior.”

The two exchanged a glance, and after a brief silence, they collided like two phantoms.

Even without spirits, their physical prowess was top-notch!

Clang!

A violent tremor traveled from the blade to Black Tiger Mask’s wrist, spreading to his internal organs, even reaching his pituitary gland!

Vlozrada’s Vibration Sword, even without spirits, is a top-tier combat technique. Under the sanctuary realm’s enhancement, the Vibration Sword can emit shockwaves through mere contact!

However, my time in the Abyss was not in vain.

Black Tiger Mask's Hyperbola Blades danced chaotically, like waves entangling the opponent's long sword. Golden Mask tried several times to pull away, but the long sword seemed glued by seawater, unable to follow his intended path, as if about to be swallowed by the waves!

Even when he retreated, Black Tiger Mask pursued like riding the waves, moving like a dance, blades like waves, resembling a tornado, akin to a whirlpool!

This is the battle technique Yargas created-Wave Blade Dance!

His core spirit is the 'Wave Blade,' and after years of study and accumulation, he developed a complete battle system starting from the 'Wave Blade.' This system reflects his swordsmanship realm, so when Golden Mask proposed comparing swordsmanship realms, he wasn't afraid.

The ancestral Vibration Sword is indeed powerful, but it's still the ancestor's; his Wave Blade Dance, though still in its formative stage, is the most suitable for him!

The two engaged in fierce combat from the start, the sound of clashing swords ringing continuously!

The onlooking students watched in awe, Swordmasters eagerly absorbing knowledge, and sorcerers from other sects dared not blink, afraid to miss a spectacular moment-this was a rare duel between two sanctuary sorcerers, focusing solely on spellcasting realms!

“Could Yardas even surpass Dimy?”

“Impossible, if Dimy used ‘Annihilation Vibration,’ Yardas would be cut down!”

“But not only Yardas, we onlookers would also be annihilated...”

“But purely in terms of swordsmanship realm, Dimy might really not be as good as Yardas... huh?”

As the crowd discussed, Golden Mask suddenly changed tactics, no longer defending but actively following Black Tiger Mask’s Hyperbola Blade movements, dancing along with him!

Soon, Golden Mask shifted from a disadvantage to an even match, even gaining a slight upper hand!

“He’s turning the tables!”

“Dimy has adapted to Yardas’s style, Yardas can’t win!”

“But Yargas hasn’t lost, Dimy still can’t escape his Hyperbola Blades!”

“They’re not using spirits, yet their fight is more intense than if they were!”

“Is this the sword saint’s grace...”

“No wonder Therave didn’t dare to challenge, the gap is indeed too large...”

While the onlooking students marveled, unaware that the two in the battle circle couldn’t stop.

The essence of the Wave Blade Dance is to create a whirlpool to entangle the enemy. When Golden Mask actively entered the whirlpool and moved with the flow, it meant the whirlpool would spin faster and faster until neither could control it, requiring someone to be seriously injured to end it!

Although they could use spirits or sanctuaries to escape this ‘sword whirlpool,’ that would be equivalent to admitting defeat. They’d rather be seriously injured than break the combat rules!

As they were caught in this dance of death, the masked Songstress on the main stage sang the final note, accompanied by the band’s music, the lingering sound drifting into the night sky.

Below the stage, only the bartender and two female students applauded.

Then the bartender took a sword bag from under the bar and ran over from the periphery, tossing it to the masked Songstress on the main stage. The Songstress nodded in thanks, drew a Wooden Sword from the bag, jumped off the stage, and walked straight towards the two who were struggling to extricate themselves.

“Hey, that’s dangerous over there!”

“Those are two sword sanctuaries fighting, is she trying to mediate?”

“Is she crazy, doesn’t she see her own strength?”

“Wait, she’s holding a Wooden Sword...”

“She’s actually holding a Wooden Sword, while they’re using real swords... Wooden Sword?”

At this moment, Golden Mask and Black Tiger Mask also noticed the masked Songstress approaching them, but they had no energy left to protect her, only able to warn her with their eyes to leave quickly-

Then, they saw three arcs of light!

Clang! Clang! Clang!

With three crisp sounds, the Hyperbola Blades and the decorative sword flew high into the air, then fell to the ground with a thud.

Golden Mask and Black Tiger Mask, freed from the whirlpool by the impact from the masked Songstress, looked at this female sword saint, whose strength was no less than theirs, with shock and uncertainty!

No one understood better than they did how difficult it was to separate them from that whirlpool state without harming them! It required swordsmanship at the sanctuary realm and the ability to perceive all the gaps and flaws in their Vibration Sword and Wave Blade Dance!

“Tonight’s Masquerade Ball security is my responsibility.”

The masked Songstress raised the Wooden Sword, quickly tapping Golden Mask and Black Tiger Mask on the head each: “If you want to fight, do it outside. Don’t die here and cause me trouble.”

With that, she walked towards the bar, and the onlooking students instinctively made way for her. She picked up a cocktail from the bar and took a sip, but the next second, she spat it all over the bartender's face.

“Even if it's bad, you didn't have to spit it all over me!?”

“Sorry, I didn't expect to taste something rancid in a cocktail... maybe you should consider studying the Toxic spell sect?”

The crowd watched them leave the dance floor in a daze, many blushing, wishing they could hide underground-they had just been clamoring that the sword Princess was far inferior to Dimy and Yardas, but the next second, the sword Princess single-handedly subdued two sword saints!

Would you dare to interfere in a duel between two sword saints?

Could you knock the swords out of a sword saint's hands?

Could you tap a sword saint on the head without them reacting?

At this moment, all those rumors of 'vase sword saint,' 'sword Princess not at sanctuary realm' were utterly dispelled!

The Wolf Costumed Youth murmured, “That was so cool...”

Golden Mask removed his mask, revealing a handsome face with golden hair, and said, “In just over a month, she’s caught up, maybe even surpassed me. were to fight the Meteor Trial again, I wouldn’t be confident of winning.”

Black Tiger Mask revealed a cold and determined face. Three scars ran across his left cheek, as if scratched by claws. He asked, ‘Is it her?’

“Who else?” Dimy said, “Do you still want to challenges shook his head, “No, I’m going back.”

“Going back where?”

“The Aby Without looking back, Hyperbola Blade left, “I will surpass you.”

After changing out costume, Sonya planned to train a bit more at the training ground, but on the way she saw a silver luxury car waiting.

“You’re here again,” the Stretch Paw Club check out the Masquerade Ball? Your brother is fighting there.”

Felix in the car seemed to have blocked out news about Dimy, saying directly, “Sword Princess, we can help you.”

Sonya decisively refused: “I don’t need help.”

“Is that so?” Felix said softly, “What a pity, I heard you’re researching how to time travel across with that.”

Chapter 636: The Stars Taboo

Sonya’s pupils contracted sharply.

She remained silent for a moment, then sat in the back seat of the car, saying, “You really do keep an eye on me.”

“You haven’t adjusted to your change in status,” Felix said. “You’re no longer that unnoticed female student, nor just a two-wings sorcerer with decent results in the Meteor Trial... You’re a sanctuary sorcerer with secrets.”

“What you like, what flowers you prefer, where you’ve been, whom you’ve met-every move you make is under the spotlight. Every action of yours will be scrutinized for hidden meanings, and yet you dare to openly seek ways to time travel across the Kingdom... You should value your life more.”

Sonya frowned, asking, “What do you mean? Am I in danger?”

“If I hadn’t helped alter your borrowing records, you might already be on the Throne Hall’s watch list, monitored by at least one Starburst Warrior.”

Throne Hall!?

The village girl never imagined she would be connected to the Royal Family’s direct institution, the Throne Hall.

The Stars Kingdom citizens’ understanding of the Throne Hall is limited to its dashing and powerful Starburst Guard. As for what it actually does, they are mostly in the dark.

Though most of what people know about government agencies comes from TV dramas, the absence of the Throne Hall and Starburst Guard in any show speaks volumes about this mysterious department’s influence.

“Why would the Throne Hall be interested in me?” Sonya wasn’t entirely convinced by Felix’s words. “I haven’t done anything to harm the country. I’ve been keeping a low profile these days. What reason would they have to focus on me?”

“You should know that every book you check out from the library is marked with ‘keywords,’ and over the past two months, you’ve been reading a lot of books with keywords like ‘exotic land,’ ‘time travel,’ and ‘foreign insights,’” Felix explained. “If you were just an ordinary person, it wouldn’t matter. If you weren’t reading these books, the Throne Hall wouldn’t pay attention to a newly promoted sanctuary sorcerer.”

“However, you are someone who has begun to grasp the Truth of the world and can disregard societal systems, yet you delve into books with forbidden keywords. You’re practically offering yourself up to the Throne Hall.”

Sonya couldn’t understand. “Why would looking into how to time travel across the Kingdom attract the Throne Hall’s attention? If it’s really taboo, why don’t they just ban all related books instead of leaving them for us to read...”

As she spoke, her voice gradually faded.

Felix said, “You’ve realized it, haven’t you? As long as the Virtual Realm exists as a place of inheritance connecting all sorcerers, monopolizing knowledge is impossible. On the contrary, the more the Royal Family tries to ban it, the more people will seek forbidden knowledge-sorcerers are forever rebellious adventurers.”

In the Virtual Realm, there are wild spirits, the Sorcerer’s Handbook, and various virtual realm mechanics. Even sorcerers without formal education can gain countless legacies from repeated opportunities.

Any attempt to monopolize knowledge might work for a year, maybe ten years, but never a hundred-you might control the living, but can you control the dead?

Not to mention, just by reading others’ Sorcerer’s Handbooks, people naturally learn about other Kingdoms. Curiosity follows knowledge, and in such an environment, how could the notion of time traveling across Kingdoms be eradicated?

Felix tapped the steering wheel lightly. “Instead of futilely blocking information flow, it’s better to place these materials where everyone can see them. But if a sanctuary sorcerer frequently and extensively reads them, it triggers the Throne Hall’s trap mechanism, expediting their inclusion on the surveillance list.”

By now, Sonya was half-convinced, though she still didn’t understand. “Why is the Throne Hall wary of sanctuary sorcerers wanting to time travel across the Kingdom? Is it considered a taboo?”

Felix shook his head.

“It’s not. Among the six Kingdoms, the other five don’t have such a taboo. After all, time traveling across Kingdoms is as hard as reaching the sky. If sanctuary sorcerers focus on this, they might gain benefits in the Spatial Sect or invent other Miracles-many Miracles are discovered by accident-but it’s nearly impossible to invent a Miracle for time traveling across Kingdoms; otherwise, you wouldn’t be without a clue.”

“Thus, ‘time traveling across Kingdoms’ isn’t a taboo in other Kingdoms. Even if it’s a difficult goal, the pursuit itself allows sorcerers to discover new vistas and gain new insights.”

“But only in the Stars Kingdom, any sanctuary sorcerer interested in time traveling is monitored by the Royal Family and the Church.”

Sonya suddenly realized something, her ruby-like eyes glinting with a peculiar light.

Felix saw the village girl's eyes light up in the rearview mirror and chuckled. "I know what you're thinking-you probably believe that other Kingdoms don't ban time travel because it's difficult, whereas the Stars Kingdom's fear implies there's an easier way to travel from the Stars to elsewhere?"

"I can tell you clearly, that's not the case. Whether entering or leaving the Stars, it's equally challenging. Those sorcerer's travelogues you read, the authors mostly reached other Kingdoms through virtual realm passages, as it's the only regular route accessible to all Kingdoms, even if it's random."

"What the Royal Family and the Church truly fear isn't whether sanctuary sorcerers can research a 'method' to leave the Stars, but the 'idea' of trying to leave."

"Just like how guard palace nobility can't entertain thoughts of corruption, and inner court nobility can't harbor ambitions for power, Sonya, what you've committed is a crime of thought."

Sonya pondered for a long time, gazing at the distant sports field where the night sky was painted with vibrant hues. Tonight, the sky was clear, the stars shone brightly, and everything seemed draped in a thin silver veil.

"Are you saying that just having this idea makes me a potential threat to the Stars?" Sonya speculated. "Indeed, why would a normal sorcerer want to leave their Kingdom if they're living well? Even if sanctuary sorcerers are curious about foreign lands, they would naturally give up if they repeatedly hit dead ends in their research."

“If I’m determined to research time traveling methods, the Throne Hall would see me as dissatisfied with the Stars? They might even think I’m disloyal and only want to move to another Kingdom?”

However, Felix didn’t answer directly but asked, “So, can I still offer some help to the stretching paw sword saint?”

Felix’s implication was clear-what he just shared was free public content, but the next part would be VIP, requiring payment.

Sonya still wanted to get it for free. “You’re just a two-wings sorcerer. How do I know if what you say is true?”

“I don’t actually know if it’s true.”

Felix admitted, “I’m just a sorcerer who hasn’t even entered the Distant Sky Domain. Even if I’m interested in time traveling across Kingdoms, the Throne Hall wouldn’t care about me.”

“But my intelligence source is a mutual aid group, where there are quite a few sanctuary sorcerers. Some of them have been monitored by the Throne Hall for researching how to time travel across Kingdoms, and they barely have any personal freedom, almost like being under house arrest.”

“You can choose not to believe me and continue your research, but my help ends here. Next time you look for books with ‘time travel’ keywords, you’ll have to find a way to erase your borrowing traces.”

Sonya finally understood why Felix was so confident-if his previous temptations were “join us and gain something,” this time his condition was “if you don’t join us, you’ll lose something!”

As long as Sonya continued to seek ways to time travel across Kingdoms from within the Stars Kingdom, she would inevitably attract the Throne Hall’s attention, and possibly face suppression, warnings, and house arrest!

Felix’s timing was also quite clever, just as Sonya had nearly finished going through the Forest Library and Flower Library at Swordflower College and was about to seek more information from other university libraries.

Although Sonya could try to hide her tracks, she lacked experience in this area, making exposure highly risky, and she wasn’t mentally prepared.

Essentially, Sonya was still a cautious village girl, avoiding anything illegal or criminal. The worst thing she’d ever done was pretend to accidentally stomp on someone’s foot with high heels and exploit a system loophole to take unlimited hot showers in the dorm.

The thought of possibly offending the Royal Family and the Church made Sonya nervous-what right did a little sword Princess like her have to do that?

It's not that she didn't dare, but merely "researching time travel methods" and becoming an enemy of the Stars felt as absurd as killing someone over a debate about whether to dip Lala Fatty in vinegar!

From another perspective, Felix's offer wasn't particularly compelling. Normally, people would choose to abandon researching time travel methods to avoid being targeted by the Throne Hall. Why would anyone join them just to continue their research?

But Felix was confident, though without any apparent reason, that the matter of "time traveling across Kingdoms" was extremely important to Sonya!

That's why she had gathered so much intelligence on time traveling across Kingdoms in advance, to present Sonya with an offer she couldn't refuse!

Sonya finally asked, "Do you have a method for time traveling across Kingdoms?"

"Not currently, because it's not our main project, but we do have quite a bit of information, definitely secrets you wouldn't find even if you turned the entire Galaxia library upside down," Felix said. "And there are many sorcerers skilled in the Spatial Sect. Collaborating with them is better than wandering blindly."

"Even if there's no breakthrough, we have ways to find virtual realm passages. Though these passages are random, many appear each year. No matter where you want to go, if you're patient, you'll eventually get there."

Felix finally revealed her trump card: besides resources, she offered a guaranteed fallback!

If Sonya wanted to delve into researching time travel methods, Felix had the connections and research resources. If Sonya simply wanted to achieve her goal, Felix had a surefire fallback method!

As long as time traveling across Kingdoms was an unyielding goal for Sonya, she couldn't refuse Felix's offer!

Sonya pressed her lips tightly together, and only when the laughter from the sports field overflowed again did she ask, "Who are you people, really? Don't give me that 'sorcerer mutual aid group' line."

"Before you join, I can't say, but I can give you a glimpse of our foundation..."

Felix bit the white glove with her fingers, pulling it off to reveal her fair-skinned, slender left hand, and-

The horrifying circular hole in her left palm.

Felix covered her eye with her left hand, and through the circular hole, Sonya could see her eye. This bizarre composition gave the village girl a strong sense of awe, like admiring a masterpiece painting or a marvelously crafted sculpture!

Huh!?

Sonya suddenly realized she couldn't move, and her spellforce had completely stalled!

Chapter 637: Pursuit

Chapter 637: Pursuit

“She got into Felix’s car? Is Felix leaving Swordflower now?”

Outside Swordflower College, a young man with black hair and dressed in purple listened intently to his subordinate’s report from within a nondescript matte black car.

“It seems tonight is the night. After days of waiting, we finally have something.”

He exhaled a cloud of smoke, drawing a cigarette from a metallic case, and took a slow drag. The smoke was expelled through the car’s ventilation system as he spoke, “Uncle Veille, could you call Uncle Koruno?”

The middle-aged man in the back seat nodded and nudged the slender man beside him, who had his eyes closed.

Moments later, the slender man opened his eyes, looking rather displeased. “I was just about to deduce the first affix...”

“With your skills, you should stick to brute force rather than playing detective,” the middle-aged man scoffed. “You know you’re not cut out for this.”

“But I’m a mystery writer; I can’t always resort to brute force to solve phantoms.”

“But you write social mysteries!”

“Are social mysteries not mysteries?”

“Enough,” the black-haired youth chuckled, cigarette in hand. “Felix has left Swordflower, and it’s time for us to act.”

“Lelouch, are you sure you want to follow Felix?” the middle-aged man asked seriously. “He’s the second son of Vlozrada. If anything goes wrong...”

“Even Vlozrada can’t stop the Valuda Family from obtaining the secret to surpassing the Sanctuary!” Lelouch extinguished his cigarette, watching the silver car pass by them, and started their car to follow. “If we can get this secret, the Valuda Family might just become the sixth pillar of Stars!”

Inside the car were Lelouch Valuda, and the sanctuary sorcerers 'Bullet Storm' Veille and 'Ashen' Koruno!

Veille was Lelouch's uncle, the gunmanship sanctuary of the Valuda Family; Koruno, on the other hand, had been accepted into the Valuda Family, becoming the son-in-law of the Count of Voidstar and a wind spell sanctuary!

The Valuda Family had only these two sanctuaries, and their days spent in this car were not without ulterior motives-they aimed to steal the secret of the sword Princess's half-year sanctuary upgrade!

To achieve this, Lelouch had joined the swordsmanship club, spending over half a month trying to get close to the sword Princess, but he couldn't break through the social barrier. In the end, he attempted a bold move by confessing, hoping to change their relationship, but the sword Princess was as cold as stone, refusing even a friendship card.

However, besides direct attempts, the Valuda Family had other plans. As the wealthiest new noble family, Lelouch spared no expense, using his pursuit of the sword Princess as a cover to bribe almost every student within 500 meters of her, all to uncover her detailed schedule and deduce the secret method she used for rapid upgrades.

As the investigation deepened, a suspicious figure came into view: Felix Vlozrada.

If Felix was merely pestering Sonya, Lelouch might have thought he was also pursuing the sword Princess. But the problem was, Felix rarely met with Sonya. Often, Sonya would leave the Forest Library, and Felix would enter shortly after, their schedules mirroring each other with a slight time gap.

And this wasn't just a coincidence for a day or two; it was a routine that lasted over a month!

If anything, Felix seemed more like a stalker, but the question was, how could the second son of Vlozrada be reduced to merely stalking a girl from afar? Moreover, Felix's reputation for being a playboy was well-known, even to Lelouch.

As for whether Felix was also trying to steal the sword Princess's secret method, it was unlikely-if the secret method was something she could access daily, it would have been discovered the night the Meteor Trial ended!

Thus, there was only one possibility: Felix and Sonya were communicating secretly!

Lelouch didn't know their exact method of communication, but he didn't need to. He just needed to know that Felix was also aware of the secret method!

Thinking back, the reason no one could find the sword Princess's secret method was likely because the secret wasn't with her; she was merely the result of the secret.

The true holder of the secret was probably Felix!

Was it an adventure from the Virtual Realm? Or the latest research result from Vlozrada?

Regardless, the Valuda Family had to get a piece of the pie!

For this reason, ‘Bullet Storm’ Veille and ‘Ashen’ Koruno had spent six days and nights with Lelouch at Swordflower College, waiting for an opportunity!

Among the newly risen nobility, the Count of Voidstar was already at the level of the Five Pillars in various aspects, but the family only had two sanctuary sorcerers, making it impossible to compare with the Five Pillars. However, the cultivation of high-tier sorcerers wasn’t a matter of ten or twenty years, but nearly a hundred years of generational inheritance. The suddenly wealthy Valuda Family couldn’t accept such a long return period.

They wanted to recruit sanctuaries, but most sanctuaries cared little for gold and silver, valuing spellcasting inheritance more, such as Vlozrada’s Vibration Swordsmanship.

But the Valuda Family had no spellcasting inheritance!

Thus, upon learning of the sword Princess’s ‘half-year sanctuary,’ they tried every means to win her over. They heard she admired Delarose, so they spent money on Delarose’s new play, reserving a role for the sword Princess, hoping to corrupt her with wealth.

Yet the sword Princess refused the collaboration!

There were many other attempts, but the sword Princess never responded to any overtures.

Lelouch's attempt to get close to the sword Princess was out of desperation. He despised the sword Princess's village girl roots, feeling that even as a sanctuary sorcerer, her speech and demeanor carried an inescapable cheapness.

In small towns, he might play around occasionally, just for a change of pace, and to give those pretty village girls dreaming of marrying into nobility in Galaxia a fantasy. In a way, it was a good deed. But if he were to marry the sword Princess, he would feel ashamed.

So getting the secret from Felix was the best outcome; the sword Princess was merely a lucky beneficiary of the secret, and without it, she was nothing.

I'll make you regret the day you rejected my goodwill at the swordsmanship club!

Lelouch's face was cold as he trailed the silver car, unafraid of being exposed, because 'Ashen' Koruno had already cast the Miracle "Night's Concealment," raising a wind that could hide all things.

With the added effect of the night, they and the car blended seamlessly into the darkness, invisible even to reconnaissance Miracles.

Soon, the silver car left Galaxia's city center, arriving at a relatively secluded factory.

Lelouch's heart raced with excitement. "This must be the place where the secret is cast! Prepare the recording equipment; once we enter, we need to document everything inside!"

'Bullet Storm' Veille still hesitated. "Won't this offend Vlozrada..."

"Vlozrada holds this secret without sharing it; they're offending all of Stars' nobility! We're just trying to experience this technology, and we're willing to pay. Whatever resources this secret requires, Valuda will cover it!" Lelouch said. "Once we know the secret, it'll be Vlozrada begging us!"

"Father has entrusted me with full responsibility for this matter. Uncle Veille, Uncle Koruno, let's go!"

Veille suggested, "Shouldn't we contact the patriarch first?"

The request was reasonable, and Lelouch had to suppress his excitement, activating his Miracle wristband, but soon shook his head. "No, there seems to be jamming equipment nearby; the Miracle wristband can't connect to the outside-Vlozrada has invested heavily to keep this place hidden."

“Wait, jamming equipment can often detect all signals in the area; they might have already noticed uninvited guests. We can’t wait any longer!”

Veille and Koruno exchanged glances and nodded, decisively following Lelouch into the factory. They cast Miracles, revealing Felix’s path after leaving the car, and soon found a hidden underground passage!

They arrived at an iron door, exchanged glances, activated all recording equipment, and then broke through the door!

The secret must be inside!

Virtual Realm, Distant Sky Domain, dream phantom.

“A hole in the left hand large enough to hold an eye, rendering the observed unable to move... This is the Four Pillars Cult’s ‘Eye of Astonishment’!”

Cult Leader Ashe provided official confirmation. “Your classmate is a member of the Four Pillars Cult!”

Sonya nodded. “You mentioned before that you were controlled by the Eye of Astonishment, and I immediately remembered.”

Deya asked nervously, “Sword Princess, you didn’t join them, did you? They’re all bad people!”

“Of course not,” Sonya shook her head. “Although Felix’s offer was tempting, the Four Pillars Cult you encountered were all ruthless scoundrels. Am I supposed to believe I just happened to meet a good one? Instead of gambling on that luck, I’d rather bet on someone suddenly becoming devoted and passionate.”

Ashe scratched his head.

Vesser suddenly spoke, “You were immobilized and unable to use spellforce; couldn’t you be taken away?”

“Yes, I thought I might be taken,” Sonya said. “But I’m not without means of resistance... Hey!”

A valiant female swordsman spirit appeared in her palm, the Vibration Sword.

“The moment I was immobilized, the Vibration Sword jumped out and stabbed Felix. The injury was quite serious, but I didn’t apologize. He was the one who launched a surprise

attack,” Sonya huffed. “Once he moved his hand away, the Eye of Astonishment’s effect disappeared, and I said I’d consider it and left.”

“He’s probably looking for someone to heal his injury now.”

Lelouch, ‘Bullet Storm’ Veille, and ‘Ashen’ Koruno burst through the iron door, immediately controlling the recording equipment to document everything inside.

But instead of the ‘secret site’ they imagined, they were met with a grand and solemn underground hall.

Strange and intricate murals covered the walls, lavish and colorful chandeliers hung in the hall, and four towering statues stood at the corners: a heroic general, a cultured middle-aged scholar, a benevolent elder, and a pure maiden.

“...?”

In the hall, a dozen Four Pillars Cult sorcerers stared at the three uninvited guests.

A deep chill spread from their spines throughout their bodies, and Lelouch swallowed hard, his legs trembling violently, an indescribable fear gripping his heart-he realized that among these dozen sorcerers, aside from Felix, he recognized all the others.

Moreover, Felix was the weakest among them.

The others were either famous figures he often saw in the news or top-tier sorcerers even his father, the Count of Voidstar, had to curry favor with!

Felix was covering her eye, blood continuously flowing from it.

Tonight was the Four Pillars Cult's regular gathering, and she had hoped to persuade Sonya this time, conveniently bringing her to formally join the cult.

Unexpectedly, Sonya still refused, and Felix ended up being wounded by Sonya's spirit. Felix didn't bother seeking a healer; after all, any uncle or aunt here could easily heal her eye.

But...

"I'm sorry," Felix apologized sincerely. "I seem to have led them here."

"It's alright; this place blocks all external signals," a nearby female sorcerer healed Felix's eye with a gentle touch. "We can still salvage this."

These renowned and amiable sorcerers outside looked at Lelouch and his companions with increasingly cold, ruthless, and sinister gazes.

Veille and Koruno immediately raised their Sanctuaries, but the barrier that could defend against anything offered little comfort. They dared not turn their backs on these people, only cautiously retreating, trying to exit the underground hall.

Lelouch trembled, hiding within the Sanctuary, and Veille and Koruno were pale, sweating profusely, their hearts pounding!

They realized they might have uncovered a monumental secret.

But there was still hope; they were sanctuary sorcerers, tactical weapons, and wouldn't die easily here-

“Oh? We have guests tonight.”

Someone arrived behind them!

And it was only one person!

In a flash, Veille and Koruno acted in unison, attacking the person behind them. If they could capture this person as a shield, they could cover their retreat-

“Greetings, Tactile Sense.”

In the moment before losing consciousness, they heard the sorcerers respectfully greeting.

Chapter 638: By Any Means Necessary

“You must absolutely avoid any contact with the Four Pillars Cult.”

Ashe stared at Sonya, giving her a serious admonition, “No matter what they offer, do not be swayed. The true strength of the Four Pillars Cult lies not in their violence or resources, but in their ideology-a seductively sweet abyss of corruption.”

Ashe had always thought the Four Pillars Cult was up to no good; why else would so many fools believe in them? However, after witnessing the Cult’s rapid growth during his visit to the Senlo Kingdom, he realized that the fool was none other than himself.

The ‘bravery’, ‘rage’, and ‘bloodlust’ of the Lord of Myriad Glories are actually a rebellion against pain. He does not ask you to win people over with virtue or reason, to consider the greater good, or to mind societal norms. Instead, his

creed is simple: kill the family of anyone who wrongs you and vent until you feel satisfied-after all, who hasn't felt oppressed or thought about breaking free from their chains?

The 'curiosity', 'knowledge', and 'thought' of the Lord of Wind, Rain, and Snow represent the purest 'desire to explore' that every child possesses. He does not curb your thirst for knowledge, whether you're curious about what happens if a ceiling fan falls, what it feels like to jump from a building, what it feels like to scoop out an eyeball, or what happens if you lock a group of people in a basement with aphrodisiacs... No experiment is too taboo.

The 'life' of the Eternal Fiery Heart and the 'joy' of the Dreaming Free Spirit are even easier to understand. Who doesn't want to live without sickness or death, indulging in their desires, forever happy?

The doctrines of the Four Pillars Cult are not evil at all; every word directly targets the deepest desires of the human heart. Thus, Ashe knew that no one could resist the Four Pillars Cult because they genuinely have your best interests at heart.

Ashe was frightened when he heard that the Four Pillars Cult had tried to persuade the Sword Princess multiple times. Besides the Lord of Wind, Rain, and Snow, the 'rebellion' of the Lord of Myriad Glories, the 'life' of the Eternal Fiery Heart, and the 'joy' of the Dreaming Free Spirit were deadly temptations for her!

She was just the type to take things personally, vain and proud!

This realization made him understand why her classmate Felix had tried to persuade her multiple times-it was indeed a wise choice, considering how

easily she could fall into their trap!

Upon hearing Ashe's concern, Sonya rolled her eyes, "The seductively sweet abyss of corruption... No wonder you used to be the leader of the Four Pillars Cult."

Ashe blinked, unable to see how she made that connection.

He became a bit anxious, "I'm not joking. If you underestimate them-"

"How could I underestimate those who have caused you so much suffering?"

Sonya snorted, "Don't worry, I won't let Felix get close to me again, but that doesn't mean they'll just give up... However, as long as I'm in Swordflower College, even if they have plans, they can't do much to me. Besides, Felix doesn't know that I've seen through them. If I keep an eye out, I might just be able to expose them."

Ashe wanted to say something, but found himself at a loss for words-after all, evasion isn't a solution. If you're always on the defensive, how can you ever really be safe? If you wish for a peaceful life, your best bet would be to eliminate all those who threaten it, not live in perpetual vigilance and unrest.

When the Sword Princess ascended to the sanctuary, she was bound to face more challenges and storms. The Four Pillars Cult, the Stars Kingdom, the nobility... In this world, the greater your power, the greater the risks. If you want to stand at the summit, you must be wary of falling off the cliff.

In the Senlo Kingdom's divine era, there were no conflicts of interest, and society was advanced and benevolent. Everyone had access to the best education and resources, but the price was the surrender of your ideological freedom.

Although Ashe wanted to advise the Sword Princess not to take risks or attempt to confront the Four Pillars Cult, he really had no right to say so—he himself didn't want to take risks, but since traversing to this world, he hadn't had a single day of peace.

Fate is never gentle; one can only find temporary refuge. The only true path forward is to face difficulties head-on.

"Well, then I'll be waiting for you to avenge me," was all Ashe could finally say.

"Who said I'm targeting them for you?" Sonya stuck out her tongue and made a face, "And I'm just going to keep an eye out, at most anonymously report them. I'm not going to put myself in danger... I really value my own safety."

Vesser spoke up, "But if what they say is true, then you, Sword Princess, can't continue looking for ways to traverse nations."

At this, Sonya's expression darkened, and she nodded, "Felix has no reason to lie about this, although I don't know why the Stars Kingdom would be wary of it, but I really can't investigate further. Moreover, not even the mysterious

Four Pillars Cult has a method for traversing nations, so no matter how much I search, it's unlikely I'll find anything."

Traversing nations undoubtedly requires a mastery of space, but with Sonya's own Spatial Sect only at the silver realm, she couldn't create her own Spatial Miracle. Hence, she had been hoping to find an existing method.

This was precisely why Sonya so decisively rejected the Four Pillars Cult-they didn't even have a ready-made solution, expecting her to figure it out herself!

I came here to copy homework, and you're telling me to do it myself?

Vesser looked at Ashe, "Observer, didn't you go to the Thousand Island Lake controlled by the Bronze Law Cult the day before yesterday, in pursuit of the gray fox heritage that might traverse space? Did you find anything?"

Ashe shook his head, "Forget it, we hadn't searched long before the Four Pillars Cult showed up. Their followers even leaked our information, making the Bronze Law Cult think we were with the Four Pillars... If we hadn't voluntarily left, it might have turned into a fight."

It had been half a month since that night in Dead City.

Ashe and his group had stopped pursuing the Silver Lantern and had lost interest in entangling with the Four Pillars Cult, focusing solely on tracing the heritage that could traverse nations. However, the Mercury Trojan Horse had

no intention of letting them go-having completely turned against them, she was now unchecked.

Without capturing these two Half Tactile Senses, she could never rest easy.

Ashe and his group had barely escaped the sphere of influence of the Four Pillars Cult, but the Cult had also begun a major campaign, aggressively invading the Qinyi Alliance.

At first, Ashe thought this was the last madness of the Mercury Trojan Horse. After all, the Four Pillars Cult was down to a few sanctuary sorcerers and didn't even have enough people to defend themselves-weren't they courting death by attacking?

However, the result was a complete shock to them-within half a month, several sanctuary sorcerers had defected from their sects to join the Four Pillars Cult, including a legendary sorcerer from the War Temple!

That was one of only three legends in all of Senlo, the leader of the War Temple, even hailed as the strongest combat force in Senlo!

Almost overnight, the Four Pillars Cult had swallowed the War Temple, its overall combat power now surpassing the Qinyi Alliance. It was then that the Qinyi Alliance realized they needed to unite or be crushed. They began sending out divine hosts to resist the Four Pillars Cult, and even the Transcendent Cult, which usually stayed underground, started activating their production machines to support the front line.

Back in Dead City, Igor had anticipated that a holy war would soon break out in Senlo, but they all thought it would be the Qinyi Alliance crusading against a weakened Four Pillars Cult. Now, it seemed more like a unification war led by the Four Pillars Cult!

In this world war scenario, Ashe and his group, being 'faithless', had entered the Thousand Island Lake controlled by the Bronze Law Cult. No matter how they explained themselves, the Bronze Law Cult wouldn't risk keeping them, especially since followers of the Four Pillars Cult had slandered them.

If they hadn't voluntarily left, the Bronze Law Cult might even have let their divine hosts kill them.

The war of faith had intensified, and there was no room for any centrists to survive.

"However, the gray fox heritage of the Bronze Law Cult is probably just a large-scale teleportation device," Ashe remarked, "It has nothing to do with traversing nations."

Unlike the heritage in Black Robe Town, Blind Town, or Dead City, which affected everyone, the gray fox heritage at Thousand Island Lake was controlled by the Bronze Law Cult and only worked for their sorcerers. They didn't know its exact name, so they called it "No Measure."

Within the influence of "No Measure", any sorcerer with No Measure privileges could teleport freely, with no cooldown time, no energy consumption, a mere thought, and the world had no bounds.

The day their identities were exposed, suddenly hundreds of sorcerers surrounded them. If they hadn't immediately raised their sanctuaries, they would likely have been overwhelmed by countless spellcasting miracles.

Ashe strongly suspected that this heritage was the top-tier version of the Gray Fox sorcerers' transportation tool-after all, zero commute time definitely increases the happiness of the working class.

"There are so many magical gray fox heritages, you're sure to find one," Vesser comforted, "Now that you mention the Qinyi Alliance and the Four Pillars Cult are fighting, they'll surely bring out their treasured gray fox heritages, and maybe then some clues will emerge."

Ashe smiled bitterly, his hopes not really high.

If the divine era of Senlo were a proper advanced civilization, that would be one thing, but the problem was that it was a civilization built on an idealistic world, a private server of a civilization!

Not to mention whether the Gray Fox sorcerers had studied traversing nations, even if they had, it would probably be ineffective. After all, the fantasy creations of traversing nations, like online artifacts, require a spatial channel to be established between Senlo and other nations.

And those absurd fantasy creations from Senlo only worked within Senlo!

While there might be exceptions, the chances were too slim, less likely than relying on virtual realm passages.

Deya remained silent, her expression quite downcast. Ashe wanting to traverse nations was naturally something she strongly supported, wishing he could return to the Gospel tomorrow. But when she asked the deities of the Gospel how to traverse nations, she only got one answer-under divine intervention, only the Virtual Realm.

Unless it was a divine intervention, to traverse nations, one must go through the Virtual Realm!

The Witch had also asked the Gospel deities if they could help with the traversal, but the Gospel could only provide one solution: it could search for virtual realm passages leading to specific nations. As for when this passage would appear, that depended on when the Virtual Realm leaked.

But this solution could only help her travel from the Gospel to Senlo, not help Ashe return from Senlo, unless she could provide precise coordinates of the virtual realm passage, and Ashe managed to reach it before the passage dissipated.

More importantly, virtual realm passages have level restrictions.

Like the Level 2 virtual realm passage from Blood Moon to the Gospel that only allowed two-wings sorcerers to enter, which was why White-haired

Hunter Gerard, already a sanctuary sorcerer at the time, couldn't chase into the passage.

In other words, for Deya to help Ashe return, she would have to wait for a Level 3 virtual realm passage that connected the Gospel to Senlo. According to the statistical data from the Gospel deities, in the past hundred years, there had only been seven Level 3 or higher virtual realm passages, and only one of those led to Senlo.

A once-in-a-century chance.

Unless Deya was willing to Fast Forward 100 years, there was no hope of getting help from the Gospel deities.

"Alright, alright," sensing the somber mood of the group, Ashe chuckled, "No need to be so pessimistic. Even if we can't find a way to traverse nations, it doesn't matter. As long as we increase our strength, we'll eventually find a way."

"Our Rainbow Virtual Wings are already half-condensed. The current task is to fully condense them as soon as possible and then find a way to sneak into Ruby Mountain. Maybe becoming a legendary sorcerer will give us a way?"

In any case, increasing their strength was definitely the right choice. And now with the great war in Senlo imminent, instead of how to leave the nation, Ashe might first need to think about how to stay alive.

“Sword Princess, you better keep a low profile recently. If something happens to you in reality and you can’t come to the Virtual Realm, I’m definitely blaming you if I can’t ascend to legend.”

Sonya pouted, “You have more than just me as a teammate, why blame only me?”

“Because I don’t like reasoning either, so I’ll just blame you,” Ashe snorted.

Then he turned to Vesser, “Thanks for your help these past few days.”

Vesser had been helping them gather various pieces of intelligence and proposing possibilities for traversing nations. Ashe felt quite apologetic since this was his personal matter. It was one thing to trouble the Sword Princess and the Witch, but it was another to bother the new team member Vesser.

“It’s okay, I’ve also gained a lot from being in this team. Helping the team leader is my duty,” Vesser said calmly.

Ashe replied, “If you have any troubles, you can tell us too. Although we can’t help you in reality, we can think of solutions together.”

Vesser smiled faintly, “Alright.”

Ashe looked at Deya and hesitated for a moment before reaching out his hand to affectionately pat the Witch's head, "Don't be downhearted. I never expected you could help."

The Witch sisters: "...Is that supposed to be comforting?"

"But seeing how worried you are about me, I'm quite touched," Ashe sighed, "It's like seeing a daughter grow up..."

Deya protested, "I'm not your daughter!"

"Alright, alright, let's start our exploration tonight then. Let's see what initial artifacts are in the treasury..."

To change the mood, Sonya brought up another topic, "By the way, the Stars Kingdom just issued a 'Red Alert for the Time Continent', saying that the Heroic Soul Legion has been waging wars recently, and all two-wings sorcerers are advised not to enter the Virtual Realm. Many sorcerers have already suffered severe soul injuries..."

Boom!

Suddenly, everyone felt a strange shockwave!

And this shockwave did not come from Phantom or the earth but seemed like...

The entire Virtual Realm was trembling!

Chapter 639: What Just Happened?

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Virtual Realm, Time Continent.

Within the Time Continent, there exists a well-known mysterious area-the Inner Circle of the Continent!

Any sorcerer aware of the White Bull's circular path along the continent's edge would quickly realize a crucial point: if they could stick to the inner circle of the White Bull's trajectory, they could keep pace with the White Bull with minimal effort!

There might even be a central point, an "eternal zone" where the Golden Flow can influence no matter where the White Bull goes!

However, no sorcerer has ever reached this area because the closer they get to the Inner Circle, the more likely they are to encounter the heroic soul legion.

The heroic soul legion also knows that following the inner circle is the shortest route, so how could they not heavily guard it? Even if a sorcerer is lucky enough to slip through the legion's patrols, they can't reach the core area-because the core is surrounded by six fortified checkpoints.

That's right, each faction guards one checkpoint, and even though they might fight each other fiercely, these six adjoining fortresses coexist peacefully to protect the secret within.

And today, with the hum of an engine, a sports car arrived at the fortress.

Compared to the towering fortress, the sports car seemed as insignificant as an ant.

Behind the sports car was a massive heroic soul legion. Humanoid troops stomped the ground, beast-like troops charged unrestrained, and flying troops blocked the golden rain, shaking the earth and dimming the sky!

Not only was there the Spider Tower coalition led by Empress Danzel, but also the Star Shrine legion and the Blood Moon legion. Though belonging to three different factions, they all pursued the sports car like a tidal wave engulfing everything in their path!

The overwhelming killing intent was palpable, and the virtual realm creatures along the way either died of fright or collapsed, barely able to flee. A regular army could crush one's spirit, let alone an army of virtual realm creatures with armed troop types. With passive mental traits like 'intimidation,' 'fear,' 'nightmare,' and 'chaos,' even a two-wings sorcerer would be left in a daze, let alone virtual realm creatures.

Yet, the three female sorcerers in the sports car remained unfazed-after being chased down over a dozen times, anyone would be as calm as they were.

“We can’t go around it; we have to break through the fortress head-on. The ‘Six-tone Anchor’ can only protect us, not pass through the gate.”

“The car’s durability is about to blow.”

“For the last stretch Troop Type: Crimson Handmaiden!

She flew up and pointed at the fortress gate, causing countless blood ants to erupt within it. The area corroded by the blood ants seemed to transform into a living entity, with blood and flesh blooming like flowers!

Before the Crimson Handmaiden, all defenses were rendered useless, and everything turned into a grotesque mass of blood and flesh!

As the sports car was about to crash into the gate, Freya flew up, clad in black-green armor, wielding a thrust sword in one hand and a short blade in the other. Though her appearance seemed unremarkable, she unleashed astonishing speed!

Oasis Sixth-level Troop Type: Gray Fox Watcher!

The Bewitcher danced in the air, her thrust sword and short blade weaving a deadly spiral, her body almost becoming a blur as she drilled a bloody hole through the flesh-like gate!

Among all Sixth-level Troop Types, the Gray Fox Watcher had the highest instantaneous single-target burst!

Through the coordination of different Sixth-level Troop Types, the seemingly impregnable fortress was torn apart like paper!

Freya and her companions immediately spread their Twin Wings and flew through the opening. They instantly armed the “Six-tone Anchor” to evade all damage, arriving at the most mysterious eternal zone of the Time Continent-the Sealing Altar, a place jointly sealed by the six major factions!

Though called an altar, it was merely a stacked high-rise tower, appearing simple and primitive. They flew to the top of the altar, and though there was no guidance, when Freya took out an irregular blank stone tablet, the entire altar suddenly glowed, enveloping it in a golden light!

Upon closer inspection, the golden light was composed of golden text, piercing through the Virtual Realm, connecting heaven and earth! They reflected on the stone tablet, transforming into a dazzling stream of information!

“We’ve finally reached this point...”

The Bewitcher exhaled, the Purple Moth and little bat both excited and expectant.

What they held was the completed “Blank Concept”!

Over the past month, they had been fleeing from the Spider Tower legion’s pursuit while pondering how to complete the Blank Concept. They eventually decided to take a risk and, using the sports car’s power, broke into the Spider Tower main city and the Star Main City, seizing the blank concepts they were nurturing, successfully completing it!

But reaching this point wasn’t enough; they still didn’t know how to use the Blank Concept. It wasn’t until they encountered the Fate Questioning that they learned the Blank Concept could only be triggered at the Sealing Altar in the center of the Time Continent.

However, as they approached the central area, they found that the Spider Tower, Blood Tomb, and Star Shrine had already laid an ambush, preventing them from getting close to the center. They broke through multiple times, battling in the Virtual Realm for three days and nights, finally finding an opportunity to breach the fortress and reach the Sealing Altar!

Now was the time to reap the fruits of their success!

As for what Blank Concept to create, they had already discussed it, so Freya immediately raised the stone tablet and said, “I-“

However, the next second, the golden text illuminating the altar suddenly vanished, and the stone tablet returned to its original state.

The female sorcerers were taken aback. What happened?

“Game over, little kittens.”

They turned to see that the heroic soul legion had taken the opportunity to surround the Sealing Altar. Empress Danzel stood atop a giant spider, a mocking smile on her lips as she stared at them. “Let me guess, you can’t use the Blank Concept, can you?”

“You know to come to the Sealing Altar, which is commendable. is indeed the place to activate the Blank Concept. But the problem is, a complete Blank Concept isn’t a world fragment that mere mortals can ins You lack the capability.”

“The Blank Concept is something only a Divine Sovereign can use. Even our commander needs to chant prayers and resonate with the Divine Sovereign to inscribe new laws on the Blank Concept.”

“Had your fun? Now hand it over.” Danzel said coldly, “You have the ‘Six-tone Anchor,’ so I can’t harm you, but I can control you. Without that car, let’s see how you run.”

The sky and earth, countless troops watched menacingly, ready to engulf them in the next second. Without the sports car, Freya and her companions had no chance of breaking through. Even if the “Six-tone Anchor” could protect them, their bodies could still be restrained by collisions and friction, keeping them under control.

The Purple Moth’s eyes darted to the Blood Tomb legion and Star Shrine legion beside them, but Danzel added, “Don’t bother looking. The Star Shrine and Blood Tomb hate you even more. We’ve temporarily allied until you give up the Blank Concept.”

Sivirin exhaled softly, sitting limply on the altar. Annan swayed, realizing they were out of options.

If they could use the Blank Concept, it would all be worth it, but who knew the usage threshold was at the Divine Sovereign level?

Perhaps the Empress commander was deceiving them, but the fact remained that they couldn’t use the Blank Concept!

There was nothing more they could do.

Days of effort had been in vain.

They risked their lives with no bitterly cruel.

“Is there really no way?”

Hearing the Bewitcher’s question, Annan and Sivirin both shook their heads.

Freya raised the stone tablet, and after confirming there was no other reaction, she snapped it in half.

Crack.

Everyone was stunned broke the stone tablet into two pieces that fell to the ground.

It took several seconds for Danzel to react, “What are you doing?”

“I’m destroying it.”

“Why?”

“Because I can’t use it, and I don’t want you to have it either. After all, it’s we worked hard for many days to obtain.” The Bewitcher stuck her tongue out at Danzel, “I’d rather destroy it than give you!”

After all, you bullied Ashe.

The Bewitcher had long harbored a grudge against the Empress commander. She the diary replica that if it weren’t for the Empress commander constantly hunting Ashe, she might have reunited with him in the Time Continent!

stunned for a while, looking dumbfoundedly at Sivirin, then pointed at the Bewitcher.

Sivirin nodded, indicating that’s mind was indeed at that level.

Danzel was momentarily speechless, her face in her hands, taking a deep breath.

her voice, almost breaking with rage, nearly tore through the Rain Curtain:

“You have no idea what you’ve destroyed, Bewitcher!”

Boom!

Suddenly, the Sealing Altar erupted with a golden text screen once more, but this time it was even more intense, piercing the Virtual Realm like a tangible force, scattering the Reverse Golden Rain!

In the Sea of Knowledge, Lois, who had finally slain the Blade Fish Dragon to avenge her previous defeat, felt something and looked up, seeing the white mist covering the sea suddenly blown away by a fierce wind.

In the distance, a dazzling golden pillar pierced the sea from the sky, dyeing the murky waters with a sacred hue.

“What just happened?”

In the Distant Sky Domain, Ashe and his companions found their initial Phantom suddenly shattered, and all the Phantoms in sight were breaking apart. They could even vaguely see figures floating far away in the air.

Then, a massive golden Phantom appeared, visible to everyone as a golden pillar shot out from both ends, seemingly fixed in the Distant Sky Domain.

“What just happened?”

At Ruby Mountain, the Trojan Horse was observing this ultimate destination longed for by countless sorcerers through the perspective of a legendary sorcerer. She rarely possessed others' explore the Virtual Realm, but a legendary sorcerer was worth the exception.

Suddenly, the mountain, entirely constructed of ruby, surged with countless texts, forming flowing golden chains. Yet, they didn't overshadow the ruby's brilliance; instead, they complemented each other, stirring the hearts of legendary sorcerers like a burst of inspiration!

"What just happened?"

Chapter 640: Angelic Heritage

Chapter 640: Angelic Heritage

When a friend achieves something you could never dream of reaching, there are two possible reactions: The first is indifference. You neither envy nor aspire to it, treating it as distant news unrelated to you, continuing your peaceful life. The second is excitement/jealousy/desire. Whether the emotions are positive or negative, you no longer want to continue your past peaceful life but instead strive to climb closer to your friend!

Lois was initially the first type, but after summoning her spirit, she gradually leaned towards the second. From a wealthy young lady who only 'knew a bit' about swimming and had never even killed a Lala Fatty, she now dared to battle Blade Fish Dragons in the sea. This shows how much virtual realm exploration can hone a person.

This is the allure of the Virtual Realm.

Whether you are a noble above all beings or a wandering lower-level refugee in reality, in the Virtual Realm, you are alone. No help, no equipment, the only one you can rely on is yourself.

Noble children, pampered from a young age and learning step by step, might lose heart after being killed by Blade Fish Dragons a few times, resigning to a life of idleness, unwilling to enter the Virtual Realm. Meanwhile, lower-level sorcerers, who have honed their skills for survival and naturally summoned new spirits, can navigate the Virtual Realm like fish in water, gradually sailing thousands of miles, glimpsing the path to truth and power.

Lois had prepared herself for hardship, but when she actively embraced the challenges of the Virtual Realm, she found it wasn't so daunting. From someone who had never fought, she became adept at fleeing and fighting; someone who always maintained elegance and cleanliness learned to roll in the dirt; someone who was afraid to walk alone at night could now stay vigilant at all times.

Gradually, Lois began to understand why, at gatherings, even those with noble titles and successful careers, if they were sorcerers, the prefix before their names was always the same.

Now, Lois rarely attends parties, but if she were to introduce herself to strangers, rather than as the daughter of a business association president or a Swordflower College student, she would prefer to say-

Water sorcerer Lois.

So, when she saw the white mist once again envelop the Sea of Knowledge, but with strange golden chains appearing in the sea, Lois didn't hesitate or retreat but dove in to see what was happening.

Though diving deep into the Sea of Knowledge is a dead end, swimming for a few minutes isn't a problem.

The Sea of Knowledge was originally pitch black and invisible, but now with the surrounding water, sweeping her inside. Lois was dumbfounded, instinctively holding onto the golden chain as she was carried through countless sea regions by the water flow!

Virtual realm mechanics-Whirlpool?!

Lois was both surprised and delighted. It was indeed a Whirlpool, and she could clearly feel her silver spellforce rapidly increasing. This was indeed the special mechanism that silver sorcerers most desired to encounter, the Whirlpool!

When Lois finally stopped, she found her silver spellforce had increased by three feathers, equivalent to a month's worth of exploration effort! Though not much, it was free spellforce, and not everyone could achieve a silver full-winged state in a month like Sonya!

But Lois was more puzzled. If she wasn't mistaken, the Whirlpool was clearly caused by her Riptide spirit, but she had never heard of a Riptide spirit having such an effect-if it could create Whirlpools, water spells would surely become the most important basic education for the Stars people.

At this point, Lois realized she had arrived at another place. She stood on muddy ground, covered by a layer of clear seawater, with the ground extending forward. Even the white mist couldn't obscure this road, and she couldn't see its end!

Though it was her first time seeing it, Lois, who had scored full marks in the "Overview of the Sea of Knowledge" course, recognized it at a glance: "This is-the Great Road!?"

The Sea of Knowledge has many unique mechanisms: Whirlpools, Sea Waterfalls, the Great Road, Sky Bubbles. Except for the Whirlpool, which benefits sorcerers, the other mechanisms, though rare, don't offer much help to them.

"Why did the Whirlpool bring me to the Great Road?" Lois was full of questions.

Whoosh.

A spirit suddenly emerged from the water on the ground, resembling a shark but appearing gentle. Soon, the surrounding water enveloped it, and as it continued to grow stronger, it transformed into a three-meter-tall humanoid water monster!

Lois stepped back in fright, only then realizing she was still holding the golden chain! The chain suddenly contracted, tightly wrapping around her arm, and a stream of information flowed into her mind-

“Any water sorcerer can challenge the Trial of the Great Road and accept my Lake Angel’s heritage.”

“As long as you have a water spell spirit, you can reach the Great Road through the Whirlpool; on the Great Road, only water spell spirits can take effect. Each sorcerer can only trigger the Whirlpool once through their water spell spirit. Only by passing the Trial can you gain more opportunities to trigger the Whirlpool.”

As the humanoid water monster approached, Lois snapped back to reality-

The Lake Angel’s heritage!?

A heritage surpassing legendary sorcerers, second only to the Divine Sovereign!?

Time Continent.

“This is the end...”

Furious, Danzel ordered the Spider Tower legion to engulf the Sealing Altar. Though killing the three Bewitchers was pointless, she had no reason not to eliminate the culprits who disrupted this Appointment War!

Annan spread her wings and said to the other two, “Let’s find a way to fly out and locate the Golden Flow.”

With the protection of the Six-tone Anchor, the heroic soul legion couldn’t harm them, but if they were cornered, Danzel could trap them in a static domain, turning them into a painting-frozen time is the end of all things.

Their only escape was to find the Golden Flow, where even the heroic soul legion couldn’t enter, to safely exit the Virtual Realm and leave the danger behind!

Unfortunately, Ashe’s diary updates too slowly, and the Gospel chapter is much longer than the Blood Moon chapter. He hasn’t yet written about the truth of the Rainbow Tail, or Annan and the others could attempt to find the Rainbow Tail to ascend to the Sanctuary.

Just then, the Sealing Altar suddenly rumbled and rose from the ground! The three were shaken to the ground, watching as they ascended higher and higher, witnessing a grand, colossal city emerging from the earth, stretching far into the distance!

This city was larger than any main city of the Six Nations! The Reverse Golden Rain acted as energy, flowing into every groove and crystal of the city until it was fully illuminated!

A moat formed by the Golden Flow surrounded this giant city!

“I can smell... the stench of those Blood Moon and Stars scum!”

With this voice full of anger, the minds of the three Bewitchers went blank-their spirits huddled together within their souls, their consciousness nearly shattered by this ancient pressure!

Simultaneously, an arc of light spread from the Sealing Altar, instantly obliterating all surrounding heroic soul legions. Countless armed troop types vanished in the arc of light! Only high-ranking commanders like Danzel managed to shield themselves with hundreds of layers of armor, barely withstanding the arc, merely being blown away!

The six fortresses sealing the central area also crumbled and disintegrated under the arc of light, turning to dust!

A golden and silver phantom appeared above the Sealing Altar, with five silver virtual wings and an obviously attached golden fake wing. Its appearance was indistinct, and most peculiarly, it was like an upside-down figure, with its head facing the ground and feet touching the sky.

“Return, my companions, my comrades, my followers, my citizens!”

With its proclamation, countless figures gradually appeared in the once-dead, empty giant city beneath the Bewitchers’ feet. Without exception, they stood straight, saluting, facing the upside-down phantom, their cheers echoing throughout the Time Continent: “Endless Time!”

“Endless Time, but our time has passed,” the upside-down phantom said. “I didn’t expect my arrangements to be forcibly drawn out by the Virtual Realm... so be it.”

It gently clapped its hands, its voice resonating across the Time Continent: “I am Klo, the King of Time, holding the supreme authority of the Time Continent!”

“The Virtual Realm heritage is open, the Eternal City reappears. Any time sorcerer can cross the moat and enter the Eternal City to undergo the Trial of Death!”

“If you wish to obtain my ultimate heritage, come before me... then.”

The upside-down phantom suddenly noticed that there were already three sorcerers on the Sealing Altar before it. Annan and Freya huddled together, trembling, while Sivirin had turned into a little bat, hiding in their embrace.

After a brief silence, it added, “You must at least obtain ten ordinary heritages in the Eternal City to gain my ultimate heritage.”

That rule was definitely added on the fly-if not for her teeth chattering in fear, Freya would have almost blurted it out.