

## SORCERER'S HANDBOOK

### Chapter 711: Raven Annihilation Trial

Ashe had a rather bad habit: when he felt close to someone (at least in his own eyes), he liked to sling his arm around their shoulders.

Igor found this habit extremely distasteful, but after slapping Ashe's hand away a few times, he gave up. Whenever Ashe slung his arm around the Con Artist's shoulder, it always gave the impression of two kittens together-Ashe was a tabby, and Igor was a ragdoll.

Harvey didn't mind at all, but ironically, Ashe rarely dared to put his arm around Harvey's shoulders. Walking beside Harvey, Ashe felt like a husky that resembled a wolf, while Harvey was a wolf that resembled a husky.

Tamashi also didn't mind, but just like his nickname implied, whenever Ashe walked with him, he felt like a pigeon, while Tamashi was a raven. Ashe's outstretched hand was like a pigeon's wing-never able to truly grasp the Black Feather.

It was then that Ashe faintly sensed: Tamashi was a person who, like a bird, would never be bound by emotions.

"We," Ashe exhaled deeply, first exchanging a glance with Igor. The latter nodded silently, having already used a Miracle to confirm that this Raven was the real deal. Then Ashe glanced at the group of predatory Black Feather sorcerers and said, "Let's help you deal with them first, then go find Silver Lantern."

“No,” Raven said seriously. “Silver Lantern has been preparing at the lowest level for several hours now. Every second you delay is another second closer to Senlo’s destruction.”

“I heard about this three hours ago, but Tanomoo was right here, so I had to stay. I was planning to kill Tanomoo, then find a way to stop Silver Lantern at the lowest level, but...”

Right!

Igor’s gaze dropped, seeing a heap of corpse fragments and a head. The blood in the neck had long since dried up. The beautiful head lay on the ground, awash in spilled wine and blood, turned just enough to face Ashe and the others. Even with her face marred by dirt, her beauty was unmistakable, and her lips bore a mocking, ambiguous smile.

These corpse fragments were sliced almost perfectly smooth-clearly the work of Raven.

Igor asked, “Mercury Trojan Horse, dead?”

“Tanomoo is dead.” Raven nodded, then shook his head. “But Mercury Trojan Horse isn’t dead yet.”

At that moment, the young sorcerer Raven had been restraining suddenly grabbed the grey fox blade, thrusting his left elbow backward. A wind blade shot from his elbow toward Raven’s back!

Snap!

Raven casually swatted the wind blade aside, and with a light flick of the grey fox blade, sliced off all the youth's fingers! Yet even after this flurry of attacks, the tip of the grey fox blade remained pressed to the youth's neck-Raven hadn't revealed even a second's opening!

"Charlyn!"

A voice as melodious as wind chimes rang out in the hall: "I order you, you are not allowed to die!"

The youth named Charlyn immediately ceased struggling. He seemed utterly unconcerned with his injuries and, upon hearing the command, could only clench his jaw in humiliation and remain Raven's captive.

Ashe and company now noticed the young girl surrounded by Black Feather sorcerers. Amidst the tense, battle-ready Black Feather sorcerers, this adorable girl in cat-faced pajamas looked like a hotel guest who had wandered into the wrong room. She seemed only in her teens, with sweet features and large, bright eyes.

Noticing Ashe and the others looking at her, she waved cheerfully and greeted them with enthusiasm, "Long time no see, Lord Ashe, Lord Igor, and Gwen-seeing you doing well after leaving the Four Pillars Cult, I'm relieved."

Mercury Trojan Horse!

Ashe's eyes sharpened and he gripped his Honey Sword tightly. Igor also readied his spell, trying to pinpoint Mercury Trojan Horse's location. But after speaking, Mercury Trojan Horse immediately hid behind the others, protected entirely by the sanctuary. If they wanted to deal with her, they'd first have to get past the human wall of Black Feather sorcerers.

Ashe asked, "So that's what Mercury Trojan Horse really looks like?"

"No," Raven said. "Tanomoo's originals are those rotten scraps on the floor. I've dreamed of her-I'd never kill the wrong person. But... she's not dead yet."

"Even if the originals are dead, the soul can transfer to a backup vessel?" Ashe sucked in a sharp breath. "The Four Pillars Cult has more than a million followers..."

"She probably can't transfer her soul out of the Silent Spiral-she can't even leave this level," Igor analyzed calmly. "If she could descend at will into other vessels on the wasteland while in the Silent Spiral, she'd already be on the surface commanding the Four Pillars Cult against the Qinyi Alliance, not leaving command to other Bishops."

"Oh?" Mercury Trojan Horse asked curiously. "The Qinyi Alliance has already advanced this quickly? I hope they can hold out a few more days..."

“Don’t trust her words, but don’t entirely distrust them either. She’s acting as if she really doesn’t know what’s happening on the surface, but maybe she does, or maybe she’s just trying to make us think she does,” Igor said. “The best way to deal with a person like her is not to negotiate. Strike hard while she’s talking. We kill everyone here, then cut off her head-then we’ll know for sure!”

“Understood!” Ashe nodded vigorously. “Just like how I deal with you-this is my specialty!”

“Ashe!” Raven grew anxious. “Are you even listening to me-“

“How nice, Tamashi, you finally have friends who care about you.” Mercury Trojan Horse smiled. “Why refuse their kindness? We all have our entanglements. Before Doomsday arrives, isn’t it nice to settle our old scores? Then we can all march cleanly to hell together.”

“But since you won’t let me live, I won’t show you any mercy either.” She said, “How long will this revenge last? Three hours? Six? Twelve? Or a whole day? I have four sanctuary sorcerers here, thirty-two two-wings sorcerers, and sixty-four One-Winged Sorcerers-let me buy a little more time for Silver Lantern in our final moments. After all, we were once colleagues.”

“Come, then.”

Mercury Trojan Horse’s sweet voice turned chilling and sharp: “I will drag you, and the entire Kingdom of Senlo, down to hell with me!”

Ashe's face turned cold, his tone filled with rare contempt. "Who are you trying to scare with that, Mercury Trojan Horse?" He sneered. "Trying to threaten me with some moral high ground? Ridiculous. Even a native like you doesn't care about the Kingdom of Senlo- why should I? Whether it's three hours or three days, you're dying here today. Even the descent of the Four Pillars won't save you. I mean it-"

"I care."

Ashe turned his head to look at Raven, who nodded slightly towards him, as if pleading, "I care about this land, I care about the people of this land, I want to save the Kingdom of Senlo."

"I also want to stop Silver Lantern, but I can't." Raven spoke his true feelings with a distorted voice, "I originally didn't want to involve you... but when I found myself powerless, my first reaction was to hope Ashe, hope you would come... only you can help me..."

"Seeing you appear, tears suddenly flowed down, but my heart was as happy as winning a card game, yet my first reaction was to hope you would leave quickly... such a contradictory feeling." The uneducated Raven could only ramble on to describe his feelings, "Not at all like the old me."

Mercury Trojan Horse originally wanted to interrupt but closed her mouth upon hearing this.

“I can’t just watch Silver Lantern destroy Senlo, nor can I allow you to stay because of me.” Raven took a deep breath and said, “I know this is a very rude request, clearly you all risked coming here for me, clearly I’ve already implicated you so much... but I still want to ask you.”

“Ashe, Igor, Gwen, I beg you to stop Silver Lantern, to save this Kingdom.”

“We may not be staying because of you.” Igor suddenly said, “Surrounding and killing Mercury Trojan Horse is our common hobby. The destruction of the world is not important, having no Mercury Trojan Horse is.”

“Equating me with the world.” Mercury Trojan Horse said softly, “I truly appreciate Mr. Igor’s affection.”

“I can’t leave you behind.” Ashe said firmly, “We are here to save you, not to save the world, and certainly not to abandon you for Senlo-either we leave together, or we kill Mercury Trojan Horse and leave together.”

“You don’t need to worry about me.” Raven suddenly crushed Charlyn’s left wrist bone, causing the latter to sweat profusely from the pain but remained silent, “I have a hostage.”

“I’ve been meaning to ask.” Igor inquired, “Why does holding him hostage threaten Mercury Trojan Horse? Her standards aren’t that low, are they?”

This sentence seemed to provoke Charlyn's anger more than the crushed bone, he glared at the Con Artist fiercely, his eyes almost popping out to hit someone.

"He created a Void Gate to a new civilization world, and the geographical location is very advantageous." Raven said, "Tanomoo plans to lead people through this Void Gate, leaving Senlo for a new Kingdom."

Ashe and the others were stunned, casting a strange glance at Mercury Trojan Horse-they hadn't expected that they would share the same view as her, that everyone was here to escape the Silent Spiral, unsure whether to call it kindred spirits or enemies meeting on a narrow path.

The Void Gate guarded by the Black Feather sorcerers was evidently the door to a new world.

No wonder Raven could threaten Mercury Trojan Horse, who knows how much time and resources they spent to create this excellent Void Gate. If before Ashe and the others arrived, this Void Gate was merely 'relatively precious,' then after their arrival, its value rose to 'extremely precious'!

Because Ashe and the others certainly wouldn't allow Mercury Trojan Horse to leave through the Void Gate!

Frankly speaking, if Mercury Trojan Horse wants to escape, this Void Gate is her last chance. If she misses this Void Gate, then before she creates a new one, Ashe and the others might have already dealt with Silver Lantern and returned. By then, let alone leaving, she might not even be able to keep her life.



Her only way out now is to find a way to take back the hostage from Raven and ensure the safety of the Void Gate!

“As long as I have this hostage, Tanomoo will never dare to act.” Raven said seriously, “I will hold out with her until you return-if you don’t come back, I’ll drag her down with Senlo as a burial for you.”

At this point, Ashe and the others finally sorted out the current situation.

They had anticipated the appearance of Silver Lantern. After all, so many layers of trials in the Silent Spiral were closely related to the Demi-God stolen by Silver Lantern, clearly, the Silent Spiral was initiated by Silver Lantern, not the Four Pillars Cult.

Even Silver Lantern constructing the World Destruction Procedure didn’t surprise Ashe and the others. After all, Silver Lantern had mentioned it so many times, and with her silence for so long, they vaguely felt something big was coming.

The only thing they couldn’t understand was why the Four Pillars Cult was helping Silver Lantern? Wasn’t Mercury Trojan Horse afraid?

The former question still had no answer, but the latter had already been answered personally: Mercury Trojan Horse indeed wasn’t afraid, she herself was ready to lead people to the new world to start anew, as for whether the old world would go bankrupt or be destroyed, it was none of her business.

The hostage Raven was holding now was the key for Mercury Trojan Horse to enter the new world. Therefore, he said he could continue to confront Mercury Trojan Horse, which was indeed true.

Looking at it this way, Ashe and the others could indeed first go to stop Silver Lantern, then return to rendezvous with Raven and together explode Mercury Trojan Horse. But...

Just as Ashe's expression was uncertain, he suddenly trembled violently, directly kneeling on the ground, his forehead covered in cold sweat.

Igor took a closer look and found that a blood-red rune in the shape of a raven appeared at Ashe's heart, the blood light so vivid that even clothes couldn't cover it, visible to everyone. Along with the raven, there was a bizarre heart with edges and corners, the raven standing on it, constantly pecking at the heart's edges.

Igor immediately activated the Miracle 'Visualization Overlap,' creating ripples in the Sanctuary of the Black Feather sorcerers, but Mercury Trojan Horse not only didn't retaliate, she loudly clarified, "Don't blame us, this has nothing to do with us, it's just Mr. Ashe's own problem."

"He deviated from the main theme of the Raven Annihilation Trial." She said, "So he suffered the curse of Raven Annihilation."

## Chapter 712: Does the World Dislike Me?

Raven Annihilation Trial!?

Before Igor could ask, Raven spoke coldly, “The Raven Annihilation Demi-God is already dead.”

“Yes, the Raven Annihilation Demi-God is already dead,” Mercury Trojan Horse said. “But anyone can become the Raven Annihilation Demi-God.”

Raven paused, then realized and murmured, “Who is it?”

“‘Debater’ Arnoi,” Mercury Trojan Horse said. “He never submitted to the Four Pillars from beginning to end. He pretended to join the Four Pillars Cult, tried to find a chance to assassinate me just like you, and even ascended to a sanctuary sorcerer before he died... It’s truly a pity.”

“Compared to a new Raven Annihilation Demi-God, what I wanted more was an Arnoi who would sincerely help me.”

Raven was silent for a moment. His distorted voice trembled slightly. “I thought... he really surrendered...”

“The truth always leaves us battered and bruised,” Mercury Trojan Horse said. “The scars that truth leaves us are the cracks where faith takes root.”

She smiled. “I even thought, if I were really killed by you, I’d pass the Raven Annihilation Demi-God to you... Unfortunately, Silver Lantern stole it later.”

“When you all reach hell, you can reminisce slowly.” Igor motioned for Gwen to look after Ashe, and said coldly, “What’s the main theme of the Raven Annihilation Trial, and what is its curse?”

“Look at the wall.”

Only then did Igor notice that the walls had been displaying various scenes. Looking closely, he saw all sorts of killings and even tortures: Blood Hawk (pulling lung lobes out from the back), Bathing (pouring hot blood on the body and scraping flesh with an iron comb), Pipa (plucking ribs with a sharp knife), Lighting the Lamp (soaking in oil and then hanging on a wooden frame to ignite), Blood Raven Spreads Wings (fixing limbs and head separately and only spinning the limbs), and so on.

Some of these Raven had introduced before, some not, but just watching the images, one could tell how cruel they were.

As for the victims, they were of different races, genders, and ages. The only thing they had in common was their wailing at the moment of death and the horrific manner in which they died! However, the Holographic Screen would also list their crimes to explain why they deserved it.

“Interesting, isn’t it?” Mercury Trojan Horse said calmly. “The Raven Annihilation Trial is very simple-admire these scenes, understand and learn from them, and keep your faith absolutely firm, without the slightest doubt.”

“The main theme here is: never regret your actions, never doubt your decisions. As soon as you doubt, as soon as you regret, you trigger the curse of Raven Annihilation.”

“Lord Ashe’s Blood Raven in his heart is both the curse and his sense of guilt. That three-pointed, eight-pronged heart is Lord Ashe’s conscience.”

A trace of a smile appeared in Mercury Trojan Horse’s voice. “Once he starts regretting his actions, or doubting his decisions, he’ll feel a guilty conscience. An uneasy conscience is guilt’s favorite food.”

“Raven Annihilation believes that only criminals feel guilty or have unnecessary guilt. The faith of Raven Annihilation’s disciples is as clear as a mirror; all their actions are righteous, and even if they torture criminals, their conscience must never waver.”

“The solution is simple,” she said slowly. “As long as he makes a choice that puts his conscience at ease, he can break the curse.”

Igor looked at Ashe, who was trembling all over, sweat streaming down like rain. The handkerchief Gwen used to wipe his sweat was already soaked.

The Con Artist turned to Raven and sneered coldly, “Just as you wished, Raven. You did well this time, at least that fool Ashe fell for it.”

Why did Ashe feel guilty? Because he wanted to stay and help Raven, but deep down he knew that stopping Silver Lantern was the more crucial matter.

More importantly, he believed he had the ability to stop Silver Lantern, and even felt obligated to do so!

If, in order to help Raven, he was late in stopping Silver Lantern and caused millions in Senlo to perish, his anxiety would breed immense guilt, and this would trigger the curse of the Raven Annihilation Trial.

How should one put it, this really is a Trial designed specifically for good people.

For people like Mercury Trojan Horse and Igor, nothing happened to them at all.

“I-“

Raven trembled all over, gritted his teeth and said, “Really! I don’t know! I would never! Harm you all!”

Igor immediately shut his mouth, because he saw that inside Tamashi, a Blood Raven had appeared pecking at his heart.

Ashe was in so much pain that he knelt on the ground, but aside from his speech being less fluent, Raven's body didn't tremble at all; he still steadily held Charlyn hostage.

Suddenly, the Blood Raven in Ashe's heart disappeared.

He took a sharp breath, wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, and stood up with a bitter smile. "It seems I have to go find Silver Lantern first-otherwise, if I stay, I'll just be a burden."

Entangled by the curse of Raven Annihilation, Ashe was simply impossible to participate in the siege against Mercury Trojan Horse. From the moment he learned Silver Lantern was on the lower level, he was never going to stay.

Yet Ashe was fine now, but Raven's conscience was still being pecked by guilt.

Seeing this, Ashe sighed helplessly. He walked behind Raven, patted him on the shoulder, and said to the uneasy Raven, "You've done very well, your decision was the right one. Thankfully, you were here, so we had a chance to save this unfortunate situation. In the name of the Judge, I declare you innocent."

"You said you cried when you saw us coming." Ashe couldn't help but laugh. "When I saw your ugly yet handsome raven mask was still alive, my eyes got a little wet too."

With Ashe's soothing, the blood ravens in Tamashi's heart gradually dissipated. The Mercury Trojan Horse watched and sighed softly, giving up on letting the Black Feather sorcerer seize the chance to attack.

"Then, I'll leave the Mercury Trojan Horse in your care," Ashe said. "Stop Silver Lantern, kill Mercury Trojan Horse, and then we'll leave together. This journey in Senlo will end perfectly."

"Alright." Raven nodded, then paused and added, "If you fail, or if I fail, remember to record my story in the Sorcerer's Handbook, okay?"

Ashe didn't correct him about "sorcerers cannot influence the Sorcerer's Handbook," and simply nodded, "Okay-but we won't fail. You'll succeed in your revenge, we'll make it home, the Kingdom of Senlo will remain safe, and Mercury Trojan Horse will die a miserable death. Everyone will have a bright future."

"See you soon, Tamashi."

"Mm."

Throughout the process, Ashe didn't spare even a glance for Mercury Trojan Horse, but she made no move either. She quietly watched as Ashe, Igor, and Gwen passed through the Fog Gate and entered the sixteenth layer of the Silent Spiral.

"Thank you," Raven suddenly said.



Mercury Trojan Horse was taken aback, wanting to laugh scornfully, but for some reason, she also felt like crying. In the end, all her complicated feelings turned into a single question: “Why are you thanking me?”

“Thank you for not stopping Ashe and the others,” Raven said sincerely. “If you had kept them here... even ten thousand years in hell wouldn’t be enough to atone for my regret, whether to Senlo or to them.”

“Is it because you chose to take revenge on me, rather than stop Silver Lantern?”

Mercury Trojan Horse shrugged and said, “Compared to ‘minor evil’ like me, it’s obvious that Silver Lantern, the ‘greater evil’, is more important. Besides, you know I’m about to leave-I can no longer harm Senlo, while Silver Lantern wants to drag Senlo into hell.”

“You clearly know all the gains and losses, yet you still abandoned justice for hatred.”

“But I’m not surprised. Raven Annihilation has always been this way.” Mercury Trojan Horse glanced around at the images on the wall. “Though you claim it’s for justice, the origin of Raven Annihilation is, in fact, hatred.”

“Reading evil, pursuing evil, soaking in evil; first nurturing hatred for evil, then venting that hatred through slaughter, thus gaining moral pleasure.”

“So-called justice is merely the term Raven Annihilation uses to decorate hatred and desire.” She sneered, “To annihilate all evil ravens is nothing more than Raven Annihilation’s spiritual self-indulgence after killing people.”

“Tamashi, from the moment you raised your blade against me, you already abandoned justice. You placed revenge above the lives of countless people. Your justice is narrow, bloody, and impulsive. You can’t even pass the judgment within your own heart-it’s just that Ashe and the others happened to appear and can make up for your mistake.”

Mercury Trojan Horse’s words were calm, but her deconstruction of Raven Annihilation’s doctrine was precise and cruel. Tamashi, whose conscience could not be moved even when pecked by blood ravens, now found his hand trembling slightly, leaving a thin line of blood on Charlyn’s neck.

That’s it.

Doubt yourself.

Regret your decision.

Let the immense guilt crush you, my dear Tamashi.

But soon, Raven’s hand stopped trembling. He said calmly, “Tanomoo, you’re right.”

“For you, I have betrayed the justice and Truth I always upheld,” Raven said. “You’re always so accurate in your analysis; your words are always right, so I always listen to you...”

“That’s why I know-the best way to deal with you is to listen to nothing you say.”

Crack!

Charlyn’s head flew into the air, and Raven stepped forward, slicing his corpse into more than a dozen pieces to ensure he had no chance of survival!

At the same time, the Void Gate guarded by the Black Feather sorcerers began to collapse and dissipate.

Raven didn’t know why Tanomoo was willing to let Ashe and the others pass, nor why she was willing to continue confronting him. Maybe Tanomoo had a way to reclaim the hostage, or maybe she could steal the most important Void Gate Spirit... but he didn’t need to know.

As long as the hostage was killed, all of Tanomoo’s schemes would become dream phantoms.

He'd never thought of waiting for Ashe and the others to return. Tanomoo wanted to use "Ashe and the others will come back" to steady Raven, but wasn't Raven also trying to steady Tanomoo, so Ashe and the others could safely pass this floor?

Sorry, Ashe.

Amidst the pouring blood rain, Raven raised the grey fox blade before him and calmly declared:

"There are two roads before me. One, I kill you, and then I can live for the justice of the world."

"The other is, I die for my own justice!"

At this moment, Mercury Trojan Horse's face darkened, and she said coldly, "Then go and die."

The Black Feather sorcerers, unable to hold back any longer, immediately unleashed the prepared Miracle!

Raven's step shook the ground as he turned into a blur, crashing into the arms of a Black Feather sorcerer, using the latter as a shield to continue his charge.

“Raven Annihilation!” Raven roared as he plunged into the crowd, facing sorcerers as a mere mortal: “Annihilate all evil ravens, fill hell to the brim!”

Flames, frost, storms, guns, swordsmanship, Fist-Claw... Though Raven could ignore illusory spirit effects, these Miracles that directly warped reality and inflicted physical effects still harmed him directly.

“Stop him!”

“Kill him!”

“He’s doomed!”

Even though Raven used the best footwork to avoid most of the damage, the wounds on his body continued to increase, blood soaking his robe and streaking across his Mask. Yet he kept moving forward, with almost no sorcerer able to stand in his way. His grey fox blade sliced through countless Miracles and flesh as if cutting through butter!

“Tamashi of the Raven Annihilation.”

At this moment, a Black Feather sorcerer with a Sanctuary blocked his path, the cold-faced young man said, “I, Dao Qiong, will remember you, this mortal.”

“Get out of the way!”

The grey fox blade plunged fiercely into the Sanctuary but failed to harm Dao Qiong in the slightest. Dao Qiong took out a grey fox gun and aimed at him, firing a lightning bullet. In a split second, Raven used his footwork to switch places with someone nearby, and the latter was instantly blasted into a bloody mist by the bullet.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Raven directly bypassed Dao Qiong, using the cover of other Black Feather sorcerers, and continued his charge towards the Mercury Trojan Horse!

Dao Qiong’s cold face immediately showed shame and anger. He didn’t aim at Raven but directly fired bullets at an entire area!

With a loud bang, the bullet exploded into countless sharp blades, piercing everyone in the area. Although other Black Feather sorcerers also suffered, it indeed severely injured Raven. Several sharp blades were embedded in his back, and they maliciously burrowed deeper into his flesh like frenzied worms.

Raven rolled on the ground but quickly got up to continue his charge, wielding the grey fox blade to attack the Black Feather sorcerers!

Sorcerers are really formidable.

Harvey and Chikara aren't here; they must have encountered strong enemies and stayed above?

Silver Lantern is so strong, Ashe, Igor, and Gwen will definitely face a tough battle later.

We're all fighting.

Raven raised his arm to block a deadly strike from the side, the sword blade's wound deep enough to see bone, but in the next second, he swung and broke the Black Feather sorcerer's long sword. He looked up and saw the Mercury Trojan Horse hiding behind the Black Feather sorcerers.

I, Tamashi of the Raven Annihilation, judgment warrior of the Raven Annihilation Cult.

About to carry out the last judgment of my life.

Qieshu, Kalan, Arnoi, Ye Lu... Tanomoo is already right in front of me.

It might be meaningless, it might be self-satisfaction, but please lend me your strength to kill her once more.

So I can go to hell with peace of mind.

Members of the Raven Annihilation,

Please witness Tamashi, the one and only, the last Dance of the Raven Flock.

Raven's figure suddenly became elusive, the Black Feather sorcerers almost unable to grasp his form, allowing him to pass through countless figures. He seemed to be dancing on the battlefield, raising a bloody rain of flowers along the way!

The Mercury Trojan Horse watched him calmly, gently raising her hand, signaling ordinary sorcerers to stay away, leaving only three sorcerers standing in front of her.

The three sorcerers unfolded their Sanctuaries, shielding the Mercury Trojan Horse within. They each prepared their Sanctuary Miracles, aiming at the charging Raven dancer.

"Go to hell and wait for me."

The Mercury Trojan Horse said, "The last judgment warrior of the Raven Annihilation."

The last remnant of the Raven Annihilation.



The last Saint of the Raven Annihilation.

The last hero of the Raven Annihilation!

To show respect for him, the sanctuary sorcerers used their strongest Miracles!

Thunder, flames, and water columns roared towards Raven from three directions!

But it wasn't just them; other Black Feather sorcerers also launched long-range attacks simultaneously, creating opportunities for the sanctuary sorcerers! Raven had to first dodge and block other attacks, but in doing so, his figure was completely exposed to the Sanctuary Miracles.

Whoosh!

The first high-speed water column Riptide, Raven couldn't block it, his entire armor shattered, several ribs broken, and he was directly sent flying into the air, unable to move.

The second flame and the third thunder followed closely, about to completely obliterate him into fragments.

Perhaps due to adrenaline, the last moments seemed to slow down, giving Raven time to reflect on his short life.

Raven suddenly pondered a strange question: Was he really unlucky?

Although he had a bit of talent in martial arts, he was despised by the Virtual Realm, unable to become a sorcerer, and couldn't even read.

The only home, the Raven Annihilation Cult, was destroyed.

His best friend, Tanomoo, betrayed him.

After finally deciding to start anew, he encountered so many accidents. Even the Senlo Kingdom might be destroyed...

In the end, looking back, everything he gained was lost, debts unpaid, leaving only disappointment and regret.

"Does the world... not like me?"

Boom! Boom!

The huge explosion sounded almost as if it was right beside him.

But it was only almost.

Raven fell to the cold ground, then was quickly picked up by someone. He opened his eyes and found it was Gwen who was holding him up, a Sanctuary shielding them inside, resisting the violent Miracles of the Black Feather sorcerers.

“Whether the world likes you depends on whether your friends like you.”

Igor stood in front, glanced back at Raven, and said, “If you have friends who like you, then the world likes you.”

## Chapter 713: The Con Artist Doesn't Want to Talk to You

Chapter 713: The Con Artist Doesn't Want to Talk to You

Raven coughed up two mouthfuls of foul blood, the blood flowing along the grooves of his raven mask. He stared blankly at the Con Artist who blocked all the damage in front of him. He wasn't surprised that someone came to save him; he was surprised that the person who came was Igor, the one he least got along with.

Suddenly, he remembered something and quickly turned to observe his surroundings.

“Sorry to disappoint you, Ashe didn’t come back with us,” Igor said calmly. “After I told him the necessary intelligence, I let him continue with Gwen to find Silver Lantern...”

“But Mr. Ashe knew Mr. Igor was coming back to protect you, so he let me come back too,” Gwen quickly finished bandaging Raven. Raven’s body couldn’t be directly affected by spirits, so she could only treat the wound this way. “He said he could handle Silver Lantern on his own.”

“In every sense, I believe he has that confidence,” Igor said. “In fact, I think we would only be obstacles in his ‘subduing’ of Silver Lantern, so it’s better to come back and save you, this raven eager to court death.”

“But why did you come back?” Raven couldn’t help but ask. “I clearly said I would hold my ground with Tanomoo-“

“You think that by not showing your face, not showing your eyes, and distorting your voice, you can hide your thoughts from me, a Con Artist from the Blood Moon, a sanctuary sorcerer of the Mental Sect?” Igor sneered. “You hid so well, but these days, haven’t I made you cry when I wanted you to cry, and laugh when I wanted you to laugh?”

“So you want to die, how could I not know?”

Blood flowed from the Con Artist's pupils, and in his vision appeared the illusion of God-slayer Ashe, swiftly killing the Black Feather sorcerers not sheltered by the Sanctuary in the distance. "When you said goodbye to Ashe, you didn't even say goodbye."

"Many times, it's because there's no agreed time to meet again that parting becomes eternal."

Raven said despondently, "I just didn't want... I just..."

Igor: "You just didn't want to drag us into your grudge with the Mercury Trojan Horse? I don't want you to drag us into Silver Lantern's conspiracy either. It's strange, I've only heard of people taking on big responsibilities themselves and letting friends take on small ones. How come when it comes to you, it turns into making us take on big responsibilities while you take on small ones?"

Raven remained silent, but the wound that had just stopped bleeding split open again. Clearly, his mood was not calm, and his shoulders trembled slightly, as if there was another liquid flowing inside the mask. Gwen quickly used emergency blood-stopping patches to treat Raven's chest wound, her expression showing a hint of peculiarity.

"Do you know your mistake?"

"I know." Raven's distorted voice carried a hint of sobbing.

"What was the mistake?"

“The mistake was arrogantly entrusting the task of stopping Silver Lantern to you, while I hid here fighting desperately with Tanomoo, using death to evade responsibility...”

“No.” Igor said, “Your mistake was not trusting Ashe.”

Raven was stunned.

“To deal with Silver Lantern, indeed, only he is needed. Secondly, your mistake was not trusting me.”

Igor stepped back, and Gwen immediately helped Raven up, the three of them leaning together.

Awoooo!-

The Con Artist opened his mouth, and a silent scream echoed in the hall, the damage increasing with distance. Even though the Black Feather sorcerers were all hiding in the Sanctuary, they were still affected to some extent-while the Sanctuary could shield high and low frequency infrasound and ultrasound, after Igor’s ascension to three wings, his Mental Scream could cause damage even in the normal sound range!

The Black Feather sorcerer closest to the Mercury Trojan Horse immediately turned and hugged the Mercury Trojan Horse's head, and the Mercury Trojan Horse crouched down, opened her mouth, and covered her ears with her hands. Even so, she still bled a little from her nose.

"You are the best killing tool," Igor said, patting Raven's shoulder, "and I am the best at using tools."

He glanced at Raven's injury. "Gwen has fixed you up, right?"

"Still a few ribs not healed," Raven gripped the grey fox blade, "but it doesn't matter."

"Then, before Ashe returns," Igor said leisurely, "let's twist off the Mercury Trojan Horse's head and kick it around like a ball."

"Is it necessary?"

The Mercury Trojan Horse's voice echoed in the hall: "Mr. Igor, do you think you, a sanctuary sorcerer, plus a crippled judgment warrior, and... hmm, my most capable subordinate, Miss Gwen, can pose a threat to me?"

"I'm not denying your abilities. Tamashi barely counts as one sanctuary combat power, Miss Gwen counts as 0.5, but adding you, it's only 2.5 sanctuaries."

“And I.” The Mercury Trojan Horse slightly raised her head, four young sorcerers forming a human wall in front of her, each displaying their Sanctuary: “I have four sanctuary sorcerers I rely on most: Dao Qiong, Mokilon, Coneva, and Nanda Tuo. Not to mention, my meticulously trained Black Feather Guard.”

The Black Feather sanctuaries she named all stared fiercely at Igor and Raven. Without the Mercury Trojan Horse’s orders, they would have already rushed over like mad dogs to bite these disrespectful lunatics to death.

“On the surface, you don’t have the advantage.” The Mercury Trojan Horse said leisurely, “Since that’s the case, why should we continue fighting? Our little misunderstanding, is it bigger than Senlo’s fate, your lives?”

Little misunderstanding... Igor raised his eyebrows and asked with a smile, “Since you have the numerical advantage, why not eradicate us?”

“I never engage in fights of passion. What good does killing you do me? Anyway, I’m going to other Kingdoms, and it’s basically impossible to meet you again. Why not resolve the misunderstanding and go our separate ways?” The Mercury Trojan Horse said, “We can retreat to the upper level, you can stay here or go down to find Mr. Ashe, we absolutely won’t disturb you, and will leave immediately once a new Void Gate passage opens.”

Although Tamashi destroyed an almost perfect Void Gate passage, which indeed angered the Mercury Trojan Horse. But she had been facing too much anger recently-the Wishflux Inheritance was stolen, her power was usurped, the Kingdom of Senlo she was about to unify was about to turn into an infernal purgatory... failed investments, company



bankruptcy, industry downturn, almost all unlucky things happened to her, and the Mercury Trojan Horse's heart had become numb.

Because she had endured so much hardship and loss, it instead further tempered her mental fortitude. The trouble Tamashi caused her was quickly digested, and she made the wisest choice: endure.

If it were only Tamashi, the Mercury Trojan Horse would naturally be too lazy to waste words-she would just kill Raven outright. But Igor not only had the qualification to negotiate with her, but also the wisdom for it.

Though the Con Artist had a grudge against her, it was by no means to the extent that only one could survive; more importantly, the Con Artist's side was currently at a disadvantage, or at least didn't have a guaranteed victory. If forced, that would be one thing, but since she was now voluntarily conceding, would the Con Artist really want to fight a losing battle with slim chances?

Igor seemed tempted as well. "But how do I know you're not secretly calling for reinforcements? If we get trapped in the Silent Spiral, we won't even be able to run."

Hearing that Igor was truly willing to negotiate, Raven's body trembled slightly, but in the end, he said nothing, only focusing harder on recovering from his injuries. Gwen gently stroked his back, growing much closer to him.

"Those upper layers of Trials aren't something ordinary sorcerers can get through," the Mercury Trojan Horse said. "If you're really worried, you can switch places-your group

goes up a level, we stay here, that way we're trapped below by you, unable to reach the surface or call for backup."

"As for whether we'd go down to hinder Lord Ashe, you really don't need to worry about that. We've already shown enough sincerity-we haven't stopped you from seeking out Silver Lantern."

"It's true, you even seem to welcome us seeking out Silver Lantern." Igor frowned. "So I'm very curious-if you're not interfering with Silver Lantern, and not interfering with us, just what exactly are you after? If you only wanted to enter the Silent Spiral and open the Void Gate, you could've occupied the Silent Spiral in advance. Why let Silver Lantern go first?"

"Secrets make people more alluring," said the Mercury Trojan Horse. "I'm sure Lord Igor understands that."

"...Wait."

At this moment, Raven held his head and murmured softly, "It feels like there's someone else... Tanomoo isn't the true leader here. Above her, there's a mastermind..."

Hearing this, the Black Feather sorcerers looked confused, some even showing signs of a headache. The Mercury Trojan Horse was momentarily stunned, then recalled at once-yes, she had never wanted Silver Lantern to activate the World Destruction Procedure, so why had she let the Four Pillars Cult protect the Silent Spiral and let Silver Lantern reach the bottom to build the procedure?

She remembered now, she had lost the supreme authority-the Four Pillars had parachuted in someone to seize her power. All this time, she'd been acting under that person's orders.

That person... who was that person!?

"Vichy!" Raven finally dredged up the name from the muddy depths of memory. "He went to the bottom level as well! The Four Pillars Cult has its own designs on Silver Lantern!"

"Mercury Trojan Horse!" Igor shouted, "Did you set up an ambush below!?"

"That's not me-"

Miracle: Mental Thrust!

In the instant the Mercury Trojan Horse instinctively replied, Igor let out a soft whistle. His voice condensed into a blow dart, piercing the Sanctuary, streaking toward the Mercury Trojan Horse's head in the crowd!

Crack!

A massive electric current exploded in the air. The Mercury Trojan Horse was so startled she fell to the ground, staring at the veil of lightning before her, now riddled with spiderweb-like cracks.

“There’s even a Defensive Miracle in your Sanctuary.” Igor said calmly. “You really are the most craven person I’ve ever met.”

“Lord Igor.” The Mercury Trojan Horse took Dao Qiong’s hand and stood up, speaking coldly. “I have already shown enough goodwill.”

“Not just now, but from the very first night we arrived in Senlo, from the moment we started hunting Silver Lantern, from the afternoon we reached Dead City-you’ve shown plenty of goodwill every single time,” Igor said. “That’s why I know your goodwill is flimsier than toilet paper.”

“To deal with people like you, there’s no room for negotiation or compromise-only blood and fire to tear that face of yours to shreds!” Igor said with utter disgust. “Resolve misunderstandings? Voluntary concession? I can’t be bothered to guess your intentions, but you’d never give up so easily. You’ll just keep brewing Schemes to damn us eternally! Since we’ll end up fighting anyway, why beat around the bush?”

Raven nodded vigorously in wholehearted agreement.

The Mercury Trojan Horse was so angry in that moment she nearly burst into tears.

This time, she truly wanted to run away. She had no wish to get further entangled with Igor, Ashe, Tamashi, or the rest! She just wanted to escape the crumbling Senlo, start fresh in another Kingdom, and had no intention of wasting her wits to harm anyone!

Yet none of them were willing to believe her!

Tamashi insisted on killing Charlyn and collapsing the Void Gate, even though letting them leave would be the greatest gift to Senlo; she herself had voluntarily conceded, offering multiple proposals, but Igor refused them all and insisted on fighting to the end!

To the Mercury Trojan Horse, she and Igor should have been the same kind of people-the type who enjoy pitting wits, who see “battle” as a last resort for truly rational people! Only with overwhelming odds or no alternative would they ever stoop to such a brutish measure!

But even the Con Artist, who loved playing Schemes the most, refused to sit at her table, choosing instead to flip it for an all-out brawl!

“I hate,” the Mercury Trojan Horse said, both furious and anxious, gnashing her teeth, “idiots like you who think you know it all!”

“And I’m the opposite,” Igor replied languidly. “I love arrogant clients like you the most.”

With a thunderous stomp, Raven once again began to dance across the hall of wine, blood, and corpses. But this time, not only did starlight swirl at his side, there was a Wandering Phantom blazing a path ahead!

## Chapter 714: Ashe and the Shadow

“Why do we keep walking without reaching the end? Did we take the wrong path... What do you all think-“

On the sixteenth level of the Silent Spiral, Ashe was walking along an endless wall. Upon entering the sixteenth level, they saw only this wall in the infinite darkness.

After Igor told him everything, he returned to the fifteenth level with Gwen, leaving Ashe to traverse the unknown trial of the sixteenth level alone.

Ashe quickly reached the wall, but no attack could affect it, and he couldn't fly over it, so he had no choice but to walk along it. After a while with no change, he grew somewhat impatient and instinctively wanted to ask for others' opinions.

But as he spoke, he realized how vast the space truly was, how empty the sound felt, surrounded by pitch blackness, making him feel small. Fear born from the darkness and anxiety from the unknown gradually crept into Ashe's heart, causing him to instinctively press against the wall beside him, seeking some semblance of support.

In truth, previous trial locations were no smaller than this, yet Ashe never felt fear; the Virtual Realm was even more unknown, yet Ashe never felt anxious.

Because in reality, there were Igor and the others, and in the Virtual Realm, there were the Sword Princess, Witch, and Vesser. With them around, no world felt empty, no darkness felt frightening. Whether returning to reality or the Virtual Realm, Ashe could loudly proclaim, "I'm back."

Or in Ashe's more crude words, "With someone by your side, even if you die, there's someone to bury you, and thinking of that brings comfort."

Upon reflection, although Ashe had traveled for so long, he had never truly been alone. Even during the Prison Break's downtime, he spent it with Freya, the silly Bewitcher college student; even when mistakenly entering the Divine Fire Trial, he fought alongside the Twin Observer.

But now, Harvey and Chikara remained on the tenth level of the Silent Spiral, hosting a grand funeral for the insane Senlo's first sorcerer.

Igor and Gwen went back to find Tamashi, to confront the Mercury Trojan Horse full of malice.

Ashe had no choice but to venture alone to the lower level, to hunt Silver Lantern once more.

Thinking of this, Ashe couldn't help but let out a self-mocking laugh. He came to Senlo's main quest to hunt Silver Lantern, and even though he had abandoned the quest midway,

he still had to continue before leaving, as if the dead main quest suddenly jumped out to attack him.

-Can't things just end without being so thorough?

Silver Lantern...

Ashe recalled the intelligence Igor had shared with him earlier, and couldn't help but sigh softly.

"Then why not just not go?"

Ashe was startled and turned to look, "Here I am, I've been following you for so long and you didn't recognize me."

He finally confirmed that the voice came from the shadow on the wall-his shadow.

The shadow waved at him, "Hi, finally able to talk to you, I'm so excited. Can we shake hands?"



Ashe wore a puzzled expression but still touched the shadow's hand on the wall. The shadow said happily, "You really are a gentle person. Would you stay here and chat with me?"

"No," Ashe said, "I need to reach the lower level to stop Silver Lantern. Can you help me find the Fog Gate to the next level?"

"Why?" the shadow asked, "You don't really want to go, do you?"

"You know Silver Lantern and Tamashi are the same type of people. Their lives are short, their beliefs firm, so they can burn everything for their dreams. They're like fireworks; as long as they shine brightly, that's enough. What they pursue is that moment of ignition."

"Silver Lantern has prepared for her dream for so many years; her life is completely bound to her dream. She's willing to disregard her life and death, as long as she achieves it, even if she dies the next second, she'd be content. How could you possibly stop her?" the shadow advised, "You might as well immediately go back to find Igor and the others, then use the Mercury Trojan Horse's Void Gate to go to another Kingdom. Maybe it's Stars or Gospel!"

Ashe retorted, "Aren't you hoping I'd stay?"

"Right," the shadow scratched its head, "But I know you definitely won't stay. There's no Sword Princess or Witch here... Oh, right, next time can you bring them here, so I can see their shadows..."

Ashe remained noncommittal and asked, “Does this wall have an end?”

“No, this wall is endless, you can’t get through it,” the shadow shook its head, “This is a very-powerful trial! You can only stay here and chat with me, but isn’t that nice too?”

“Impossible, every trial can definitely be passed,” Ashe said with a strange look at the shadow, “Even if by force, I’ll break through.”

“Don’t look at me, I’m just a shadow, I can’t affect this trial,” the shadow shrugged, “But why do you have to go through? Stopping Silver Lantern is very dangerous. Even if you can retreat to Wishflux Celestium at any time, you can’t predict accidents.”

“More importantly, Igor and the others aren’t by your side now. If Silver Lantern goes mad and directly initiates Doomsday, you won’t even have time to pull them into Wishflux Celestium for refuge. With the Void Gate passage and Wishflux Celestium as a trump card, you could safely avoid Senlo’s Doomsday, but if you insist on going alone, you might end up being the only one surviving.”

“Or are you saying that the lives of all Senlo people are more important to you than Igor and the others?” The shadow seemed curious. “Do you hope that strangers will applaud you? But no one knows what happened with the Silent Spiral, and no one will know you’re acting as a savior.”

Ashe: “You’re so annoying.”

“Isn’t it just that you can’t argue with me?” The shadow said, hands on hips. “I know what’s bothering you-it’s guilt! You feel you have the ability to save the Senlo Kingdom, and you’ve happened upon this situation, so you must at least try your best. Otherwise, if the Senlo Kingdom truly perishes and millions vanish into dust, you’ll feel it’s because you shirked responsibility, which will weigh on your conscience.”

“But a guilty conscience is better than letting Igor and the others die, right? A guilty conscience is better than putting yourself in danger, right?” The shadow continued, “Besides, you’re the kind of person who doesn’t compromise on big issues but doesn’t sweat the small stuff. You’ve had plenty of guilty moments-like when you first started working, you felt guilty taking the bonus, wondering if you were exploiting the capitalist.”

“You even managed to self-regulate after becoming a Cult Leader, so why can’t you handle a guilty conscience? When you meet the sword Princess, you can touch her conscience every night, and your own conscience energy will soon be replenished. If that’s not enough, you can touch the Witch’s conscience too. That should be enough, right?”

Ashe pondered, “Touch their conscience?”

The shadow said, “If you can bring their shadows in here, I’ll demonstrate...”

“No, I mean, is touching the only option?”

“If I weren’t stuck in the wall, I’d have to give you a punch.”

The shadow said, "So what now? Pretend nothing happens, go back to Igor and the others, use the Void Gate to escape to another Kingdom, then establish two Void Gates-one to Gospel to cling to Lise's leg, and one to Stars to touch the sword Princess's conscience."

"The only issue is Tamashi, but you and Igor are both adept at dealing with this crow. He'll surely be willing to give up revenge and saving the world to obediently leave with you."

Ashe pondered, "Your suggestion is indeed good."

"But I just want to take a distant look at Silver Lantern, and then I'll leave." Ashe asked sincerely, "Can you let me go over and take a look?"

Shadow: "...Saying that is pointless. If you really see Silver Lantern, if your gaze can move away from her, I'll admit defeat."

"Why do you make me sound like a pervert?" Ashe shrugged. "But you know my determination, don't you?"

The shadow was silent for a moment. "You originally just wanted to go home, not save the world. You weren't prepared for this, so why wade into these troubled waters?"

"Who said I wasn't prepared? I came with preparation," Ashe said. "Without preparation, how could I surpass the Trial guarded by Senlo's top sorcerer? Without preparation, how could I make the Mercury Trojan Horse watch me leave?"

“Wasn’t that the work of your friends?”

“They are my preparation,” Ashe said. “They supported me to get here. Without them, even if I wanted to save the world, I couldn’t.”

“The coldest Harvey is willing to stay behind to fend off strong enemies, the most calculating Igor not only didn’t dissuade me but went back to help Tamashi, leaving me without worries.” Ashe stopped and said to the shadow, “Isn’t this preparation sufficient?”

“I don’t particularly want to save the Senlo Kingdom either, but the Transcendent Cult has been kind to us, the people of Black Robe Town are interesting, and many have helped us along the way... More importantly, fate has pushed me to this point.”

“So, you’re forced?” The shadow immediately asked.

“Yes.” Ashe nodded. “To avoid guilt crushing my conscience, I am indeed compelled.”

“But my sense of justice at this moment is also beyond my control.”

“The curse here must be loneliness, right?” Ashe looked up at the endless wall. “As long as you feel lonely, you’ll never surpass this wall.”

“Thank you for reminding me.” Ashe looked at the shadow. “You’ve made me realize I’m never alone.”

White mist began to appear within the shadow, and he shouted, “Don’t blame me for not warning you, Ashe! If you fail and lose everything, you’ll regret your decision now and hate yourself for making mistakes!”

“If I give my all and still fail, then I can freely blame the world, not myself.” Ashe reached out to clear the Fog Gate within the shadow, saying, “Moreover, the only thing I’ll regret is not what I did wrong, but what I didn’t do.”

“Really can’t do anything with you...” The shadow muttered:

“Then, in the future, don’t let the shadow hold you back.”

## Chapter 715: The Substitute for the Raven

Tamashi still remembers the first sorcerer he killed.

At that time, he hadn’t yet become a judgment warrior, although he could subdue young warriors from the cult without injury in five minutes. The cult was still reluctant to let an ordinary person become a Death Raven who hunts evil. They preferred Tamashi to become

Miss Ye Lu's assistant, responsible for logistics within the cult, especially since Tamashi was good at cooking.

So he sneaked a look at the mission intelligence before the other warriors set out, walked sixty kilometers in half a day, and slaughtered the sorcerer scout sent by the Tribulation Fire Chapel who was lingering in the town.

The Raven had already forgotten what it felt like to kill for the first time. After all, just like eating many slices of bread, one doesn't remember the taste of the first slice. But he remembers being covered in blood due to his unfamiliar technique, combined with the dust and sweat from walking so far, and to make matters worse, it rained. He was covered in blood and mud, and even some excrement-because he had to carry the corpse back, and after he twisted the neck of the Tribulation Fire sorcerer, the excretions from the corpse fell out due to gravity.

Killing is indeed a dirty business, which is one reason the Raven later had a good impression of Harvey. He even thought necromancers who dealt with corpses for free were doing charity work.

He carried the corpse back, and halfway through, someone found him.

It was Tanomoo.

At that time, although Tanomoo was only in her teens, she was already a sorcerer and had directly entered the blessing priests sequence, known as the White Crow, due to her healing skills and beautiful appearance.

Though called a White Crow, because white clothes easily get dirty, she usually wore a white scarf, paired with a black dress and tight pants, and convenient short boots for movement.

But when she found him, Tanomoo had only one short boot left, and she held it in her hand. Her body had many scratches, her pretty face had abrasions, clearly from falling while running too fast, and the other boot was nowhere to be found. Her face was smeared with tear marks; the cult's biggest dissatisfaction with Tanomoo was her tendency to cry easily, not being strong enough.

Seeing the filthy Tamashi, Tanomoo directly threw the remaining boot at him, but her strength was too weak; she couldn't throw it far, let alone accurately. She picked up the boot, put it on, and limped over to hug the dirty and smelly Tamashi, burying her head in his chest, breathing in small gasps, eventually sobbing quietly. She cried worse than a crow, seemingly said something, but Tamashi had already forgotten.

Then Tamashi gave his boots to Tanomoo, wearing the larger boots from the corpse himself. Thus, he carried the corpse, hand in hand with Tanomoo, slowly walking back to the Raven Annihilation Cult.

This became their later portrayal. After completing missions, the Raven would carry the body bag, while holding the hand of the physically weak Tanomoo, walking under the sky of the Senlo wasteland. Sometimes they talked about the Virtual Realm and wasteland topics, sometimes just chatting nonsense, as if they had endless things to say and discuss.

Yes, there was once a time when Tamashi was a very talkative and chatty Raven.

The Raven thought such days would continue forever.



So he never imagined that the two who once talked about everything...

Snap.

Because the Grey Fox blade struck too quickly, the Black Feather sorcerer thought he was fine, but the next second, a vertical line of blood appeared on his body, splitting him in half.

In the splattering blood, the Raven raised his head, eyes under the blood-stained raven mask meeting the cold gaze of the Mercury Trojan Horse hiding behind the sorcerer.

Now, they had nothing left to say.

Sizzle!

Suddenly, countless high-pressure water arrows rose from the liquid and blood on the ground, and with the Black Feather sorcerer's thunder spell enhancement, these water arrows entwined with bizarre lightning, coming down like a torrential downpour!

Facing such an attack, the Raven didn't need to retreat to Igor's Sanctuary. He turned and slashed in the thunderstorm, like a petrel in a storm. The Thunder-Water Arrow Rain,

split by the Grey Fox blade, exploded with bursts of lightning, painting the Raven in brilliant colors at that moment.

However, Igor and Gwen didn't fare as well. Even though they used Mental Scream and the veil of starlight to block part of the attack, they still took half of the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain-the Black Feather sorcerer was actually guiding each water arrow-they could only minimize the Sanctuary to reduce the attack area.

But it wasn't over yet. Suddenly, a massive flame ignited in the hall, and then a gale howled, forming a fiery storm sweeping in. But compared to the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain, the fiery storm's range was noticeably narrower. The Raven stepped on sonic boom clouds to dodge, while Gwen immediately grabbed Igor, her feet glowing with starlight, dragging Igor to the other side-the Star Sect's movement spirit, meteor!

However, the fiery storm was aimed directly at Igor and Gwen, the flames constantly roasting the Sanctuary. Igor was forced to use a close-range Mental Shock to disperse the flames, but the next second, the ground beneath them suddenly collapsed!

Although they immediately took to the air, the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain struck again! Suspended in mid-air, they were undoubtedly subjected to the full force of the torrential attack!

Perhaps because the Miracle's offensive was effective, a Black Feather sorcerer couldn't help but become excited, widening his eyes to look at Igor and Gwen.

But amidst the flames and downpour, he noticed that Igor was also staring at him.

Then he could no longer look away; the Con Artist's gaze seemed to be filled with a fatal allure that tempted him to fall. Suddenly, everything around him fell silent, and he felt like a moth in endless darkness, with the Con Artist being his only light.

"Bart!"

When the voice of the Mercury Trojan Horse jolted Bart awake, he found himself outside the Sanctuary. Fear gripped him, and he immediately retreated, trying to return to the safety of the domain. But in that brief moment, a fleeting black shadow crossed his vision.

It was the Death Raven.

Then Bart heard a gentle whoosh, the sound of blood spraying from his throat, echoing like the call of the Death Raven. His head soared skyward, and his corpse crashed to the ground.

"Don't look at them!" the Mercury Trojan Horse sternly warned, "Focus on your spellcasting!"

Though they had successfully lured out and killed another Black Feather sorcerer, Igor's expression showed no joy, and his mood grew increasingly heavy.

The Mercury Trojan Horse's offensive was exceedingly straightforward, having all sorcerers hide within the Sanctuary and then combining different spells to create stronger offensives, such as Thunder-Water or Wind-Fire. Yet, this simplicity to the extreme made Igor feel extremely uncomfortable.

Because it was a straightforward clash of spellforce!

Aside from the four sanctuary sorcerers, other Black Feather sorcerers could also participate in the offensive. In a situation where neither side's offensive could penetrate the Sanctuary, Igor could only pit his spellforce against theirs collectively!

This Black Feather Guard was evidently a carefully selected elite by the Mercury Trojan Horse. Who knows how she trained them to follow orders so precisely, with spellcasting coordination reaching a sublime level. Besides attacks like Flame Storm and Thunder-Water Arrow Rain, they could also cast collective Defensive Miracles. Now, the Black Feather sorcerer formation was shrouded in a thin layer of white mist, which, although severely impairing their vision, significantly weakened the Miracle power attached to sound and light!

Moreover, their offensives were large-scale area attacks, requiring no high accuracy-just confirming Igor's location and blasting away, fully exploiting their numerical advantage!

Igor's only advantage was using Mental Miracles to lure out Black Feather sorcerers, allowing the Raven circling the perimeter to swiftly kill them. With their cooperation, eight Black Feather sorcerers had already died under the Raven's gray fox blade.

But as a price, Igor's spellforce was already more than half depleted!

He couldn't continue this consumption... Igor and Gwen slowly moved toward the upper Fog Gate, and the Mercury Trojan Horse immediately noticed, launching a Flame Storm to force them back and having the earth sorcerer erect a solid earth wall in front of the Fog Gate!

"Thinking of escaping now, isn't it a bit too late?" the Mercury Trojan Horse sneered, "Even if you retreat to the upper level, I'll chase you until I see you fall into hell before I forgive you."

"What terrifying hatred," Igor sneered, "But how many will I drag with me to the grave before I die? Ten? Twenty? By then, how many of your Black Feather Guard will be left to follow you to a new Kingdom? They all have the potential to become sanctuary sorcerers, and you're willing to waste their lives in the mire of the Silent Spiral?"

"Who told you to betray a woman's goodwill?" the Mercury Trojan Horse snorted, taking a sip from a bronze flask, and arrogantly asked, "Black Feather Guard, are you willing to wash away this shame for me?"

"Ready to die for the honor of our leader!" the voices of the Black Feather Guard echoed throughout the hall.

Igor's eyes were sharp. His previous words were not meant to negotiate with the Mercury Trojan Horse but were directed at the Black Feather sorcerers, hoping they would show signs of fear or other weaknesses. However, their loyalty to the Mercury Trojan Horse had reached the level of fanatic disciples.

The Con Artist excelled at finding the dark side of the enemy and then tearing it open, expanding it until the enemy was completely consumed by it. And fanatic disciples were undoubtedly the Con Artist's least favorite clients.

However, Igor wasn't truly planning to escape. The Mercury Trojan Horse's cunning and ruthlessness had already doomed them to be unable to coexist. Even if the Con Artist didn't think for himself, he had to consider Ashe, who was heading to the lowest level- Ashe and Silver Lantern were already complicated enough without the Mercury Trojan Horse as a 'third party'!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

At this moment, Igor noticed that the Black Feather sanctuary Dao Qiong was continuously shooting at the Raven, various bullets relentlessly tracking the Raven's movements. Yet, the Raven was too adept at dealing with gun sorcerers, and even when facing a sanctuary gun sorcerer, he could still deftly evade and parry.

Hmm?

Igor then realized that not only Dao Qiong but other Black Feather sorcerers were also focused on the Raven. They weren't devoid of negative emotions, but their negativity wasn't directed at Igor; instead, their hostility was aimed at the Raven, making it difficult for Igor to exploit their dark sides.

Raven Tamashi... Black Feather sorcerer...

A peculiar thought emerged in Igor's mind as he gestured to Gwen and Raven. Though Gwen and Raven were puzzled by his orders, they complied nonetheless.

Raven suddenly shifted from evading to actively attacking the Black Feather sorcerer. However, with the Sanctuary blocking his way, his gray fox blade couldn't reach the sorcerer inside, but he successfully drew their attention to himself.

Meanwhile, he deflected the bullets shot by Dao Qiong with disdainful laughter, provoking the Sanctuary gun sorcerer's anger. At that moment, Tamashi suddenly leaped up, his gray fox blade scraping along the Sanctuary like a raven soaring into the sky!

The Black Feather sorcerers were momentarily stunned, then overjoyed, as they aimed at the airborne Raven-being in the air meant he couldn't leverage his position, and since Raven wasn't a sorcerer, his floating was practically seeking one's own doom!

At this moment, Gwen fired a pinpoint starlight, but the target wasn't the Black Feather sorcerers; it was above Raven!

The starlight instantly brightened, casting Raven's shadow over the Black Feather sorcerers!

Now!

Igor decisively unleashed a Miracle, targeting-Raven's shadow!

Miracle: Psychological Shadow Blast!

Raven's shadow twisted violently, exploding like a bubble! The explosion was silent, without even a hint of airwave, yet several Black Feather sorcerers were blasted away, and the Defensive Miracle on the Black Feather Sanctuary was shattered!

Sanctuary gun sorcerer Dao Qiong spat out a mouthful of foul blood, but he continued to aim at Raven. As long as he pulled the trigger, this raven in the sky would fall-

Miracle: Mental Thrust!

Igor used his only Miracle capable of piercing a Sanctuary, an invisible mental blow dart that shot through space, piercing Dao Qiong's head.

He was dead.

But other Black Feather Sanctuaries were already launching ranged attacks at Raven. Just then, Raven's figure mysteriously shifted ten meters to the side, landing smoothly on the ground, collecting the heads of several Black Feather sorcerers who had been blasted out, and returned safely to Igor's Sanctuary.



“How did you manage to shift in mid-air?” Igor couldn’t help but ask, having already prepared for Raven to be seriously injured.

“Oh, it’s a simple trick,” Raven replied. “I create a vacuum beside me, and the air pressure pushes me over. If there’s someone opposite me, this trick can even swap our positions... But creating a vacuum puts a heavy load on my arm, so I can only use it once in a short time.”

Igor nodded as if he understood, but after a moment, he added, “Since Ashe isn’t here, Gwen, you can mock how ridiculous his simple trick is.”

Gwen couldn’t help but chuckle, saying nothing.

“Your Miracle was amazing just now,” Raven said. “Do it again!”

“It wasn’t me who was amazing, it was you,” Igor replied.

“Hmm?”

“My Miracle requires two prerequisites: the opponent must be covered by a shadow, and the shadow’s owner must be something the opponent fears,” the Con Artist explained. “If it weren’t your shadow, this Miracle would have no power at all.”

“They fear me?” Raven was momentarily stunned, then understood, “Of course, villains always fear judgment warriors.”

“They don’t fear your strength; they fear your ‘existence,’” Igor’s voice carried a hint of mocking laughter. “They fear you will take away Mercury Trojan Horse’s favor.”

“The Black Feather Guard was established by Mercury Trojan Horse in your image. These Black Feather sorcerers are replacements she found after losing you.”

By this time, Mercury Trojan Horse had already reorganized the Black Feather Guard. Holding Dao Qiong’s corpse, she slowly said, “I’ll say it again, don’t look at them, focus on casting.”

“You are my last reliance,” Mercury Trojan Horse’s voice was gentle yet sorrowful, “I don’t want to lose any more of you.”

The Black Feather sorcerers were filled with rage, almost grinding their teeth to dust, as if they wished to immediately atone for their sins by taking their own lives. But they did nothing, said nothing, only silently stared at the ground, then drove their spirits to cast Miracles!

Suddenly, a Black Feather sorcerer fell, with the rune of a blood raven appearing on his body-he had developed an overwhelming sense of guilt, triggering the curse of the Raven Annihilation Trial, and was pecked at by the blood raven!

He hadn't felt guilty for joining the Four Pillars Cult, nor for his evil deeds, but he felt guilty for failing Mercury Trojan Horse's expectations!

However, after a few comforting words from Mercury Trojan Horse, he quickly broke free from the curse and resolutely joined the casting sequence.

"Looks like there's no chance for a second time," Igor sighed helplessly. "They no longer have a psychological shadow of you."

"Their psychological shadow was never me," Raven gripped the gray fox blade, speaking calmly, "but the imagined Tanomoo."

## Chapter 716: The Victory of the Con Artist

Fifteenth layer of the Silent Spiral. Amidst the sweeping thunder, rain, wind, and fire, a tiny sanctuary was pressed against the wall, like a precarious shelter on the verge of collapse.

Igor stood in front of Gwen, minimizing the size of the sanctuary as much as possible. The larger the sanctuary, the wider the area exposed to attack, and naturally, the greater the consumption of spellforce. Now Igor had to save every bit of spellforce he could, ideally shrinking the sanctuary until it clung to his body. But he had to protect Gwen, so the sanctuary had to leave enough space for two people.

Yet, the situation continued to deteriorate. His spellforce had already dropped to a third, and after the “Psychological Shadow Blast,” the Black Feather sorcerers had entered a state of complete withdrawal; Igor hadn’t managed to lure a single one out to be culled.

Even when Raven scrawled wildly on the barrier of their sanctuary, not a single Black Feather sorcerer so much as glanced at Raven, as if he were nothing but a noisy crow.

“Surrender, Lord Igor.” The Mercury Trojan Horse regained her confident posture. “You have nowhere left to run. My Guard will not be deceived or manipulated by you.”

“I never deceive anyone,” Igor replied. “I just tell people stories they’re willing to believe.”

Igor couldn’t help but admire the Mercury Trojan Horse—he had deliberately pointed out the Black Feather sorcerers’ envy and fear of Raven, hoping to drive a wedge into their hearts. Yet the Mercury Trojan Horse had plucked out that thorn and healed the wound with a spit. The scar that remained did not become a source of their inferiority, but rather a symbol of their pride.

Though there were only three sanctuary sorcerers left, the combat strength of the Guard had not diminished—instead, it had increased.

In terms of Playing with People’s Hearts, among all the people Igor knew, the Mercury Trojan Horse could rank second.

But now, the Mercury Trojan Horse had made up her mind to slowly exhaust Igor’s spellforce. In the face of such an orthodox assault, where the many oppress the few, Igor-

who excelled in cunning and Scheme-was truly at his wit's end.

Once his spellforce dried up, he'd be no different from Lala Fatty, waiting to be slaughtered!

Just then, the ground beneath them suddenly collapsed. Igor and Gwen instantly unfurled their Twin Wings and soared upward, but the Black Feather sorcerers were well-prepared, already casting Thunder-Water Arrow Rain to hunt them down. Everywhere Igor looked, the raindrops all poured toward him, every one destined to fall into his eyes.

Swoosh! They flew through the storm. The Thunder-Water Arrow Rain veered after them, pattering ceaselessly on the sanctuary. As Igor darted in front of the wall, hoping to let the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain expend itself against it, he suddenly noticed something strange.

Crack!

He yanked Gwen into his arms. Gwen's arm had already been pierced by a Thunder-Water Arrow, the wound charred and deep enough to expose bone.

Igor glanced at her but said nothing. He'd thought it was just an accident, but during the next fiery storm attack, he noticed Gwen almost stepping out of the sanctuary. He grabbed her wrist suddenly, causing her to wince in pain.

"Is it just my delusion," Igor murmured, "or are you really trying to get yourself killed?"

Gwen was silent.

“Are all you Senlo people like this? Rushing toward death, thinking you can leave something behind through dying. Raven was like this. So are you. Looking at it this way, Mercury Trojan Horse and Chikara are a bit better-at least they know to cherish life... If your mouth can’t speak, maybe it should just be sewn shut.”

Gwen still said nothing.

After so many days together, Igor had long since figured out the temperament of this Star sorcerer assistant. No response meant she hadn’t changed her mind. Even with just a strand of hair, Igor could guess what she was thinking. Wasn’t it just that she thought everyone was doomed, but if she, the burden, were gone, Igor’s sanctuary would last a little longer, and he’d have a better chance to escape...

That’s why Igor really hated Senlo people. Loved them chaotically, hated them chaotically-a truly chaotic Kingdom. Everyone acts on their own, everyone goes mad for something...

Madness...

Suddenly, the Con Artist had a curious idea.

“If you really want to die...” Igor said coldly, “Fine, I’ll give you a chance.”

Gwen looked up at him, nodding slowly.

As the Black Feather sorcerers switched to the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain offensive, Igor and Gwen suddenly ran in opposite directions, heading for the upper and lower Fog Gates.

The Mercury Trojan Horse was momentarily stunned, but immediately commanded: “Lock on to Igor!”

Thunder-Water Arrow Rain shot toward Igor. He unleashed a massive-range Mental Scream, affecting all the Black Feather sorcerers and shattering most of the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain. Yet a few arrows pierced through Igor!

However-

“Mercury Trojan Horse, do you really want to fight me to the death?”

Mercury Trojan Horse blinked-she saw Igor unharmed, appearing near the lower gate. The one pierced by Thunder-Water Arrow Rain was actually Gwen!

Her pupils shrank. Could it be-

“Swap Spirit,” Igor said coldly. “This is my trump card... If you hadn’t insisted on stopping me, I wouldn’t even want to reveal this power.”

Gwen leaned against the earthen wall before the upper Fog Gate, trembling in pain.

“I’ll ask you once more, Mercury Trojan Horse: will you let me go, or not?”

A thought flashed through the Mercury Trojan Horse’s mind. “If you’re willing to hand over the Swap Spirit, I’ll let you go.”

Swap Spirit!

Anyone could see at a glance the immense potential of this spirit!

Just imagine: during a standoff, if you suddenly swap the opponent’s key figure into your own ranks-what would happen? During an ambush, if you suddenly swap the target into your trap-what would happen? During a pursuit...

The tactical value of this spirit was immeasurable. Although Mercury Trojan Horse had never heard of such a spirit, in the Virtual Realm, anything was possible. Besides, Igor came from another Kingdom; perhaps this was a Spellcasting achievement from elsewhere.



If she could obtain this spirit, it would be no less than gaining the power of a sanctuary sorcerer!

Yet Igor sneered, “Don’t bother making promises as flimsy as toilet paper.”

“Then hand over all your other spirits.” Mercury Trojan Horse said at once. “If there’s one I want, maybe I’ll be happy enough to let you go.”

“Not all of them. At most, I can give you a few.”

“Then tell me what spirits you have...”

On the side, Raven watched their negotiations in silence. Luckily, his raven mask concealed his shock.

In his vision, it was Igor who was sitting on the ground wounded, and Gwen who was standing!

Igor and Gwen-had never switched places at all!

The Con Artist likely cast an illusion Miracle on himself and Gwen, so in the eyes of others, he and Gwen swapped places in an instant. However, the Raven is immune to any direct spirit influence, and he is almost completely impervious to such mental influence Miracles!

The Raven was puzzled as to why Igor would do such a thing, but then he noticed Igor was stealthily digging a hole in the earthen barrier, behind which lay the Fog Gate leading to the next level-Igor intended to escape!

Indeed, with no hope of defeating the Mercury Trojan Horse, why not leave? From the beginning, the Raven had hoped only he would die here; Igor and Gwen were implicated because of him, so their departure was only natural.

But...

The Raven looked at Gwen, who was gradually approaching the Mercury Trojan Horse, and pressed his lips together in silence.

He hadn't expected Igor to use Gwen as bait to distract the Mercury Trojan Horse in order to buy time to dig the hole.

But upon reflection, the Raven couldn't blame Igor. Gwen was their captive, and she had previously been the vessel of sin for the Mercury Trojan Horse. She should have died in the Dead City long ago, and it was Igor and the others who spared her life.

Now, Igor was using her as bait to buy himself a chance to survive, which was what Gwen should do.

Yet, the Raven's mind was in turmoil, wanting to hit Tanomoo and Igor-didn't Igor know why Gwen was willing to be bait for him!?

She never said anything, quietly following him, doing anything he didn't want to do, preparing everything he was too lazy to prepare. She was like an inconspicuous blade of grass, just wanting to be by his side, not even needing him to look at her, just needing the sunlight he let through to flourish.

But he could do nothing, say nothing, only quietly watch the situation unfold, because this was what Igor wanted, and what Gwen was willing to do.

"...Three three-wing spirits, that's my limit."

"Alright, deal," the Mercury Trojan Horse said happily. "Hand over the spirits."

Gwen looked at the Black Feather sorcerers before her, trembling with fear. She suddenly pressed her injured arm, took a deep breath, and spread her virtual wings to fly.

She should have died long ago, during the Four Pillars Cult's invasion of the cult, in the Dead City. She had lived her life in a daze, only knowing to follow the cult's orders, the Mercury Trojan Horse's orders, not knowing why she lived or died, living like an animal.

But at least this time, she chose to live this way, to die this way.

As an animal, she had lived too long; but as a star, shining briefly was just right.

She spread her virtual wings and flew, following Igor's last command, shouting, "Raven, get ready-"

"Attack!"

With the Mercury Trojan Horse's order, the Black Feather sorcerers launched the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain again! But their target was not 'Igor' flying in the air, but 'Gwen' digging a hole in the distance!

After all, even the Raven noticed 'Gwen' was digging a hole, so how could the Mercury Trojan Horse not see it? But her thinking was completely different from the Raven's-she believed that after 'Gwen' finished digging, 'Igor' would swap places with 'Gwen' and seize the chance to escape back to the upper level!

The reason 'Igor' negotiated with her was merely to buy 'Gwen' time to dig!

So, apart from a small portion of the arrow rain aimed at 'Igor,' the majority surged towards 'Gwen'! This way, after 'Igor' and 'Gwen' swapped places, 'Igor' would still be bombarded by the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain!

At that moment,

Gwen thought she was the bait,

The Raven thought Gwen was the bait,

The Mercury Trojan Horse also thought 'Gwen' was the bait!

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!-

Even though the Mental Scream echoed in the hall, many thunder-water arrows still pierced through the figure beside the earthen wall!

"Who are you attacking?"

With Igor's mocking voice echoing in the hall, the Black Feather sorcerers were horrified to find that the pitiful figure pinned to the wall by the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain, covered in blood and coughing up a mouthful of foul blood, was...

The Mercury Trojan Horse!

The Con Artist had actually swapped Gwen's position with the esteemed one?

They had killed the esteemed one?

In an instant, the Black Feather sorcerers dropped their weapons and knelt on the ground, the light in the hall seeming to dim as overwhelming darkness engulfed their world.

In the hearts of all the Black Feather sorcerers, a bloodthirsty raven pecked at their conscience.

Gwen stared blankly at the scene, unharmed because the Sanctuary protected her.

It was Igor's Sanctuary.

He used the Sanctuary to protect Gwen, while he bore the brunt of the Thunder-Water Arrow Rain, which was the necessary price. Only this way would the Black Feather sorcerers fully believe his story's ending.

The story began when he and Gwen swapped identities.

The Swap Spirit was the core of the story. He had to make the Black Feather sorcerers believe he truly had a spirit capable of swapping two people's positions, so he had to create an opportunity for him and Gwen to swap places, for example, swapping with Gwen just before getting injured.

Then, he only needed to disguise himself as the Mercury Trojan Horse the next time he got injured, and the Black Feather sorcerers would believe Igor had swapped places with the Mercury Trojan Horse, that they had harmed their master.

In any other place, this scheme would be meaningless. But in the Raven Annihilation Trial, Igor's plot could become a deadly dagger!

The guilt of killing the Mercury Trojan Horse would crush the Black Feather sorcerers' mental defenses, rendering them completely powerless! Even the three sanctuary sorcerers couldn't maintain their Sanctuaries!

So-

Igor almost coughed up blood as he shouted, "Tamashi!"

Slash!

Before he even spoke, the Raven's dance of slaughter had already begun. Countless heads flew, countless corpses fell, countless blood splattered, and wherever the Death Raven passed, all beings were harvested like straw!

Three sanctuary sorcerers.

Thirteen two-wings sorcerers.

Twenty One-Winged sorcerers.

Three seconds.

It took only three seconds for the Raven to utterly destroy the Mercury Trojan Horse's last assets. Throughout the process, the Mercury Trojan Horse watched in a daze, seemingly not yet comprehending, or perhaps knowing she was already powerless.

She looked up, seeing the shadow of the Death Raven looming over her.

## Chapter 717: I Will Not Die



Tamashi hasn't always been victorious in every battle; he has had more close calls than Ashe.

Though he is indeed the pinnacle of humanity, capable of resisting direct influence from spirits, he is still just a mortal. Moreover, the extraordinary methods of sorcerers are unpredictable and unpreventable. Until one masters the Sanctuary, battles between sorcerers are shrouded in mystery, and an unexpected spirit could easily change the tide of battle, especially between a sorcerer and a mortal.

Tamashi served as the most dangerous judgment warrior, constantly confronting the most vicious sorcerers. Even more terrifying, the vast majority of Evil Sorcerers in the wasteland are actually Underworld Forces executing tasks for cults, such as the 'Ruins Hunters' of the Tribulation Fire Chapel, the 'Fuse' of the War Temple, and the 'Three Hands' of the Light Spiral cult. This means that when Raven Annihilation hunts Evil Sorcerers, they risk retaliation from other cults, and during the hunt, Evil Sorcerers might receive support from their cults.

Tamashi encountered such a situation once. He and Tanomoo were pursuing a group of bandits disguised as a merchant convoy. According to Intelligence, the opponents only had a few ordinary One-Winged Sorcerers, but when Raven began his massacre, he was hit by a close-range grey fox gun.

Grey fox guns are extremely rare in the wasteland. Raven had only undergone some training against homemade guns, but faced with the grey fox gun's speed and power far surpassing homemade guns, he only managed to avoid a fatal hit, but his tailbone was pierced, causing him to fall to the ground, his lower body completely paralyzed.

He was in the enemy's stronghold, paralyzed.

The gun sorcerer did not immediately kill him, instead shooting twice more to pierce his arm, and then his bandit subordinates captured the nearby Tanomoo. Tanomoo saw Raven lying on the ground and cried out, pleading for their lives, begging to spare Raven, saying she would do anything... But the gun sorcerer merely sneered, slung her over his shoulder, and returned to the house, leaving Raven in the mud.

Raven had just killed their brothers; how could the bandits let him die so easily? Paralyzed, while the gun sorcerer enjoyed himself inside, the other bandits could slowly torture Raven to vent their anger.

Mercury Trojan Horse's memories of that time are already blurred. She tried to intimidate with the Raven Annihilation Cult, offered her prophecy spirit to entice them, and begged to spare Tamashi, but ultimately couldn't suppress the fear within her, crying helplessly. Then she was slapped hard by the gun sorcerer, her face swollen, her mind completely dazed, her body losing all strength to resist, allowing herself to be placed on the table by the gun sorcerer.

She could only vaguely remember the gun sorcerer tearing at her clothes, cursing:

"That Raven is doomed!"

"He will be tortured to the point of begging for death!"

"He will die a miserable death!"

Just as the gun sorcerer tore her shorts, the sound of horse hooves echoed from outside. The gun sorcerer cursed at whoever was riding in the yard, then with a bang, the door was smashed open by a tall, grey-brown horse.

The only thing Mercury Trojan Horse remembers clearly is this scene. More unforgettable than hearing the voice of the Four Pillars God, more memorable than seeing Raven assassinate her later, as if Tamashi riding the horse not only crashed into the house but also into her heart.

Tamashi was on horseback, using four spears and ropes to bind himself to the horse to prevent falling. His body was covered in wounds with flesh rolled back, blood soaking through his robe, dripping continuously down his pants, his raven mask broken in a small part, revealing bright, glowing green eyes.

Mercury Trojan Horse didn't know how he managed to kill all the bandits while paralyzed, nor how he tied himself to the horse. She only remembers Tamashi riding over, and before the gun sorcerer could draw the grey fox gun, he thrust his spear, piercing the gun sorcerer's head!

"I will not die!"

The voice of the Death Raven echoed repeatedly in Mercury Trojan Horse's ears:

"I will not die!"

Silent Spiral, fifteenth layer.

Raven pressed Mercury Trojan Horse to the ground, raised the grey fox blade high, aiming at her head, and fiercely stabbed down-

“I will not die.”

Mercury Trojan Horse pulled out a small silver handgun, blocking it against her face.

She calmly gazed at the raven mask that was once her Oneiros, now merely her nightmare: “Unless you want Igor to accompany me to the grave.”

Raven halted his hand.

“Don’t listen to her sweet talk!” Igor coughed out several mouthfuls of foul blood, shouting: “The only way to deal with Mercury Trojan Horse is not to negotiate, but to kill her directly! Cough, cough!”

“Don’t speak so loudly!” Gwen scolded Igor for the first time, almost crying in anxiety, frantically using Hydrotherapy spirit to heal the Con Artist’s wounds.

“Tamashi, you know me.” Mercury Trojan Horse said leisurely: “I wouldn’t use such a clumsy lie to prolong my life. Next, I’m going to dismantle the bullets inside, watch carefully.”

The Mercury Trojan Horse removed the magazine from the miniature silver handgun, flipped it over, and let the bullets tumble out.

“Try piercing a bullet,” she said.

Raven glanced at her calmly and swung the grey fox blade to cut open a bullet.

Inside the silver bullet head was a fine groove, from which some liquid resembling flowing mercury trickled out.

“That’s mercury powder refined from my bone marrow,” the Mercury Trojan Horse explained. “After I became a Tactile Sense, my bone marrow turned into this mercury. Any entity infused with my mercury becomes a trojan horse I can parasitize.”

“Gwen once ingested my bone marrow, which is why I could descend upon her. However, your Adventure in the Dead City purged the mercury from her body, so I couldn’t control her.”

“These mercury bullets, upon hitting the target, inject the mercury inside them into the enemy’s body through kinetic energy.”

The Mercury Trojan Horse waved the magazine: “There are 17 mercury bullets in the magazine, but only 16 here. Where do you think the one I used is now?”

Raven gripped the shoulder blade of the Mercury Trojan Horse tightly with his left hand and used the grey fox blade in his right hand to destroy the remaining mercury bullets.

Gwen and Igor naturally heard the words of the Mercury Trojan Horse. Gwen searched within Igor's body and, almost sobbing, trembled as she answered, "Mr. Tamashi! There's a mercury bullet inside Mr. Igor!"

"Seems like my aim was pretty good," the Mercury Trojan Horse smiled.

"Don't be afraid of her, Raven," Igor gasped in pain, nearly collapsing to the ground, but still said, "Her soul... can't transfer too far. As long as I return to the upper level, she won't be able to... descend upon me..."

"You can gamble," the Mercury Trojan Horse gripped Raven's grey fox blade, aiming it at her own throat: "My soul indeed can't escape the Silent Spiral. But whether my Tactile Sense range is limited to this level or includes the entire Silent Spiral, you can take a gamble."

"Of course, as long as you transport Igor to the surface, I definitely can't reincarnate into his body. But in his condition, can he really pass through the fifteen layers of the spiral Trial?"

"Moreover, after you entered the Silent Spiral, do you think my subordinates would enter the Silent Spiral to find me?" The Mercury Trojan Horse's hand was cut by the grey fox blade, yet she seemed oblivious, looking at Raven with a cruel and sinister smile, as if the

one with a blade to their throat was Raven: “Is Igor really the only vessel I can reincarnate into? Of course, whether he is or not, I will prioritize reincarnating into Mr. Igor and then pretend nothing happened.”

“When I possess Igor’s appearance, Igor’s memories, Igor’s spirit, what difference is there between me and Igor?” The Mercury Trojan Horse pressed the grey fox blade down, the tip piercing her skin, revealing a cute yet terrifying smile: “Tamashi, we can start over.”

After a Miracle of destruction, the hall was already flooded with sewage, a dark mixture of wine, blood, and water flowing over the ground. The Mercury Trojan Horse lay in the sewage, and beside her head, the sewage reflected a grim raven mask.

“This time, I will be more cautious, more discreet in developing the Four Pillars Cult, more secretly in grasping power. I won’t let you find out, won’t let you be troubled. You just need to, like before...”

The Mercury Trojan Horse reached out her right hand, touching the filthy mask covered in layers of blood and grime, her fingertips gentle as if caressing a work of art: “...continue to take good care of the weak me.”

Slash!

Raven suddenly stabbed, pinning the Mercury Trojan Horse’s right hand to the ground. She whimpered, tears welling in her eyes, her tone a mix of complaint and coquetry: “It hurts...”

“Tamashi, you know I’m most afraid of pain. I never made it through a single Raven Annihilation Physical training...” she said pitifully, “If you hurt me too much, I’ll hide in Igor for a bit, wait for you to calm down before coming back...”

Her words sounded like a mischievous child hiding at a neighbor’s elder sister’s house to avoid an angry adult after causing trouble. Yet Raven felt a chill shoot from his tailbone to his brain, almost unable to suppress his anger, roaring, “Can’t you just obediently die!?”

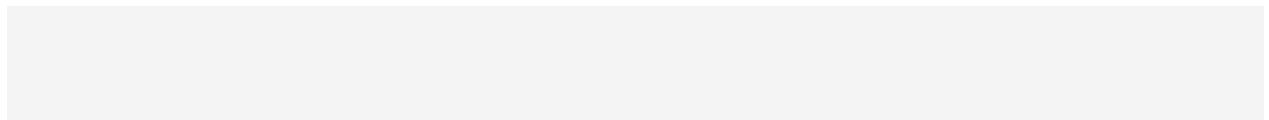
“You protect yourself in your way, and I protect myself in mine,” the Mercury Trojan Horse laughed. “I won’t die.”

She paused, then repeated:

“I won’t die.”

“However, you could let me go. As long as I leave the Silent Spiral and you remain in the Trial, I can’t possibly reincarnate into Mr. Igor.” She smiled, “How about that proposal?”

## Chapter 718: Fate Has Its Own Plans





Igor's blood-soaked coat and shirt were removed by Gwen, who tore her own skirt and sleeves to bandage his wounds due to the lack of sufficient bandages-his injuries were too severe, and the hydrotherapy spirit couldn't manage all the wounds, requiring immediate bleeding control to prevent shock from blood loss.

This silly woman, while bandaging, comforted him with a tearful voice saying, "It won't hurt, it won't hurt soon," which was laughable. The Con Artist surely felt no pain; he was a mental sorcerer who had severed the pain feedback before the attack. However, her noisy presence wasn't entirely useless; at least Igor wasn't as sleepy-the massive blood loss and spellforce depletion caused a mental fog, making Igor feel waves of drowsiness...

Yet despite this, Igor maintained a clear understanding of the current situation: one must admit, the mercury bullet shot by the Mercury Trojan Horse was a brilliant move to snatch life from the jaws of death.

Could a mercury bullet really turn someone into a vessel? Was no other ritual track needed?

Could the Mercury Trojan Horse truly reincarnate at will? Could anyone with her bone marrow reincarnate?

They didn't know the answers to these questions. The ambiguous possibilities weren't because the Mercury Trojan Horse couldn't weave a perfect reason but because she deliberately left a window open. As the Con Artist said, the highest realm of deception is telling a story that others are willing to believe.

Humans are simple creatures; if they wish to believe, they will deceive themselves. The Mercury Trojan Horse narrated the key elements of this story, and the more they pondered the other details, the more they believed in the story.

For instance, why did the Mercury Trojan Horse shoot a mercury bullet at Igor? Because she wanted to use Igor for herself; the Mercury Trojan Horse might not reincarnate at will, but facing a life-and-death crisis, she would surely risk great side effects to escape; the bone marrow of the Mercury Trojan Horse was no longer bone marrow but a virus capable of invading brain cells...

Just by thinking simply, Igor had already filled in countless details for the Mercury Trojan Horse's story. The reason being, he had to believe this story because he couldn't afford to lose.

If he didn't believe this story and insisted on killing the Mercury Trojan Horse, he might die or might live; if he believed the story and spared the Mercury

Trojan Horse, he would likely remain safe. When facing losses, people always adopt conservative strategies to stop losses, just like no one wants to hold onto a continuously falling stock until it rises again, and Igor was no exception.

However, the choice wasn't in his hands.

He opened his eyes and looked at the dark silhouette in the hall.

No one understood Raven's feelings for the Mercury Trojan Horse better than he did, not even Ashe, and even Raven himself didn't understand his inner true thoughts as well as Igor did.

Raven always thought he hated the Mercury Trojan Horse, but no one who hates someone constantly recalls the other's beauty and kindness. When you hate someone, you only remember their disgust, flaws, ugliness; when you hate someone, you feel that memories of them seem so foul; when you hate someone, you only feel how foolish you were to have liked them in the past.

If Raven truly hated the Mercury Trojan Horse, he would only remember her evil deeds.

Only when you love someone do you remember all the beautiful memories with them.

Yes, Raven still deeply loved the Mercury Trojan Horse; he loved the kind White Crow in his memory, so he had to kill the Mercury Trojan Horse before him. The more he loved White Crow Tanomoo, the more he hated the Mercury Trojan Horse; killing the Mercury Trojan Horse was protecting Tanomoo.

He hadn't even realized that he instinctively separated Tanomoo from the Mercury Trojan Horse. If Raven Annihilation pursued other villains with anger to brew killing intent, then Raven brewed killing intent with love, more enduring than anger, deeper than hatred.

When love and hatred intertwined, brewing this exquisite killing intent, it was enough to make anyone lose their mind.

Ashe could previously persuade Raven to give up revenge because Raven himself saw no hope for revenge. But now, with the Mercury Trojan Horse right in front of him, this might be his only chance in life, and even Ashe couldn't stop him.

Moreover, this was Raven Annihilation's trial; if Raven wanted to spare the Mercury Trojan Horse, the overwhelming guilt would crush Raven's mental defenses, and only the Mercury Trojan Horse's blood could wash away this guilt!

Igor had many reasons to persuade Raven, such as other Four Pillars Cult members might already be in the Silent Spiral, and even if they killed him and the Mercury Trojan Horse, she might reincarnate into another vessel to escape; even if they spared the Mercury Trojan Horse, the Four Pillars Cult was about to be destroyed, and they could easily capture her later; and...

But the Con Artist said nothing, merely closing his eyes silently.

Only Gwen couldn't help but shout at Raven, "Mr. Tamashi! Please, please..."

Raven still pressed down on the Mercury Trojan Horse, his wrist holding the grey fox blade trembling slightly. The Mercury Trojan Horse also remained silent, closing her eyes and waiting quietly, as if waiting for Raven to embrace her into sleep.

What should I do?

What should I do!?

Should I really let her go? As long as I can kill her completely, I wouldn't mind dying immediately. Now that I've finally cornered her, how can I... how can I...

"Cough! Cough!"

Igor suddenly coughed out two mouthfuls of blood mixed with organ fragments, his head tilting as he fainted. Raven turned and saw that the Con Artist's injuries far exceeded Gwen's abilities. The hydrotherapy spirit was indeed powerful, but facing such massive bleeding from multiple wounds required multiple healing sorcerers to rescue him, and now there was only Gwen, a Star sorcerer, filling in.

In other words, Igor was likely beyond saving.

If for a dead man, he spared a villain who deserved death...

How many people had Tanomoo harmed? How many had she killed? She sparked a war that swept across the continent; she was the root of all evil. If he spared her here, how many lives would suffer because of her? How many villains would he have to kill to repay this sin?

What exactly have I been living for up to now? Why didn't I take my own life when the Raven Annihilation Cult was destroyed? How could I have missed that chance?

As long as... as long as I sacrifice Igor...

I won't let him die alone. As long as I'm sure Tanomoo is dead, I'll kill myself immediately to atone for him. Serving him in hell for a hundred or a thousand years means nothing to me. Besides, maybe Tanomoo was lying, maybe...

Gradually, the hand Black Raven held the grey fox blade with grew steady. His hand, which had been gripping Mercury Trojan Horse's scapula, now shifted to her throat.

Mercury Trojan Horse sensed this subtle change, the corners of her mouth curling into a faint smile, making Black Raven lose himself for a moment- Tanomoo used to hold him and smile at him just like that when they slept.

Qieshu, Kalan, Arnoi, Ye Lu, Mentor, and... Tanomoo...

Please... hold my hand tightly...

Sorry, Igor. Really... truly sorry...

"Raven! Annihilation!"

Black Raven cried out every word, stabbing down ruthlessly with the grey fox blade!



“If a criminal takes a hostage and demands a vehicle for escape, what would you do?”

In the Mud House’s “Gambling Apocalypse,” Emma, who was gambling with Igor one-on-one, suddenly asked a strange question.

At this point, Igor already knew Emma was a Blood Hunter, so he gave the politically correct answer for Blood Moon: “Of course, the top priority is ensuring the hostage’s safety, so I’d do my best to meet the criminal’s demands.”

“But what if the criminal escapes and later kills even more people?”

“That would be the responsibility of the Sin Hunter’s Hall, and it has nothing to do with the hostage.”

“But reality is never that ideal, is it? Sin Hunter’s Hall isn’t God.” Emma tossed a few chips forward. “Sometimes you have to weigh the value of different

lives. The life of a single hostage, versus the lives of those who might be killed in the future-whose life is really worth more?"

"If anyone could truly judge the value of different lives," Igor smiled, "then that must be God. But I'm not a Blood Hunter, so I don't face those kinds of choices-so Emma, what would you do in a situation like that?"

Emma made a handgun gesture, aiming at Igor. "I'd fire a shot at them."

"You'd better not say that outside." Igor glanced around. "If a reporter heard, you'd make the headlines."

"Relax, relax." Emma waved her hand. "But do you know why I'd do that?"

Igor: "You must be confident in your Gunmanship, that you'd hit the criminal accurately."

“That’s part of it, but who can really guarantee it? What if I hit the hostage by mistake? It’s not impossible.” Emma shrugged. “But even if I kill the hostage, I’d feel no guilt.”

“Oh?” Igor was a bit surprised. Though Emma was a Blood Hunter, she was first and foremost Moonshadow. The Moonshadow are all twisted into being kind and passionate; if they do something wrong, they could feel so bad they wouldn’t eat for months, forming a sharp contrast with the cold-blooded Blood Saints.

“My bullet could hit the criminal, or it could hit the hostage. If it hits the hostage, I’ll keep shooting at the criminal-meaning fate decided the hostage’s life was worth less. If it hits the criminal, then all is well-fate decided the hostage’s life was worth more.”

“So, this is ‘the bullet of fate.’” Emma raised her bet. “I’ve done everything I can. As for judging the value of life, I’ll leave that to fate.”

“That’s very much your style, Miss Emma.” Igor smiled. “Call, reveal-straight flush.”

“Pff, I had four aces!” Emma’s tail shot up in shock, her face incredulous. “You really didn’t cheat?”

“As a Mud House that trades in entertainment and pleasure, I have no need to cheat. If you’re suspicious, you can check the surveillance footage.” Igor spread his hands.

“All right, all right. I’m not a sore loser.” Emma muttered. As Igor shuffled the cards, she added, “But the ‘bullet of fate’ has a third possibility.”

“Oh?”

“That is-it misses.” The werewolf lady shrugged. “Neither the criminal nor the hostage gets hit.”

Igor laughed and asked, “Doesn’t that mean, Miss Emma, your Gunmanship isn’t up to par?”

“Of course not!” Emma puffed up with indignation. “If something unexpected happens and my bullet misses, that means-“

“-fate has its own plans.”

“Ah...”

Igor felt himself lying in a soft embrace, struggling to open his eyes, his lips dry as if they were burning. Gwen hurried to give him water, but there wasn't much left, so she quickly used a spirit to condense more from the air.

The Con Artist lowered his head and discovered that most of his wounds had stopped bleeding, though each injury had developed a hideously ugly burn scar, making him raise his eyebrows.

“In the future, you can use hydrotherapy spirits to remove the scars,” Gwen whispered. “Don't worry.”

Igor certainly wasn't worried about his looks. He was already a sanctuary sorcerer-he could be as ugly as Chikara and still act with impunity.

He raised his head and saw Black Raven sitting with his back to him, shoulders trembling slightly. In the hall, there was no sign of Mercury Trojan Horse.

"Black Raven..." he said weakly.

Black Raven didn't respond right away. He lowered his head, as if putting the raven mask back on, and then turned to look at him. "You're awake? Do you feel anything strange? Did Tanomoo control you?"

Igor gently shook his head. Looking at the raven mask, now covered in blood, he asked, "You let her go?"

"Mm."

"You know, she won't let this go."

“Mm.”

“You know, Harvey and the others are still upstairs. Maybe Mercury Trojan Horse was killed by them.”

“Mm.”

“You know, she’s probably lying, and if she survives, she’ll lead the Four Pillars Cult to continue ravaging the Senlo wasteland.”

“Mm.”

“But you still let her go,” Igor said, glancing at Raven’s chest. “And in your heart, there is no blood raven formed by guilt.”

Raven remained silent, merely looking down at the grey fox blade resting on his lap, as if in repentance or prayer.

Igor gazed at him quietly, then suddenly asked, "How did you heal my wounds so quickly?"

Gwen took out a copper wine bottle, and Igor actually recognized it. "Isn't this the Mercury Trojan Horse's bottle?"

"This is Crow's Blood Wine, brewed from the corpse of a sanctuary sorcerer," Raven said, his distorted voice still carrying a hint of the aftermath of tears. "Pour it on the wound and ignite it with fire, it stops the bleeding quickly. Before she left, she told me how to use this wine."

Afraid that if I died, Raven would regret it... Igor smiled faintly and asked, "Is there any wine left?"

"There's still half," Gwen replied.

Igor said, "Tamashi, bring three cups over, let's drink."



Raven said, "You drink, you're the injured one."

"No, we must all three toast together," Igor insisted. "To celebrate."

"Celebrate what?" Raven brought over three cups, puzzled. "We let the Mercury Trojan Horse go, we've already failed..."

Igor raised his cup with difficulty and said, "Let's just... celebrate that fate has its own plans."

Though Gwen and Raven were somewhat confused, they didn't refuse the proposal. Gwen raised her cup, "To our safety."

Igor smiled wryly, "In our state... we're a bit off from being safe and sound."

Igor didn't mention it, but Raven was also covered in wounds, and only Gwen was slightly better off, though still lightly injured.

Raven looked down at the clear Crow's Blood Wine in his cup and raised it, "Then I'll... toast to a new beginning."

On the fifteenth level of the Silent Spiral, the three cups clinked gently together.

On the eighteenth level of the Silent Spiral.

When Ashe stepped out of the Fog Gate, he found that the gate behind him had disappeared.

Though there was no way back, Ashe wasn't particularly alarmed. He looked around and found himself in a tropical forest, lush with trees, cicadas singing and birds flying, with the distant sound of waves. He followed the sound and saw a beautiful beach.

A figure in a dress was walking barefoot on the beach. Ashe intended to approach directly but reconsidered and removed his steel-soled boots, stepping barefoot onto the sand.

The fine texture of the sand seemed to massage every inch of his feet, a sensation he hadn't enjoyed in a long time, causing him to shiver with pleasure. He then caught up with the figure ahead. Their footprints were the only ones on the beach, like two lines about to intersect.

Suddenly, a wave surged up, the residual foam washing over their ankles, the cool and pleasant sensation making Ashe want to call others down to play.

"Silver Lantern," he called out when he was five steps away.

"You're just in time," Vesser pointed to the sky. "It just rained heavily, so now it's the clear blue after the rain. Isn't it beautiful?"

Ashe glanced at the sky and then at her—indeed, she was drenched, as if she had just been caught in the rain.

Her words reminded Ashe of a song lyric: "The sky waits for the rain, and I am waiting for you."

“What brings you here?” Vesser asked. “I don’t recall sending you an invitation.”

“I heard you were constructing a World Destruction Procedure here, so I came to check it out,” Ashe replied.

“World Destruction Procedure?” Vesser chuckled. “There’s no such thing—even an angel doesn’t have the power to destroy the world, right?”

“However, my being here is indeed related to world destruction.” She glanced at Ashe. “You know that Senlo is the Dream of the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, right?”

“Mm.”

“So destroying the world is actually quite simple,” Vesser said lightly. “This place is the lowest level of the entire Kingdom of Senlo, the closest to reality. I don’t have any World Destruction Procedure. The reason I went through so much trouble to get here is because—“

“This is the easiest place to awaken the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo.”

The waves surged again, soaking their ankles and taking away some sand. The sun shone fiercely, distant seagulls cried out clearly, and small hermit crabs emerged from the sand, bumping into Ashe’s foot.

“Did you succeed?”

“Halfway.”

Ashe couldn’t help but laugh. “The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo went back to sleep?”

Vesser didn’t answer, instead asking, “Don’t you think the first seventeen Trials of the Silent Spiral are like checkpoints in an Inheritance?”

“Mm.”

“A normal person could never collect seventeen Demi-Gods, and even if they did, they might not pass the seventeen Trials. But if someone accomplished both and successfully reached the eighteenth level, what do you think that means?”

Ashe thought for a moment. “It means she would be noticed by the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo?”

“Or rather,” Vesser said, “this is how the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo selects an heir.”

“The Silent Spiral is actually the Inheritance of Senlo.”

“The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo is gradually waking up. And I am about to gradually fall asleep.”

“I will replace the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo and become the Dream Master of the Kingdom of Senlo,” Vesser said, looking at Ashe. “I am the World Destruction Procedure.”

# Chapter 719: Deadlock

## Chapter 719: Deadlock

The white bull's steps retreated slightly.

"...That's it, the reason Silver Lantern is so determined to destroy the world stems from the Gray Fox Inheritance in the Dead City. Perhaps as a child, Silver Lantern accidentally entered the Dead City and managed to come out, but she's not Raven; she can't pass through the Fog Gate without a price. The necessary condition to cross the Fog Gate is to fully accept and inherit the final will of the Gray Fox sorcerer."

"Once she left the Sanctuary, she was destined to face the challenges head-on."

On the sixteenth level of the Silent Spiral, Igor revealed all the intelligence to Ashe. After listening, Ashe nodded silently but asked an unrelated question, "You actually knew about this back in the Dead City, didn't you?"

Because you didn't ask... Igor instinctively wanted to brush it off like that, but seeing the Cult Leader quietly gazing at him, his words turned into a defensive retort, "Are you accusing me?"

"I'm not accusing you; how could I blame you? If Silver Lantern's purpose in luring us to the Dead City was to let us know the truth, then it should have been her telling us, not your responsibility. Besides, I have many secrets I'm hiding from you, so what right do I have to blame you for keeping things from me?" Ashe said softly, "Though I am selfish, I'm not selfish enough to think everyone should be selfless."

“I’m just a bit sad.”

“I’m sad just enough to understand your good intentions and realize the problem lies with me. It’s my doubts that prevent me from gaining more of your trust.”

You... Igor couldn’t help but grit his teeth for a moment. Is this the power of the Bard’s Words? It sounds so genuine that even I can’t see through it. Though there’s a smile on his face, it feels like his eyebrows are drooping, like a dog suddenly kicked into the water while walking.

“You’re not me.” Igor looked away, crossing his arms, and said, “Not everyone can remain indifferent to tragedy. Since we’re leaving here, let’s make it a place worth remembering, not just a memory of these irretrievable tragedies.”

“Some tragedies have no solution; they’re a deadlock. Having one more person see the deadlock just means one more person is troubled.”

“Thank you.” Ashe smiled, “Your explanation means a lot to me.”

“I’m not explaining,” Igor said, “just letting you know that you’ve never had my trust. The only person a Con Artist trusts is themselves.”

Ashe smiled slightly and added, “However, there’s one thing you got wrong.”



“Hmm?”

“Since having one more person see the deadlock, it can’t be said there’s no possibility of unraveling it.” Ashe waved his hand, “Alright, I understand. You should go back and help Tamashi. And Gwen, you should go too; I’ll handle Silver Lantern alone.”

“Besides, you’re better at assisting Igor.” Ashe winked at Gwen, “Working with me would be a waste.”

Gwen lowered her head, nodding slightly, hiding the faint blush on her face. Igor turned to leave but suddenly said, “I know what gives you confidence against Silver Lantern, but don’t really think you can handle her. For someone whose heart is as cold as iron, the tenderness brought by a little emotion is truly insignificant.”

Ashe couldn’t help but feel a bit awkward, “I’ve already said, I’m not selfish enough to think others are selfless.”

“I’ve collected intelligence on Silver Lantern’s past and did a psychological profile on her.” Igor continued, “I originally thought her luring us... luring you to the Dead City was hoping you’d understand her, become her companion, or even save her. After all, destroying the world and killing millions is something extremely hard for a normal person to accept, which is why no one has been able to walk out of the Dead City for centuries.”

“Silver Lantern is the only exception, but can the will forcibly instilled in her as a child remain unwavering? Could she have started resisting this mission as an adult, yet unable to completely abandon it, always caught in a struggle, seeing you as a lifeline, hoping you could pull her out of the mire?”

Ashe couldn't help but nod. After hearing Igor's analysis, similar thoughts had crossed his mind.

"You'd better not hold such naive fantasies." Igor said coldly, "If I'm not mistaken, Silver Lantern's initial intention might indeed have been for you to understand her, but she has always been solitary and doesn't need your help, so she doesn't need you to join her."

"She simply wants you to know how impressive what she's doing is."

"What do you mean?" Ashe was somewhat puzzled.

"To put it simply," Igor said, "she's proud of her work."

"She's actually showing off."

"I am the World Destruction Procedure."

The sun shone brightly, the sea breeze blew gently, and Vesser stood barefoot on the beach, crouching to pick up a seashell, glancing at Ashe with eyes that seemed to glow.

It was as if they were discussing not the fate of Senlo, but the patterns on the seashell.

Ashe pondered, “You’ve become the Dream Master of the Senlo Kingdom... Does that mean the responsibility of maintaining the Senlo Kingdom falls on you?”

“Yes.”

“But...” Ashe chose his words carefully, “It was always the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo maintaining the Senlo Kingdom before. Can you really... handle this task, Silver Lantern?”

“Of course not.”

Vesser shook her head with a smile, continuing to walk along the beach. Ashe followed, walking beside her. At this moment, Vesser’s Square Cicada suddenly appeared, and Ashe’s Round Cicada also emerged, both Four-winged Spirits from the same source, curiously observing the strange cicada opposite them.

“I’ve now inherited a small part of the Senlo Kingdom,” Vesser gestured a small space with her thumb and forefinger, then thought for a moment and made it even smaller, “I’ve already affected reality-perhaps some fringe Oasis is withering, a river is drying up, or a wasteland is stirring up a storm.”

“The Dream I can maintain is as large as the dream phantom you witnessed in the Distant Sky Domain. And the size of the Senlo Kingdom is far beyond countless dream phantoms. Moreover, after thousands of years of development, the Senlo Kingdom has many ‘affixes’ that require the Dream Master to maintain.”

“Don’t be fooled by the current desolation of the Senlo Kingdom; that’s already the result of the Chasm Sovereign’s efforts. Once it’s in my hands, everything will turn to dust, bursting like bubbles.”

“Here.” Vesser pointed to the beach, “This is the place closest to reality. The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo started from here, gradually constructing the Senlo Kingdom with Dreams. Have you ever stacked blocks? The method the Chasm Sovereign used to construct Dreams is somewhat similar to stacking blocks, building higher and higher. Then they removed the foundational blocks, which are the first to seventeenth levels of the Silent Spiral, to prevent ordinary people from reaching the lower level.”

“But isn’t that a castle in the air?” Ashe asked.

“It is a castle in the air, but as long as the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo supports it, the castle in the air can be as stable as the ground.” Vesser said, “But if the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo dies, the Senlo Kingdom without a foundation will collapse instantly. I don’t know what will happen, but a building without a foundation collapsing seems to have no other possibility than becoming ruins.”

“The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo was not unprepared. Under normal circumstances, the Kingdom of Senlo would not have so many Demi-Gods. Typically, sixteen cults compete against each other, just one short of seventeen, and the Chasm Sovereign consciously suppresses the number of Demi-Gods. Only when the Sovereign loses control over the Kingdom does the number of Demi-Gods surge... Currently, there should be around thirty Demi-Gods in the wasteland.”

“Then, the people of Senlo just need to fill the Silent Spiral with Demi-Gods to serve as a foundation and stabilize the Kingdom.”

Ashe asked, “Can this prevent the final Doomsday?”

“No,” Vesser shook her head, kicking the sand forcefully, “This is to welcome the Doomsday.”

“It’s like pulling the plug from a water tank, and then the water flows into the sewer through the pipes.” Vesser looked at Ashe, “The Silent Spiral is both the foundation and the conduit.”

A chill swept through Ashe’s heart: Mortals cannot bear the Senlo Dream, yet the Chasm Sovereign is eager to hand the Senlo Dream over to Silver Lantern; the Silent Spiral is the path to inherit the Senlo Dream, and also the road to Doomsday...

“...When will this plug be pulled?”

“It can be pulled at any time, for example, I can pull a small piece right now.” Vesser spread her hands, “Then the Senlo Dream will begin to collapse, and all beings will flow into the Silent Spiral, falling downwards until they reach our eternal resting place-the Virtual Realm.”

“Moreover, when I fully inherit the Senlo Dream, the plug will completely shatter.” Vesser smiled, “The so-called plug is the ‘force that maintains the existence of the Senlo Kingdom.’ I don’t know how the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo achieved this, but it probably requires the power of a deity to accomplish such a divine intervention, which is beyond my capability.”

“That’s why I said, I am the World Destruction Procedure.” She scooped up the sand, letting it slip through her fingers and scatter in the wind, “When I enter Into Dreams, all beings return to the cradle to sleep.”

Vesser suddenly looked at Ashe, “You should know by now, right?”

Though the question seemed abrupt, Ashe understood, “Igor deduced the truth of the Dead City and told me everything just now. He described you as: You know a future disaster is imminent, and you have a magical knife. Those you kill will live a happy life in another world, so in that world, you are a hero, but in reality, you are just a murderous maniac.”

“Although I know Igor was considering your feelings, I quite like his description.” Vesser smiled, “But in reality, there’s no such good fortune-there won’t be any happy life, nor will anyone consider me a hero, and the term ‘murderous maniac’ is too mild for me.”

“Given that, you should understand by now.”

Vesser stopped and looked at Ashe, “It’s not just me, not just the Gray Fox sorcerers. Destroying the Senlo Dream and dragging everyone into hell was the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo’s wish all along.”

“The Senlo Dream is simply too vast, too complex. For centuries, countless sorcerers have added to the Senlo Dream, building it higher day by day... The ‘Sanctuary,’ ‘Twin System,’ and ‘Kaleidoscope’ behind the gray fox heritage represent hundreds or even thousands of special affixes... Such a complex and massive system is maintained by only one person, the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, like a single person supporting an entire mountain range.”

“Probably no other Divine Sovereign could perfectly take over this system. Now that the Sovereign is gravely injured and near death, this system, which requires His maintenance, has become an unbearable burden, further accelerating His demise.”

“That’s why the Gray Fox sorcerers left that Inheritance in the ‘Sanctuary’ of the Dead City. In the moment of their extinction, thousands of sorcerers jointly deduced the root of the disaster, but they did not find a way to save the Kingdom; instead, they heard the plea of the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo.”

“So, when I arrived at the eighteenth level, I received the Senlo Inheritance.”

“I was two hundred years late,” Vesser said, “The Chasm Sovereign of Senlo has been waiting for me.”

Ashe suddenly recalled Igor’s words: Some tragedies have no solution; they are dead knots.

At first, Ashe thought the World Destruction was merely Vesser's unilateral decision; later, he discovered it was the will left by the Gray Fox sorcerers; now, he realized even the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo wished to abandon this decaying Kingdom.

For ordinary people of Senlo, this was undoubtedly a catastrophic disaster; they did nothing wrong, yet they were born into a Kingdom doomed to perish.

But can it be said to be the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo's fault? From the Fire Cat, Bluebird, and Gray Fox Divine Era, it was clear that His initial intention in constructing this 'Dream Kingdom' was good. It was because the Sovereign integrated His dream into reality that the sorcerers of Senlo could build such a magnificent civilization. Even now, all people of Senlo still benefit from the Sovereign's grace-the 'Infant Incubator' where Senlo people are born clearly only works in the Senlo Kingdom, not to mention the Sovereign still maintains the operation of the Kingdom.

Moreover, the Sovereign was also forced by circumstances; if He were not gravely injured and near death, the Senlo Kingdom would have long entered the fifth divine era, possibly even a prosperous era of material abundance.

Even Silver Lantern was the same; if she hadn't come to the eighteenth level of the Silent Spiral to become the Dream Master, in the future, when the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo perished, the wasteland Dream would collapse, and the negative energy from the Sovereign's death would wash over the Kingdom, turning all living beings into Green Beasts, plunging all beings into an eternal dark age of suffering.

Everyone tried their best, but they could only choose between a bad ending and a worse one; there was no perfect solution.



Ashe suddenly remembered something-he was brought into the Senlo wasteland as the First Gospel!

He was not the First Gospel, so he always thought he was summoned to fight against the Four Pillars Cult. But now it seems, the Four Pillars Cult is at most a festering wound, while the heart of the Senlo Kingdom is about to stop beating.

If he were truly the First Gospel, he might easily uncover the truth and understand the root of the Senlo wasteland's problems. This means he was summoned to the Senlo wasteland not to assist the Tribulation Fire Chapel, nor to fight the Four Pillars Cult, but...

"However, it's not too late now," he murmured softly.

"So." Vesser walked up to him, slightly raising her head to look at him. At such a close distance, her eyes held no trace of shyness or other emotions, only clear determination, "Will you still try to stop me?"

"I was never here to stop you," Ashe said, "I am here to untie this dead knot."

He raised his hand, and a strange spirit appeared in his palm. The spirit looked like a blank card, with a pair of transparent cicada wings, flapping so rapidly they were almost invisible.

“This is the Void Gate Spirit,” he said.

## Chapter 720: A Better Choice

“I know about the Void Gate Spirit,” Vesser asked, puzzled. “What’s the matter?”

“The Void Gate Spirit can create a passage to other places,” Ashe said. “This naturally includes other Kingdoms.”

“I know, but-“

“Do you know why I came to the Silent Spiral?”

Vesser was taken aback. To be honest, although she was somewhat surprised by Ashe’s appearance, it wasn’t entirely unexpected. Her relationship with Ashe was tangled like a mess, and moreover, she had caused such a commotion in the Silent Spiral that attracting Ashe, this unexpected catalyst, was only natural.

Vesser had originally thought she would encounter Ashe when she opened the Silent Spiral and would have to fight a bitter battle to reach the eighteenth level. Unexpectedly, the journey was so smooth, and after everything settled, Ashe arrived late to attend her coronation ceremony.

Her first reaction was that Ashe came specifically to stop her, but on second thought, it seemed that not many days had passed since she opened the Silent Spiral. Even if Ashe traveled day and night, it would be difficult to rush over from Black Robe Town or other neutral areas.

In other words, when she opened the Silent Spiral, Ashe was already on his way.

His destination was also the Silent Spiral, but not for her. And now Ashe's goal was singular, coupled with the Void Gate Spirit...

"You're here to use the Void Gate Spirit in the Silent Spiral to create a passage to other Kingdoms?"

Ashe nodded, "You probably also know the drawbacks of the Void Gate Spirit. If used on the surface, the Void Gate passage is not only unstable but also likely to lead to chaotic flows. Even if it's a real passage, the other side could be soil, lava, or ocean currents."

"But someone learned from Fate Questioning that the correct way to use the Void Gate Spirit is underground. The farther from the surface, the more stable the Void Gate passage, and it's easier to refresh a real passage... We're here to create a real passage to the Gospel Kingdom."

"So, there's already a solution." Ashe grabbed Vesser's shoulders and said excitedly, "The Senlo Kingdom can be destroyed, but before its destruction, we can create a stable Void Gate passage to transfer all Senlo people to a safe Kingdom!"

Vesser's lips trembled slightly, but she quickly said, "Other Kingdoms don't welcome foreign travelers. Going there rashly will only be treated as pests!"

"We can go to the Gospel Kingdom!" Ashe said. "The Empress of the Gospel Kingdom is my daughter... my family. I should be able to persuade her to accept the Senlo people, and there are only tens of millions of Senlo people, the Gospel Kingdom can easily absorb them."

"Even if we don't go to the Gospel Kingdom, going to the Blood Moon or other Kingdoms is still better than staying in the wasteland waiting to die. Going to other Kingdoms at least offers a chance of survival, but staying in the wasteland means only perishing with the Dream!"

Vesser shook her head, "But how could they possibly be willing to leave the wasteland? Senlo people are religious fanatics; they only wish to stay in the Senlo Kingdom to realize their ideal. Moreover, this is their homeland... Even if it's barren and chaotic, the night sky starless, and Choking Green rampant, it's still the land that gave birth to them and raised them."

"Yes, I also think it's difficult to drive the Senlo people away from the wasteland. I've been pondering how to solve this problem since I came. After all, even if evidence is presented, the vast majority will certainly not believe such a thing-they cannot accept such a future." Ashe looked at Vesser and said seriously, "But you've already solved this biggest difficulty!"

"Me?"

“As you gradually take over the Senlo Dream, the wasteland will also turn into a dead land, as if Doomsday is approaching step by step!” Ashe said, “Even religious fanatics cannot squander their lives in a certain death situation; they will surely save their lives for when it’s more necessary.”

“If the newly born Void Gate concept is the key to unlocking the deadlock, then Silver Lantern, you are the hand to untie the knot! Precisely because of your pressure, whether Senlo sorcerers are willing or not, they will inevitably study how to use the Void Gate Spirit to escape the wasteland!”

“By then, the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo, the Senlo people, the Senlo Kingdom, can all start anew,” Ashe said. “Silver Lantern, you don’t need to try any harder.”

Vesser quietly slid down, her expression dazed, sitting on the beach murmuring, “It seems... really feasible.”

She wasn’t unaware of the Void Gate Spirit, but after trying it a few times, she felt its use was too random and didn’t pay much attention. Moreover, she had been unable to log into the Virtual Realm due to soul damage, and in reality, besides gathering Intelligence, she was less active outside, all of which led Vesser to misjudge the Void Gate Spirit.

“If that’s the case, isn’t the Gray Fox sorcerer terribly wrong?” Vesser suddenly laughed, “And the Chasm Sovereign of Senlo too, all those who died in the Dead City...”

Ashe squatted down, looking at her, and said, “Actually, they didn’t choose wrong; it’s just that when they made their choice, there wasn’t a better option.”

“Two hundred years ago, that was the right choice; when you entered the Dead City, it was the right choice; even when I first came to the Senlo wasteland, it was still the right choice.”

“But who could have foreseen that the newly formed concept would be a Void Gate concept that could regularize time travel between Kingdoms?” Ashe thought it was funny too, “Were the four who seized the Inheritance all aiming to time travel between Kingdoms?”

Vesser was startled, glanced at him, and silently watched the little hermit crab crawling out of the sand.

“Moreover, their efforts weren’t in vain. If you hadn’t become the Dream Master, this migration plan wouldn’t even be possible,” Ashe said. “No one knows when they will become the protagonist chosen by fate.”

“So, let’s go.”

Ashe reached out to her, “Let’s go back and reverse this tragedy.”

Vesser looked at him calmly, silent for a long time, gradually revealing a helpless smile, and extended her hand-

To push Ashe's hand away.

"I'm not you; I don't have an excess of justice, nor am I interested in watching those I don't know applaud me," Vesser stood up and said, "If you want to be the savior, go ahead. Anyway, you have to return to the Gospel Kingdom, even if it's just to bring your Empress some population benefits."

Ashe was somewhat surprised and asked in confusion, "What about you? Aren't you leaving?"

"Why should I leave?" Vesser walked into the shallow water, letting the sea wash over her calves. "Whether there's a Void Gate or not, what I need to do remains unchanged."

Ashe looked at her back and asked, "Are you still determined to destroy Senlo? To stay here and be buried with Senlo?"

"Yes, I'm not leaving." Vesser shrugged. "I've been planning this for over a decade. Senlo's average lifespan is only 25 years. This matter has spanned my childhood, youth, and adulthood; it's my life... If I give it up, it would be like denying my own life."

"Senlo people are all religious fanatics, and I'm no exception." She lifted her head and closed her eyes, letting the sea breeze caress her face. "Destroying Senlo is my faith."

Ashe shook his head. "But now there's a Void Gate, you can just let Senlo fend for itself in the future; there's no need..."

“In Senlo, faith has always been a necessity of life,” Vesser said. “And do you really need me to spell it out for you-I enjoy this work.”

“Huh?”

“In the beginning, I might have truly run around to save people, feeling joy in saving lives. But later, I realized what truly ignited all my passion was the act of destroying the world.”

“I want to see the grandeur of world destruction, see the remnants after the destruction, listen to the earth’s wails, look at the scars in the sky, feel the wind’s escape, and see the sea part.” Vesser turned her face to look at Ashe. “Just like some sorcerers fly towards the sun until they burn out, some want to slay the white bull to shake the Virtual Realm, and some turn themselves into experimental subjects for random modifications...”

“So there are also lives born for destruction.”

Ashe asked, “Even if it means dying?”

“I’m not the Mercury Trojan Horse; I’m a normal Senlo person,” Vesser said. “Senlo people aren’t afraid of death. Moreover...”



“Reality is just a momentary delusion, and the virtual realm is the eternal future,” she said. “I’ve already proven the first part, and now it’s time to verify the second.”

Reality is just a momentary delusion, and the virtual realm is the eternal future.

Ashe was silent for a moment and said, “I thought you were motivated by guilt, wanting to use your death to atone for your past actions.”

“If thinking that way leaves a good impression of me on you, then think that way,” Vesser said. “But isn’t it possible that as a Dream Master, I simply can’t leave this layer?”

“This is the starting point of the Dream and also my cage.” Vesser raised her hands in a lifting gesture. “Once I completely take over the Senlo Dream, I’ll support the entire Senlo Dream here until it completely collapses into ruins.”

“Whether the Senlo people can be saved or not, my fate is already sealed.” Vesser lowered her hands and said, “But thank you. Your words mean a lot to me.”

Ashe sighed, “Is there no way?”

“For a mortal to untie one dead knot is remarkable enough; don’t think about challenging a second one,” Vesser said. “By the way, if you want to save people, don’t go around talking about my affairs. Continue with the old propaganda about me.”

“What do you mean?”

“The world is going to end, and it’s Silver Lantern’s doing.” Vesser’s lips curled upward. “I guarantee this statement will make them believe in Doomsday 50% more and increase their speed by 20%.”

“Indeed.” Ashe’s lips curled upward as he shook his head. “Your infamy is known from the Four Pillars Cult to the Transcendent Cult.”

“Isn’t there always a story about a demon king who wants to destroy the world for no apparent reason? Although it’s cliché, it’s the easiest story to believe.” Vesser said, “Since someone has to be the savior, someone has to be the demon king, and I am the demon king.”

She pointed behind Ashe, and a Fog Gate quietly formed.

“Go on.” Vesser said, “Next time we meet, it’ll be in the eternal Virtual Realm.”

Ashe said, “Usually, that’s called a farewell.”

“But I think it’s a reunion,” Vesser said. “By then, there won’t be any delusions.”

With that, Vesser turned to look at her reflection in the sea. She suddenly remembered something: should she tell him that Silver Lantern is actually Vesser? After all, taking such a secret to the grave is meaningless, not even a burial offering.

Ashe would surely realize that Vesser was the mole from the start, and that she had used rhetoric in the Virtual Realm to guide his actions in reality. But at this point, Vesser didn't care if Ashe would dislike her even more.

But even if she didn't say it, he would find out sooner or later. Thinking this way, she decided not to say it-Vesser had already ruined one of his chances to solve the mystery in the Dead City, so this time she'd let him enjoy the pleasure of discovering the truth.

Thinking this, Vesser suddenly felt something strange and turned to see that Ashe hadn't left yet.

However, Ashe wasn't looking at her; he was staring blankly at the sea behind her.

Vesser turned around and was also stunned.

On the vast azure sea, a battered ship was sailing through the stormy waves. On the highest mast stood three figures.

As the ship approached the beach, it gradually began to disintegrate. The three figures on the mast remained unmoved, and when the ship was finally broken down, it conveniently delivered them to the edge of the beach, where they stepped onto the soft sand.

During this process, Ashe and Vesser had unknowingly stood together, watching these three Uninvited Guests with vigilance.

“Hello, successor.”

The first to speak was a handsome man with glasses, dressed in a white feathered trench coat and wearing a white top hat. “Nice to meet you, I’m Dove.”

Another figure, a red-haired cat-eared girl wearing a white shirt and black suspender skirt, waved enthusiastically and giggled, “Hello, I’m Fire Cat!”

The long-legged woman with blue hair and a white feathered dress said coldly, “Bluebird.”