Empress 731

Chapter 731: Can’t Pay, Not Buying

The Netherworld is void, the Netherworld is real.

This is an inter-dimensional prison, imprisoning exiles from countless worlds.

It is a place of filth that the power of the gods refuses to touch, a life-forbidden zone where even the power of demons hesitates.

No one wants to come here voluntarily, yet many decide not to leave once they arrive.

The residents of the Netherworld never consider themselves prisoners; they pride themselves on being called Free People.

As long as they don't leave the Netherworld, it is the freest place in the world.

The Netherworld has only a few basic rules to ensure the residents' freedom of action; there is no government, no police, no military, only places for trade and debate.

Of course, the rules for debate here are simple: might makes right.

When Roland arrived at the Netherworld, he looked at the rotund fellow with an adorable demeanor welcoming guests at the city gate and momentarily thought he had come to the wrong place.

"Is this the Netherworld?" Roland pondered briefly and chose to ask directly.

"Outsider, this is indeed the Netherworld, but I would prefer you to call it the Land of Freedom," the genial rotund fellow continued smiling with squinted eyes, not offended.

"If I wish to pass through to the Sea of Annihilation, what will it cost?"

Seeing the man who looked every bit like a merchant's greeter, Roland decided to be forthright.

"The Sea of Annihilation?"

The fat man's eyes widened in surprise, then his expression turned serious, "There are two ways: one is to gain permission from the Judge, the other is to sneak in."

"What's the difference?" Roland asked curiously.

"If you gain the Judge's permission, you'll remain a friend; if you sneak in, you'll be an enemy," the fat man stated calmly.

Roland thought for a moment and softly asked, "Isn't the Sea of Annihilation a one-way trip?"

"Thus far, no one has come back from the Sea of Annihilation."

The fat man showed a kind smile, "But just because it hasn't happened doesn't mean it won't. You know, a good businessman never says never."

"Indeed."

Roland nodded in agreement and casually asked, "How did the previous visitors choose?"

"Unfortunately, they chose to become the Land of Freedom's enemies."

The fat man shrugged and lightly mocked, "Since they made such a choice, even if they could come back, they would still be enemies of the Land of Freedom, so they were doomed."

"Any chance to break through the Judge's blockade?" Roland frowned.

"Only a fool who doesn't understand the Judge's power would think so."

The fat man snorted, "Under the Divine Domain, the Judge is invincible, otherwise, he wouldn't hold sway over this lawless region. Well, I told you so much because you don't seem like a single-minded fool, make your decision."

"It's a pity, a pretty young lady a few days ago had already decided to make a deal, but backed out at the last moment, angering the Judge greatly."

The fat man stopped abruptly, perhaps realizing his slip, he glared at Roland in irritation and growled softly:

"Make your decision quickly, I'm busy."

"Sorry, one more question, what is the cost to impress the Judge?" Roland squinted his eyes.

"Pay the most precious thing, or a part of the soul, anyway, it can be negotiated."

The fat man was clearly impatient, urging Roland once again to decide.

The most precious thing or a part of the soul?

Sorry, I can't afford it.

Invincible under the Divine Domain? Roland didn't agree.

He didn't believe anyone at the same level could defeat Sofia, and now that Sofia had regained her peak strength, her power must be above the Judge's.

As long as he held out until Sofia came to his aid, he had nothing to fear from the Judge.

To rescue Sif, he couldn't pay any price.

From the start, he never intended to trade; he was just toying with the fat man to gather intelligence.

His plan was flawless; the fat man indeed thought of him as a flexible merchant willing to trade anything.

From what he heard, the pretty young lady who went into the Sea of Annihilation before was Sif.

Having been with him for a long time, Sif's approach had also become flexible; as long as there was the possibility of a deal, she wouldn't refuse.

The most precious thing? No need to think twice about what it is.

Since Sif didn't want to trade, how could he accept it?

Roland nodded, smiling, and said, "Thank you for the introduction, I've made my decision."

Charge in!

Tossing a smoke bomb, Roland's figure disappeared at the far end of the horizon.

In the Netherworld, there are seven entrances to the Sea of Annihilation. Without a government or army, naturally, there are no specific gatekeepers.

The so-called Judge only holds the strongest power, everyone gives him face, he can't maintain an army.

The Judge has a few Patrollers under his command to maintain order, but they're not used to guard the black hole-like place of no return.

Roland appeared to charge the gate directly but actually circled back to the city center of the Netherworld.

The most dangerous place is the safest place.

The darkest spot is truly dark.

Gold is a universally accepted hard currency. When Roland entered the Netherworld, he used a special method to seal three thousand kilograms of gold in an independent space to bring it in.

This money would be wasted if not spent.

Doing some shopping in the Netherworld before heading to the Sea of Annihilation.

The fat merchant rushed angrily to report the negotiation failure to the Judge. Soon, several Patrollers left the city heading to the Sea of Annihilation's entrance to intercept Roland.

They might not be able to stop Roland, but a slight delay would suffice.

The Judge would appear with the force of wind and thunder, crushing those who show disrespect.

After being severely reprimanded by the Judge, the fat man finally waited for the Judge's dismissive wave, leaving drenched in sweat.

He walked angrily into a bar, intending to find a seat and have a few drinks, only to find every seat taken. According to the shop's rules, unless a table's patrons agreed to let him join them, he couldn't force himself to sit down.

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After scanning the room, he fixed his gaze on the table in the corner and walked over.

"Can I join you at the table, my friend? I'll pay for your drink," the chubby man tentatively asked.

"I'll pay for your drink, but disappear immediately," the guest, whose face was partly concealed by a mask, croaked out, his attitude exceedingly hostile.

"Sorry, I misspoke. How about this?" The chubby man took out a few gold coins and placed them on the table.

The guest across the table felt the texture of the coins, stood up, and said in a deep voice, "Deal. I won't disturb your enjoyment."

The guest collected the coins and swiftly rolled away, lifting the chubby man's spirits slightly.

It was a common transaction, as this bar was the best in the Netherworld and seats were scarce. It made sense to pay a price to get those occupying the seats to lift their heavy rumps.

In the Netherworld, if you're willing to pay enough, there are few things you can't buy.

The chubby man did not notice that the mysterious customer quickly slipped into an unoccupied corner with his gold coins and skillfully melted them in a crucible.

The gold coins quickly transformed into gold bars.

The mysterious guest breathed a sigh of relief; fortunately, the world's gold purity was similar to Theia's.

After confirming there were no issues, the mysterious guest melted all the gold he carried into coins indistinguishable from those given by the chubby man.

Melting gold is not a sophisticated technique, especially for a Tier Three Transcendent.

Once the coins were ready, the mysterious guest skillfully aged the coins and, after multiple confirmations to ensure there were no flaws, he left the alley and bought a delicate milky white pendant at a roadside jewelry shop.

Roland was surprised to find a necklace with such pure divine attributes available for sale in the Netherworld.

Though he couldn't understand why a weathered man bathed in Holy Light would come to the Netherworld to sell Holy Light jewelry, that wasn't important. The important thing was the shop offered good quality at an affordable price, perfect for picking a gift for Christine.

Giving girls a formal gift, jewelry is naturally an excellent choice.

But choosing what to give is crucial.

The best magic jewelry is naturally a ring, but giving it to Christine was impossible.

Clergy members don't wear rings, and rings are hardly exchanged between non-romantic heterosexuals.

Bracelets are also an excellent choice but likewise unsuitable for clergy members.

Clergy often wear pendants, pocket watches, brooches, and simple necklaces.

Necklaces function similarly to rings, thus immediately ruled out.

Pocket watches hold special meaning for Roland, and thus are the second to be ruled out for gifting.

Brooches might work, but the ones here all had non-mainstream designs, not quite fitting.

Roland's gaze quickly focused on the pendant.

The milky white divine attribute pendant had no additional attributes; it simply stored vast quantities of refined divine energy.

Christine could freely use this divine energy, and it was truly beautiful.

With a drop-shaped appearance resembling a teardrop and a smooth glossy surface, it felt very comfortable to touch. When placed against the chest, it gave a unique cooling sensation, refreshing the mind and incredibly soothing.

This thing could be worn around the neck or placed against the chest; how to use it was entirely up to Christine.

Before setting off on the adventure, he promised Christine a gift, and he wouldn't break his word.

He understood well that unless it was a divine artifact, Christine did not care much for the gift itself; she was more eager for Roland to return alive.

Only by coming back alive could he bring gifts.

Thanks for your support; I'll definitely return!

Roland took a deep breath, then prepared gifts for Alina, Lisa, and Sofia.

He didn't prepare a gift for Sif.

Not that the old couple lacked love, but...

What gift could be more precious than crossing the tiers of death to save you?

I'm coming!

Roland spent all his gold coins, swapped his last change for a bottle of strong liquor, downed it heavily, and strode towards the entrance to the Sea of Annihilation.

Though he didn't understand why, he did indeed descend from the dream world to the Netherworld, entering the Death World.

Perhaps guided by Sif's soul fragment, he could faintly perceive the correct direction.

It's foggy.

This was the Netherworld's most common ill-fated mist, with extremely low visibility. Prolonged exposure to fog can bring misfortune, hence it's called ill-fated mist.

Patrollers quickly returned to the city, hid in rooms, and bid farewell to that damned mist.

The bustling street instantaneously became devoid of people.

Roland, walking alone on the street, stood out slightly. Fortunately, the mist was quite dense; nobody saw him, which kept him unnoticed.

The Sea of Annihilation drew ever closer, and Roland's heartbeat kept accelerating.

While he couldn't fully grasp the methods of entering the Netherworld, he could still fathom its possibility, but Sofia's entrance shook his worldview.

The living cannot enter the Netherworld; this is an ironclad law.

After death, the soul is awakened from its shell by a Guide and enters the Netherworld in the form of a soul body.

No matter how powerful one is in life, as a soul body, their strength is reduced to less than one ten-thousandth, leaving them powerless and at the mercy of the Netherworld's minions.

Through dreams, Roland transformed his complete soul and consciousness into a spirit body, entering the Netherworld as a Void Spirit, retaining most of his power and control over it.

A Void Spirit Body straddles the line between life and death. Without close observation, it's indistinguishable from a soul body, but with careful scrutiny, it reveals a physique more substantial than a soul's, distinctive in its own right.

Roland initially believed that Sofia, like him, used a dream passage to enter the Netherworld; he hadn't imagined she had brute-forced entry with her flesh and blood by some unknown means.

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Creatures with flesh and blood are a dimensional attack against Netherworld souls and Netherworld armies.

Unless a God descends, Sophia is truly invincible here.

The Netherworld Judge is a fake invincible, Sophia is truly invincible.

Roland maliciously imagined the scene of the Judge being chopped to pieces by Sophia.

Unfortunately, this scene probably won't play out, Sophia may not want to come to the Netherworld. She might continue to massacre stronger Netherworld armies in the Netherworld to hone her combat techniques.

So...how did she manage to come in?

Roland curiously glanced back, just in time to sense a ghostly shadow approaching through the thick fog.

So quickly, is it the Judge?

Without any hesitation, Roland stepped into the entrance, entering the third tier of the Land of Death, the Sea of Annihilation.

The moment he crossed the entrance, a black-as-ink scythe slashed through the air, just hitting the sole of Roland's shoe and cutting away the dirt he had carried from the Netherworld.

The dirt from the Netherworld fell at the entrance to the Sea of Annihilation and fiercely struck the Judge's heart.

In the mist, what was originally a black face turned a mottled green and purple.

The Judge's heart raced, as if witnessing a terrifying scene.

The true purpose of the Netherworld's existence was not to exile criminals, but to separate the Netherworld from the Sea of Annihilation.

"Since you've entered, don't come out!"

The Judge angrily whispered, "No one can leave the Sea of Annihilation, no one!"

His voice carried endless fury, as if only this could vent the dread in his heart.

Just not long ago, he heard there was a living person in the Netherworld, a complete living person.

He thought of that terrifying prophecy.

A person with complete life will eventually disrupt the incomplete Death World.

He was afraid, but more curious.

The Netherworld repels living beings, even Gods from the outside world cannot enter, this is the rule of the universe, inviolable.

So how did that woman manage it?

...

Of course, through death and resurrection.

Sophia quietly wiped the green liquid off the sword blade, her face expressionless.

The Netherworld has native creatures, Nether Spirits.

These Nether Spirits, unlike the soul bodies that fall into the Netherworld, have flesh and blood, albeit green blood.

Sophia pondered for a moment, then pierced her wrist with her fingertip, gazing at the green blood flowing out with slight bewilderment.

She is now unmistakably a Nether Spirit, able to perfectly control the aura of a living person.

Roland was very curious about how she managed to enter the Netherworld alive, but she never said, letting Roland be tormented by curiosity.

Living people naturally cannot enter the Netherworld; this is a fundamental rule of the universe, one that none can defy, including her.

When Roland entered the Netherworld through dreamscape, she simultaneously destroyed her physical body, attaching in energy form to Roland to enter the Netherworld.

After death, when converting to energy form, one cannot retain the soul, which is also a universal rule.

Therefore, at the moment of her death, Sophia injected her soul completely into the black and white gems Roland carried.

Upon entering the Netherworld, she was thoroughly dead.

Upon entering, she immediately reversed the energy back into a physical form.

Due to time constraints, she could only temporarily retain a human form, thus becoming a monster magnet.

After slaughtering numerous Nether Spirits, she finally found a way to transform herself into a Nether Spirit.

"Here, the Nether Spirit form might be more useful."

Sophia silently muttered.

"Roland, you've created countless miracles, can you do it again this time?"

As Sophia murmured, Roland happened to step into the Sea of Annihilation, evading the Judge's killing blow.

The Sea of Annihilation, boundless, unsupported.

This is complete void.

Not the void attributes of magic, nor the concept of nothingness, but truly devoid of anything.

Roland's body floated in the air, without land to stand on.

This feeling of emptiness, unable to grasp anything, was truly awful.

Yet his eyes suddenly emitted a look of delight.

He saw Sif curled up, with lifeless eyes.

She was barefoot, her silky long hair strewn across her shoulders, eyes vacant, as quiet as a corpse.

Roland took a deep breath, using his mind to drive his body and approached Sif.

The gloomy Sea of Annihilation, for the first time, had light. The light of hope blossomed in his heart.

"Sif!"

His shout rang out at his lips, then dissipated.

The Sea of Annihilation has no air, not even dark matter; there's nothing, so sound cannot travel.

When the energy brought in runs out, annihilation will come.

Sitting among a pile of Soul Fragments, Sif seemed to sense something. Her previously hollow gaze gained some vitality, looking towards the moving Roland.

His movements were somewhat clumsy, yet his eyes were extraordinarily gentle.

Sif slowly stood up, tears welled in her eyes, but she couldn't cry out.

Her energy was about to run out, even excitement felt powerless.

Her life flame was about to extinguish, but she was not sad.

Annihilating in her lover's arms was a kind of romance.

The only regret was that Roland would be buried with her.

She couldn't bear to leave Roland to those few women, but she couldn't bear Roland's death even more.

If there was a choice, she'd rather Roland return home safely.

Even if there were no traces of her at home anymore.

Finally, she cried out, her lament soon disappearing at her lips.

"Roland, Roland, you're really here."

Even if they disappear forever, this moment is eternal.

Fingertips touched, their bodies tightly embraced, exchanging consciousness at the touch.

No words were necessary between them, yet they could clearly understand each other's hearts.

Roland unreservedly transferred half of his energy to Sif.

He decided to work with Sif in search of a way out.

If they couldn't find one, they would burn out together, annihilate together.

Sif wasn't theatrically sobbing, nor hysterically venting, she just calmly looked at Roland.

Countless moments flooded her awareness, as if returning to the instant they first met.

That essay competition, that absurd short story "Oh my, the Empress is pregnant, who did it?"

If you're responsible, then take me home.

Sif's gaze grew softer, embracing Roland firmly, unwilling to separate in the slightest.

Chapter 734: How Much Is Your Life Worth?

The true Land of Annihilation is a place where nothing exists.

It is easy to move in any direction, but it is meaningless, seeming like a lot of movement but actually akin to standing still.

This is the Sea of Annihilation.

No one knows where it came from, how it was formed, or where its boundaries lie.

In the Sea of Annihilation, the energy consumption rate is extremely slow, but no energy is ever produced; creatures trapped here gradually face annihilation in endless despair.

Sif easily gathered all the Soul Fragments, her body and soul completely restored to peak condition.

This is indeed something to be happy about, if she could leave.

But she sees no hope of leaving.

Even though she imagined the situation to be bad enough before entering the Sea of Annihilation, this true void made Roland and Sif understand what despair truly is.

Here, there is no matter, no energy, naturally, no enemies exist.

Sticking close to Sif, Roland communicated with her through their souls, with virtually zero energy consumption.

As long as they accept being idle, they can exist here until the end of time, until the world collapses.

They even avoided the apocalypse of the Theia Plane here.

If they don't care about the quality of life after eternal life, this could even be a form of eternity.

But can one still be considered human if they are motionless?

People pursue immortality to explore the world with an eternal life, to enjoy life, not to stand like a rock.

This kind of eternity, at least Roland does not want.

"What should we do?" Sif couldn't help but ask Roland.

Even though she didn't want to add pressure on Roland, nor affect his thinking, this desolate emptiness was truly unbearable.

"Wait."

Roland was quite calm.

"When Sofia descends into the Netherworld, we will have a chance to sense her location and escape from here."

Sif fell into silence.

Roland was right, just a few days ago, she had vaguely sensed Roland's location.

At the time, she thought it was a delusion caused by her concern, and didn't pay it much heed.

Although she believed Roland's love for her was unreserved, she wasn't sure if this love was strong enough for him to face triple death.

If Roland didn't come, she would only feel regret, not resentment.

After all, Roland's world wasn't just about her; there was an entire plane.

Letting go of everything to find her, although romantic, might seem somewhat impulsive.

With Roland's rational reality, he would surely be pained for her, but certainly wouldn't come.

Yet Roland came.

All interest-based calculations seemed so pale and powerless in the face of "Sif in peril."

Having a loved one by her side made it worth it even if shattered to pieces in this life.

But she truly was reluctant to die, reluctant to leave this beautiful and regret-filled world.

When Roland appeared, the Sea of Annihilation, void of light, was filled with sunshine, flowers, and laughter.

This is the power of love.

It transcends everything, transcends...

Unfortunately, while love can transcend all, it cannot replace all. Back in reality, Sif had to face the harsh problems.

Should they exhaust their energy in a grand finale, turtle-like survival, or continue searching for an exit?

None of the options seem the best choice.

So she left the choice to Roland.

However, she never imagined Roland would gamble everything on Sofia.

"You and her..."

Sif's heart raced slightly.

Although she could accept Roland having other women, she didn't want her first position to be shaken.

Lisa and Alina were both excellent women, but she came early, and already held a leading position.

The only one who could make her feel threatened was Sofia.

Her formidable strength and glacial queenly presence were enough to conquer any man.

Could it be...

Sif didn't want to lose composure in front of Roland, but in the Sea of Annihilation, her consciousness was linked with Roland's, allowing them to clearly sense each other's every thought.

Roland could barely hold back his laughter at her wild thoughts.

"Don't overthink. Sofia indeed has great allure, but not as a woman, rather as a formidable being."

"Admiring her strength doesn't necessarily mean thinking in that way."

"She is a goddess, and I am just a mortal, so it's impossible."

Sif felt a bit embarrassed.

Because of their soul and consciousness link, she could of course feel Roland's sincerity.

Yet she was still somewhat unconvinced.

"Is being a goddess that impressive? Our goal is to defeat the three goddesses and take their place. If you don't even have the confidence to marry a goddess, what talk is there of a challenge?"

Influenced by Sif's confidence, Roland responded with a laugh: "I already married a goddess, just the three of them, that's enough."

He was referring to Sif, Lisa, and Alina.

Although only Sif had a formal wedding, Alina was a lover, and Lisa a sister, in essence, they were all his lovers.

For some reason, upon saying this, Roland and Sif almost simultaneously thought of another person.

Christine.

Then they both breathed a sigh of relief.

Thankfully, she was a devout believer, her life already dedicated to the Light, without other intentions.

After the wild thoughts came endless silence.

Roland and Sif relaxed their spirits quietly, patiently waiting.

What if they couldn't wait for Sofia? Then they would burn out the last flame of their lives here; as long as they had a loved one by their side, annihilation would not be a terrible end.

...

The flow of time in the Netherworld is very slow, but compared to the Netherworld, it's as if time flies.

Time in the Netherworld is almost stagnant, making it almost impossible to feel the passage of time here.

In the largest bar in Freedom City, a stern-faced beautiful woman sat there with a glass of water in front of her, with no one around.

When she was here, the other patrons in the bar dared not speak loudly, nor did they dare sit at the tables near her.

Every time the bar owner saw her, he felt a toothache.

This damn woman made his business hard every time she visited.

Not everyone wanted to experience a library's atmosphere in a bar; most people came to bars to enjoy the noise and heat.

You must keep quiet in a library; must you also be quiet in a bar? Isn't that a wasted trip?

Just as the owner thought, when the cold woman appeared, a few customers who were drinking became uninterested and paid their tabs to leave.

The owner forced a smile, helplessly seeing off the guests; when his back was to the cold woman, he wore a look of disdain, but when he turned around, he greeted her with a smile as bright as a flower.

Three days, a whole three days!

When the woman entered the bar and asked about the prices of various drinks, he answered truthfully, thinking she was a big spender, but then she asked if plain water was free.

The owner thought to himself, "I'm not running a black market shop; can I really charge for a glass of water?" Calmly, he said, "It's free."

The cold woman sat down boldly, ordered a glass of plain water, and then sat in a daze.

After all, running a bar in the Netherworld meant he had seen all kinds of people; many were far stranger than her.

Though she didn't spend money, he wasn't bothered over a glass of water.

The owner wishfully assumed the cold woman just didn't have money on her and was shy about asking, so she came for a glass of water to wet her throat, intending to leave after drinking it.

Thinking of it as a good deed, he let her be.

After all, the woman was beautiful; admiring her more was a bonus.

However, the owner soon regretted it.

After the woman sat down, she demanded that people around her should not make noise.

What's a bar? A place to have fun and vent emotions. The people who came here couldn't stand it and went up to argue.

However, the cold woman completely ignored those who came to argue; if anyone dared to make a noise, she would act.

She didn't hit anyone; she just froze their drink into ice and stuffed it into their mouth to block their throat when they spoke.

Such provocative behavior naturally aroused public wrath, several drinking patrons rushed over, only to be thrown out of the bar and slammed onto the street.

Those who could survive in the Netherworld mostly had fighting prowess; those who dared to make a move in a bar usually had some unique skills, yet these usually arrogant guys couldn't fight back against the woman.

The woman tossed them out like trash.

Those thrown out weren't injured, they just couldn't get up.

After a few back and forths, everyone knew this woman was not to be trifled with and dared not oppose her.

If they couldn't provoke her, they could avoid her; since coming to the bar was unhappy, they simply stopped coming.

The owner stared hard at the cold woman, slowly making his way behind the bar, his broad hands touching the heavy sword below the counter.

He squinted, his eyes turning from black to bright red.

His body swelled a bit larger, transforming from a greasy middle-aged man to an enraged maniac.

His youthful adventures replayed in his mind, the glorious past of causing havoc throughout the realm of Kalia before being sent to the Netherworld made his expression instantly bold.

"Damn it, I've never been humiliated like this in my life. If I endure this, then..."

The owner's pupils suddenly enlarged, his thick hands slightly trembled, his red eyes turned black again, and he changed back from a gallant Berserker to a greasy middle-aged man.

He saw the cold woman slicing half a glass of water with her slender fingers, lightly flicking it so that the water seemed obedient like jelly and was sent into her mouth.

He drew a sharp intake of breath, all his boldness vanished into thin air.

As everyone knows, if a blade is fast enough, it can cut water in a short time and even create the astonishing visual effect of water flowing backward.

When he was young, the owner himself could swing the heavy sword like a fan, impenetrable to water.

He had once cut through an entire river, splitting the water for several seconds.

The Water Severing Sword Saint was a name earned through merit.

But all of that relied on the sword being exceptionally quick.

The cold woman separated a glass of water with a very gentle motion, even changing the basic property of the water, a kind of power he had never even heard of.

This level of power control was beyond his comprehension and made him wisely give up on resisting.

He lowered his head in frustration, but happened to see the remaining half glass of water float into the woman's palm, where it started to burn.

The crystalline water leaped in her palm in the form of flames.

Waves of heat came towards him, proving it wasn't an illusion.

The owner's legs almost gave out, and he nearly kneeled on the spot.

To say cutting half a glass of water barely stayed within his realm of understanding, lighting the water on fire shattered his conception of the world.

He collapsed into the chair in despair, eyes staring blankly.

At least, at least she wasn't murderous. At worst, he'd lose some money, consider it an appearance fee for such a spectacular show.

Gritting his teeth, the owner was just about to admit defeat and soften his stance when the woman waved at him.

The owner, trembling with fear, shuffled his steps as if going to execution, carefully putting on a fawning expression in front of the woman.

"Dear madam, what can I do for you?"

"Name?" the woman asked, her calm voice was indescribably icy.

"Cook Harris." The owner dared not delay and answered instantly.

"Sofia, I want to discuss a business deal with you."

"Please, go ahead."

"I need money and information."

Want money? The owner breathed a sigh of relief.

If money can solve the problem, no matter how big, it's a small problem; isn't it just being extorted? So be it.

He patted his chest, boldly expressing to Sofia, "Respected Miss Sofia, just state how much you want, I'll give it all as long as I don't go bankrupt."

Sofia's expression suddenly turned colder, the flame in her palm immediately froze, shattering on the ground.

Cook, the owner, was scared out of his wits, completely clueless about which of his words offended the female god of death before him, his body shaking uncontrollably.

"Do I look like a beggar?" Sofia asked indifferently.

The owner almost burst into tears, surely you aren't a beggar, you are a robber.

Sofia didn't make things difficult for him, she simply said calmly: "I could kill you."

Cook lowered his head in despair, unable to speak, he couldn't refute.

"If you want to live, pay ransom."

Cook was left speechless, it was his first time seeing someone package robbery so uniquely.

He was drenched in sweat, calculating for a long time, tremblingly took a check out of his pocket, hesitated for a while before writing a number, holding it out with both hands.

Sofia didn't make things difficult for him, she just added a zero at the end, then accepted the check.

Cook's expression instantly collapsed, he wanted to speak, but couldn't say a word.

Sofia said calmly, "For you to consider so long, the price should be about right. So, I accept."

Cook was so angry that his lips trembled.

To agree and still multiply by ten, what kind of twisted logic is that?

"Did you send someone to tip off to catch me?"

Cook was drenched in sweat all over, his whole body, the fat and the muscular bulk hidden beneath, shook.

He dared not deny, nor dare to admit, he just wished to faint.

"Such actions deserve to be killed ten times, demanding tenfold penalty is very reasonable, isn't it?"

What else could Cook say? Bargaining could perhaps raise the price even higher.

He just didn't quite understand, wasn't the Judge the strongest in Freedom City? If someone was causing trouble here, would he really ignore it?

Sofia saw through Cook's little trick at a glance, mockingly teasing, "Guess why he doesn't dare to come?"

Did Cook dare to speak?

It was obvious; he thought it was a small matter and couldn't be bothered.

But Sofia's next words made him nearly burst into laughter.

"Because he doesn't want to die."

Cook finally couldn't help but laugh, "Miss Sofia, I admit your strength is unmatched, but the Judge is invincible below the Divine Domain, you are too arrogant."

Sofia chuckled softly, reached into the air with a grasp, causing the account book and pen on the bar to fly over.

Sofia casually tore out a page from the account book, wrote an astronomical figure on it, and tossed it to Cook.

She filled the glass with plain water again, overturned the glass in mid-air, allowing the water to fall like sand in an hourglass, dripping steadily.

"If you don't ransom your life before the water runs out, then don't bother coming."

Cook fearfully watched the floating "sand clock" of water in mid-air, drenched in sweat.

It was clear the woman was here to pick a quarrel.

The Netherworld was in serious trouble.

Chapter 736: If You Don’t Know, Then Die

The damn woman finally scrammed!

Only the Judge has a way to do this. As expected of the most powerful man in the Netherworld, he can actually dissuade Sofia...

Can't he?

The pub's old customers returned to their usual spots, ordered strong drinks, and began to boast and talk.

However, the boss Cook, who should have been the happiest, couldn't manage a smile.

Did he really dissuade her? He's somewhat doubtful.

Recalling Sofia's marvelous skills, Cook still shuddered involuntarily.

The clear water flames flickering in his palm was a scene he could never forget in his life.

Exceptionally beautiful, exceedingly terrifying.

Although the Judge is powerful, Cook could understand his methods, which are far too different from Sofia's.

But in any case, it's good that the issue is resolved...

Cook's eyes suddenly widened as the bottle he had just held slipped from his grasp, leaving him dumbfounded.

Even if a ghost stood before him, he wouldn't be this shocked.

After all, strictly speaking, every Netherworld resident has died at least once; they're all souls.

Yet standing at the door was Sofia.

Why is this nightmarishly frightening woman here again? Didn't the Judge announce that her issue was resolved? Is this considered resolved?

No time to brood, Cook, wearing a mournful expression, hurriedly greeted her.

"Miss Sofia, are you here to patronize my little tavern?"

"Hmm." Sofia nodded calmly.

Cook lacked even the strength to cry; the only reason he didn't faint was the chill down his spine.

Just when he thought Sofia was here to extort him again, a bag of gold coins was tossed onto the bar.

"Give me your finest wine; it must be aged red wine."

Cook took several seconds to come back to his senses, quickly replacing his expression with a fawning smile, "You're too kind. If it's just a few bottles of wine, they're on the house."

"What, do I look like a person who buys without paying?" Sofia lightly frowned.

This sentence instantly heated Cook's face; if it weren't for the fact he couldn't beat her, he would have wanted to fight her desperately.

Damn it, after extorting me just days ago, now she pulls this stunt?

Although indescribable rage burned within his heart, he dared not retort.

Those with the bigger fists hold absolute power, and clearly, Sofia's fists were much bigger.

He dejectedly opened the cupboard behind him, using a slightly rusty key to unlock the hidden compartment within, and reluctantly took out the treasured wines he had collected for years.

Seeing his conflicted and pained expression, Sofia knew the old fellow wasn't holding back, nodding in satisfaction, and had Cook find a box to pack them up for her before she took the box and left.

Aside from the questionable source of money, it looked like just an ordinary shopping trip.

Cook breathed a sigh of relief, carefully opening the bag of gold coins and discovered in astonishment that this bag was from the Judge's subordinates, used to hold money.

The style of the money bag was unique, and there was a short sword emblem at the seal.

Cook's face changed slightly, quickly unpacked the money bag, crumpling it and tossing it into a wastebasket in the corner.

He finally understood what method the Judge used to resolve Sofia's issue.

Throwing money at the problem.

In that moment, the Judge's high and mighty aura was shattered, leaving not a speck of majesty.

Cook wasn't wrong; the Judge indeed threw money at the problem.

That day, he arranged to meet Sofia outside the city on the grounds of preventing destruction within the city, and instantly knelt, using the toughest tone to propose paying to avert disaster.

Faced with the perceptive and tactful Judge, Sofia didn't make things difficult for him, only giving three demands.

First, she was to have liberty of action in the Netherworld.

The Judge dared not defy, and promptly agreed.

Second, she was to have the freedom of shopping in the Netherworld.

The Judge was drenched in sweat, forced to agree.

The Judge was merely a respected and recognized power among the various forces of the Netherworld, without any actual jurisdiction, so he certainly had no authority to make others provide Sofia with free goods.

The so-called shopping freedom just meant paying money.

After Sofia announced a terrifying figure, the Judge's face turned ashen, countless times contemplating taking action, yet each time he clenched his fist, the horrific scene of the Sea of Annihilation flashed before him, leading to his ultimate withdrawal.

It's just shopping freedom, here you go!

Third, she wanted the right to access all Netherworld data.

This too was beyond the Judge's authority, but he promised to persuade the various forces of the Netherworld to accept her demands.

Sofia gave him three days, and today was the last day.

The fragrance of red wine was delightful; sitting alone on the high hill in the wilderness outside the city, Sofia drank, enjoying the unique flavor of the rich red wine, awaiting the result.

The wind arose, footsteps gradually approached.

The answer she awaited was coming.

The Judge did not come, but many others did.

A total of seventy or eighty people at least, though she couldn't be bothered to look closely, those daring to join the encirclement had at least Tier Three's astonishing strength, making Roland's solo attempt to kill them unlikely.

Of course, in Sofia's picky view, none of these people had the potential to surpass Roland.

Given time, Roland slaying this bunch of morons solo wasn't impossible.

All he needed was time.

Sofia constructed in her mind the full-grown template of Roland, then simulated the images of the Netherworld's mighty figures, helping Roland complete a solo run in her mind, suddenly finding herself somewhat disinterested.

The Netherworld, in a way, was somewhat undeserving of its name.

Or rather, people's perceptions of these exiles were somewhat skewed.

They were indeed strong in their original planes, but not the strongest. Otherwise, their enemies would have been the ones exiled.

Disappointed contestants from struggles on the Material Plane, banished to the second layer of the Land of Death, forever unable to escape, ultimately just a group of sturdier prisoners.

Once the terrifying stereotype of the Netherworld is set aside, what remarkable aspects do they possess?

Sofia's lips slightly curled as she continued to savor her wine, completely dismissing the surrounding crowd.

Chapter 737: If You Don’t Know, Just Die (Part 2)

Her confidence comes not only from herself, but also from Sif.

The power of Sif back then was far less than hers now, yet she managed to break free from the Netherworld and charge straight toward the Sea of Annihilation, which clearly demonstrates the true strength of the Netherworld.

If they truly had strength, they wouldn't be confined to the prison of the Land of Death.

The Gate of the Netherworld is right there, yet they don't even have the courage to leave. Clearly, they are not even a match for the Netherworld's army.

After all, the Netherworld is backed by the Death God, and controlled by the Nether Empress Judica at the Nether River Shore, where countless beings from the Material Plane enter the Netherworld as soul bodies, becoming resources for the Netherworld.

The slots for reincarnation are limited, where can those soul bodies go that cannot reincarnate? Naturally, they turn themselves into bricks to build the Netherworld.

Sofia is combative, but not reckless.

In the Netherworld, she always held back, never being too arrogant, and certainly not provoking the Nether Empress Judica across the Nether River.

But the Netherworld is different.

Even the desperate escapee Sif managed to slaughter her way through, so what is there to fear?

Sofia > Sif > Netherworld.

The inequality is transitive, so she's bound to win.

Seeing Sofia act so arrogant, the group of Netherworld residents who initially wanted to discuss cordially became furious, exchanging glances, ultimately having an elder step forward to remind Sofia with a cold snort.

"Ms. Sofia, do you really think you alone can defeat the strong of the Netherworld, or even kill us all?"

Sofia glanced at the elder with the corner of her eye, pondered for a moment, and nodded seriously.

Though a bit challenging, it can be done.

The elder's wrinkled face flushed instantly.

He intended to gain negotiation leverage by suggesting, "No matter how strong you are, can you win against so many people?" aiming for a dignified compromise. He didn't expect Sofia to ignore the convention, not treating him as a person at all.

The elder's anger froze in midair, making him momentarily at a loss.

He wanted to issue an order to attack collectively but dared not.

While he hesitated, a shadow walked up from behind, speaking in a hoarse, deep voice.

"Even Gods would not dare be so arrogant in the Land of Freedom. I..."

"Attack together. I have no interest in the names of the dead." Sofia continued to sway the goblet, her gaze falling on the scarlet liquor as though discussing a trivial matter.

At this point, if you don't attack, there's no point in trying.

The shadow roared furiously, initiating the charge first.

A massive black scythe appeared in hand, gleaming with dark brilliance, swiftly slicing towards Sofia's slender, swan-like neck.

At the moment of attack, magic, arrows, flying knives, firearms, swords and blades were almost simultaneously launched, sealing every inch of space around Sofia.

Before they arrived, they had already rehearsed, targeting the Judge who dared not attack alone.

With everyone besieging him, the Judge soon fled in panic after a brief resistance.

Even if Sofia is stronger than the Judge, everyone's below the Divine Domain. How much stronger can she be?

If everyone attacked together, before she was exhausted, could she kill all of us?

Facing this sophisticated trap, Sofia sighed lightly, put down the goblet, and took out a crystal ball, tossing it into the sky.

Among the crowd, an observant strongman from the Netherworld recognized the crystal ball and shouted in surprise:

"That's the Soros family's crystal ball, used for recording!"

Recording?

The besieging crowd was somewhat confused. Can a recording crystal ball break our siege?

Of course not, but it can record battlefield dynamics.

If this tedious battle doesn't even serve as a tutorial, then it would be quite nonsensical.

Sofia quietly thought.

She didn't draw her sword, but picked up a tree branch broken off a giant tree outside the city.

This branch is almost identical in size and thickness to Roland's scepter, very suitable for simulating Roland's fighting style.

She didn't use the Power of Destruction but summoned the Power of Light, which she had perceived after observing Roland these days.

Although she found the Goddess of Light Tiya detestable, light is not an abhorrent power.

In fact, the Power of Light is very comprehensive, encompassing attack, defense, enhancement, healing, resurrection, and many other functions. Mastering light, life will not be dark.

This isn't religious indoctrination but the truth.

The Power of Destruction specializes in attack and weakening, while the Power of Rebirth excels in defense, assistance, and resurrection. The combination of both perfectly realizes the effectiveness of the Power of Light.

Precisely because the Power of Light is so comprehensive, she deems Roland's potential limitless and despises Tiya even more.

Possessing supreme power yet becoming a servant, it's pathetic.

Let this light illuminate the hopeless Netherworld.

Tiya, Roland, watch closely, this is how the Power of Light is used.

[Illumination]

Milky white light surged from the palm, instantly filling the entire space.

Despite Netherworld being a land of death where talents abound, no one was proficient in positive attribute powers.

The Holy Light illuminated the Netherworld, blinding many attackers, rendering them momentarily incapacitated, unable to see anything.

Netherworld's strongmen only accustomed to dim light exhibited poor adaptability to strong light.

However, precisely because the Netherworld generally only had dim light, they didn't rely heavily on vision and quickly recovered from the chaos, launching another attack just moments later.

Countless projectiles and swords slammed into Sofia almost simultaneously.

A semi-transparent milky white Shield of Light appeared, enveloping Sofia.

Three pairs of Light wings unfolded behind her, resembling an angel's descent.

Upon seeing the three pairs of wings, many strongmen shuddered internally.

At least half of the exiled in this Netherworld had offended the Goddess of Light Tiya to be banished, seeing light descends akin to seeing a ghost.

This momentary bewilderment transformed their perfect rehearsed coordination into a piecemeal attack strategy.

If using the Power of Destruction, it wouldn't be so cumbersome, but now she is recording a teaching piece with the unfamiliar Power of Light for Roland, so technique is required.

Of course, Sofia wouldn't miss this fleeting opportunity, the branch lightly taps the edge of the helmet on the heavily armored samurai at the front.

The heavily armored samurai encased in black Orichalcum armor was nearly immune to direct damage in the short term, almost invincible.

Thus, he charged first, hastening his demise quickest.

Breaking heavy armor open with a thin branch is indeed dreaming, but Sofia wouldn't be hindered by a can.

When the branch tapped the mind, the Holy Light flickered suddenly, the oscillating power permeating the armor, directly liquefying the heavily armored samurai's brain, causing instant brain death.

The fall of the heavily armored samurai left the warriors following him bewildered.

The mightiest warrior collapsed, need the weaker ones ask?

They were initially following in the heavily armored samurai's wake to scrounge for advantage, never expecting to face a horrific monster, and their high morale crumbled instantly.

They had to seriously ponder a question.

Can Sofia actually kill them all?

The answer is obviously yes.

If it weren't for recording a relatively comprehensible teaching piece for Roland, she would have already killed everyone.

Despite the restraint, she was not on the same level as these hapless folks.

Perhaps they believed with everyone below the Divine Domain, the gap wouldn't be large.

Yet they were unaware that Sofia already embarked on an entirely different path.

No need to ascend to the Divine Domain, she can still achieve deification.

They confronted the half-step deified Sofia, the ultimate version touching the fetters Sofia.

Even if Tiya descended personally, without external forces, she wouldn't match Sofia.

This isn't a battle but simple slaughter lessons.

When over one-third had perished, the besieging crowd finally realized something was amiss.

The remaining group couldn't help but plea for mercy from Sofia.

Confronted with their cries, Sofia halted slightly, asking in a deep voice: "Who knows about the Sea of Annihilation?"

The crowd exchanged looks, not understanding the killer's purpose in asking about the Sea of Annihilation.

As they were uncertain about how to respond, Sofia already understood the answer.

If even the most crucial secrets are unknown, what use are these fools?

Being useless, then they should die.

The Netherworld residents have died once, even twice, a further death wouldn't matter.

Sofia raised her scepter, the Holy Light intensified.

Just as she was about to use a group ability to clear the field, someone couldn't help but howl.

"The Land of the Forsaken! The Sea of Annihilation is the Land of the Forsaken!"

Sofia's killing intent halted abruptly, her gaze turned cold.

"How much do you know, speak!"

Chapter 738: The Informer Must Die

Roland had thought about leaving the Sea of Annihilation, but he never imagined it would be in this way.

The people of the Netherworld are tough, Sofia eventually had to wade through rivers of blood to find someone who knew the truth.

Opening the Sea of Annihilation offends the Goddess, and it's only a matter of time before death comes.

Not opening the Sea of Annihilation offends Sofia, and death comes immediately.

While you die whether sooner or later, the consequences of offending Sofia are obviously more severe.

The supposedly inescapable Sea of Annihilation silently opened a small passage, allowing Roland and Sif to walk out, full of surprise.

After exiting the Sea of Annihilation, they were guided by a Guide to the best restaurant in the Netherworld, where they met Sofia in a private room with the best view on the top floor.

The dishes were mostly served, and the red wine was decanted, just waiting for their arrival.

"Take a seat. The cutlery is a bit odd, just make do."

Indeed, it was a bit odd, who would use two thin bamboo sticks as cutlery.

Roland looked at the cutlery resembling chopsticks, the corners of his lips slightly raised, and he said softly, "Thank you for the hospitality."

The lifesaving grace must be thanked, but words alone are useless; gratitude must be shown through actions. So, he only thanked for the hospitality, not for saving his life.

Sif didn't speak, only offering Sofia a gentle and serene smile to express her gratitude.

Roland was the head of the family, his attitude was her attitude.

Having been saved by Sofia, it would be hard to stand against her in the future. Many others would find it frustrating, but not Sif.

She naturally wasn't someone who seeks to win, even slightly adopting a laissez-faire attitude.

If Sofia hadn't posed a mortal threat to her, she never would have considered fighting with her.

The Battle of White Mountain had almost drained all of her courage, she simply didn't believe she could face Sofia with boldness again.

Since she wasn't a match, choosing not to fight was not disgraceful.

If you don't fight, you won't lose.

Sif sat down boldly across from Roland, sitting shoulder to shoulder, very close.

This peculiar cutlery might be challenging for ordinary people using it for the first time, but she quickly mastered the technique.

Raising the cutlery in her hand, aiming at the steak in front of her, Sif elegantly and accurately stabbed the steak in the center, lifting the delicacy lightly into her mouth.

Can this thing be used this way?

Sofia's originally cold face tremored slightly, and she couldn't help but laugh.

"Did I, did I use it wrong?" Sif looked a bit flustered.

"Of course..."

"Not wrong." Roland quickly interrupted Sofia, using the same method to stab the steak and put it in his mouth.

Chopsticks are free; they can be used however you like.

He quickly came up with a reason for using them that way for Sif, "Look, don't these cutlery look like a Knight's Long Spear?"

"Yes." Sif's cheeks reddened, nodding frequently.

"So, of course, the use of this cutlery should refer to the Long Spear; thrusting is a basic use of the Long Spear, naturally, it's the correct way to use Long Spear cutlery."

Roland looked up at Sofia, pleading with his eyes, hoping she would cooperate.

Sofia: "..."

Her mood suddenly soured, perhaps the dark skies of the Netherworld made her feel uncomfortable.

She didn't speak, nor did she notice that Roland and Sif's misuse brought the way of using the cutlery astray, resembling the thrust of a long spear.

Sofia didn't speak, Roland couldn't speak, Sif, who was starving, just focused on eating without saying a word.

The three of them ate in silence until the waiter brought up the prepared smoked fish.

Sofia smiled as she introduced the correct way to use chopsticks while eating this dish.

"The smoked whitefish is tender and smooth, melting in your mouth, its texture even more tender, so..."

Sif's hands moved quickly. Before Sofia was finished with her introduction, the chopsticks had already stabbed downward.

The tender fish flesh was particularly playful and wouldn't be pierced unless the usage of Extraordinary Abilities was involved, otherwise, she was destined not to get the first bite of fish.

Before Sofia finished speaking, Roland's chopsticks also moved over.

"This dish requires the collaboration of two pieces of cutlery."

Roland's single chopstick combined with Sif's chopstick, skillfully clamping the fish meat.

Sofia's hand froze in midair.

Indeed, it required two pieces of chopsticks to work together, and Roland and Sif did just that. With their bodily coordination, using chopsticks indeed didn't require special practice; everything went smoothly.

Yet, she felt something wasn't right.

Is this how you're supposed to use chopsticks? Then how does one person use them?

Unconsciously, Sofia applied force with her fingers, and a subtle crack appeared in the chopstick in her hand.

After clamping the fish, Roland wanted Sif to eat first, Sif wanted Roland to enjoy it first, and after a brief standoff in midair, Sif obediently complied with Roland, opening her cute cherry lips and taking a bite.

Sofia felt a sourness in her gums.

She wondered which idiotic chef added too much vinegar to the dish.

She thought the matter would end there, but Sif's ensuing action almost made her flip the table.

Sif held the fish meat in her mouth, not chewing or swallowing, but wrapping one arm around Roland's neck and moving up for a kiss.

Lips and teeth met, fish shared, and two agile tongues playfully tangled in the narrow cavity, reluctantly sharing the fish.

Fish: It was worth dying.

Sofia's chopsticks in her hand: What's going on, why did mine break eating this meal?

Sofia's gums bled, bitten by herself.

She finally understood why the phrase "chattering teeth" is used to describe a feeling of anger.

These two are too nauseating.

They're both adults, do they need spoon-feeding, are their hands not fully grown? They've been an old couple for years, why so clingy? Who are they showing off to?

Chapter 739: The Informer Must Die (Part 2)

She quickly realized it wasn't a show, but a very natural display.

Her mood got worse. If it were merely a display of affection, she wouldn't be so angry.

But these two lovebirds were truly in love.

This meal was unbearable.

Sofia found a random excuse to leave, and in a flash, she had disappeared from the restaurant.

She was full, half with anger and half with dog food.

This restaurant was no place to stay, better to leave it to these lovebirds, lest they strip down to nothing.

Though Sofia guessed Roland and Sif with the utmost ill will, they didn't disappoint her.

After she left, they started panting while eating, though they were people with status and dignity, so they didn't do it right at the table but found a luxurious room to express their love.

A short separation is sweet, even more so when faced with life and death, nearly never seeing each other again in this life.

This meal moved from the restaurant to the bedroom and would not be finished anytime soon.

Sofia sat drinking alone atop a lonely peak outside the city, while Roland and Sif in the city's hotel wished to merge into one, greedily absorbing each other's warmth.

Each had their joys and sorrows.

But the sadness between people does not connect.

Sofia finished the wine in her glass, casually threw it towards the sky, and muttered to herself:

"If the glass falls down, I'll drink another. If the sky keeps it, then I'll stop."

She was quite justified, but gravity never accommodates anyone, and the glass fell back down.

"Since it's fate's arrangement, I'll drink another!"

Sofia continued to pour herself wine, drinking several glasses without using Extraordinary Abilities to suppress the spread of alcohol, even though her drinking capacity was bold, she felt a little overwhelmed.

Her gaze gradually turned blurry.

Only having eaten a few bites, her stomach, filled with several bottles of wine, began to churn.

She could easily control the movement of her stomach to forcibly digest those damned things, but she didn't.

She wanted to experience the long-lost feeling of the mundane.

Joy and pain intertwined, mundane and fragile like paper.

The glass was thrown towards the sky again, her gaze became more hazy, until it fell before her, shattering on the ground.

Glass shards flew, brushing across her cheek.

Even if swords and blades pressed upon her, it would be difficult to injure her body; mere glass shards naturally wouldn't.

The glass shards grazed her soft face before being instantly bounced away.

Yet the feeling of pain welled up from her heart.

Why is this world so unfair to her? She was the strongest and most promising Chosen One, with the highest aspirations for the Divine Domain, yet she was shut out.

She had reluctantly accepted a political marriage, hoping her husband, an educated noble, could at least maintain basic dignity, provide her basic care and legitimate offspring.

However, she was repeatedly mocked by the world.

She wasn't angry because Roland and Sif showed love.

This was their happiness, she would only envy...

No, she didn't envy them at all!

Sofia stared at the increasingly dark sky, her gaze growing cold.

She furrowed her brows, pointed her finger at the ground, and alcohol formed into a trickle, slowly dripping down.

Enough is enough, the last obsession of mundane Sofia.

Weakness shouldn't belong to her, and cannot belong to her.

The anomaly in the sky seemed to portend some change, which made Sofia alert and stirred a bit of her killing intent.

Clearly, the Netherworld of the Land of Death knew what was happening here and was already making early preparations.

Someone had betrayed her.

A list of suspects appeared in Sofia's mind.

She wasn't a judge, nor did she have time for interrogation, venting her anger only required a target.

She stood tall and walked towards the city gates.

She didn't care what lineup the Netherworld dispatched to intercept her, but she would never spare those who betrayed her.

Killing in error? She didn't care.

The people in the Netherworld Prison City had no idea what kind of disaster they had provoked, nor did they know they would face annihilation because of a certain couple reunited after a long separation.

Destruction descended.

...

"What's happening?"

Immersed in a tender moment, Roland suddenly awoke, feeling the tremor of the earth, he hurriedly dressed and grabbed his weapon.

Sif bit her lip, her delicate face blushing so deep it was about to drip blood.

It was certainly not shyness.

Enjoying intimate contact with her lover rightfully, even if the Supreme God were standing here, she would be justified.

She was purely furious.

She was just seconds away from soaring to the clouds for the seventh time and then gently drifting down, only to be ruthlessly interrupted.

The letdown was like a birthday cake toppled over after blowing out the candles, leaving her murderous intent brimming.

The fear of falling into the Land of Death, the helplessness of sinking into the Sea of Annihilation, the excitement of Roland descending from the sky, the surprise of being rescued by Sofia, and the thrilling reunion left her heart unable to remain calm.

She spun around, her armor and long spear already equipped.

When she and Roland dashed out of the room, they saw Sofia hovering in the air, unveiling the Domain of Destruction.

The originally gloomy sky turned completely black as ink, and the arrows of destruction, like unlocked bolts, flew towards the targets Sofia identified.

Was this a massacre?

Sif also flew into the sky, approaching Sofia.

"Are we to kill them all?"

Sofia saved her life; she had to repay this debt.

Though a massacre contradicts the Elf Race's love for peace, her dealings with Roland over the years taught her that having no principles was her principle.

A massacre would harm the innocent, but as long as Sofia wanted it, she could only accept it.

Sofia's gaze turned to Sif, reducing her murderous intent by nine-tenths, even somewhat speechless.

"Don't be so extreme."

"Just kill those marked by me; no need to harm the innocent."

Roland also ascended to the sky, deploying the Light Barrier, illuminating the whole Netherworld Prison City.

"All unrelated people, leave immediately to avoid accidental harm!"

His words were like a pardon, and countless residents rushed towards the city gates once granted permission.

Those marked were ashen-faced.

Someone shouted loudly, hoping Sofia would give an explanation; others pleaded loudly for mercy, hoping for leniency.

But Sofia was unmoved, merely watching them coldly.

Finally, someone couldn't withstand the oppressive atmosphere any longer and, mixed in with the crowd, began to sneak away from the city.

The first intelligent one had just stepped out of the city when their body turned into a wisp of smoke and vanished.

Sofia explained to Roland and Sif as if she were a tutor, "The Power of Destruction is a force that aligns with the laws of the universe, but beings with Destruction Attributes cannot exist in this world. Leaving my Domain with a mark of destruction inevitably results in annihilation."

She was explaining to Roland but made those also marked with destruction look ashen-faced.

They couldn't fight it; they couldn't run; was there no way to live?

Indeed there was, as the oppressive aura of death approached, finally allowing someone to understand the reason.

Something major must have made Sofia, who had always mediated with them, so angry.

The recent major event was someone snitching to the higher-ups.

"It was them who reported! I didn't collude with them; I can swear on my soul." The bar owner, Cook, desperate to survive, ruthlessly laid his hand on his chest and swore a deadly oath.

Lead-gray mist enveloped his body, transforming into a pearl that floated into his forehead.

The oath was established; he lived to prove his innocence.

With Cook taking the lead, others naturally imitated, swearing deadly oaths in the standard format.

Some passed, while others did not.

The Judge roared, his long saber slicing through the sky towards Cook's neck.

"Traitorous dog, die!"

He knew he wasn't Sofia's match and didn't dare to hope to live, but before dying, he had to cut down these traitors.

Traitors are the most despised people in the world, without exception.

Sofia had little favor for the slippery Cook, but she still acted.

A translucent light green glow enveloped Cook, forming a protective shield that deflected the long saber, saving Cook.

"If I want someone to live, even the Death God can't take them."

As the last person finished swearing to prove their innocence, Sofia's expression showed no mercy, detonating the marks.

The Power of Destruction and Power of Rebirth collided, exploded, and annihilated within the Netherworld inhabitants.

There was no room for resistance; all the informers except the Judge perished.

The Judge had already been despairing, even closing his eyes to await death, yet all he heard was the wails from those around him, and he was still alive?

He opened his eyes in surprise, just about to speak when Sofia removed the mark from him and withdrew the domain.

"I, I..."

"You are still a dead man, only the executioners are them."

Sofia shattered his fantasy, pointing to Roland and Sif.

The Judge, standing at the pinnacle of Tier Two where normal men could reach, might be boasting to claim invincibility under the Divine Domain, but his strength was real.

Roland, having been tempered through the Netherworld's battles, and Sif, almost recovering her peak strength, should be able to defeat the Judge in the unrestricted Land of Death.

This was a test.

They must pass.

Chapter 740: If Not "Big Sister," Should I Call You "Aunt"?

If I can't handle Sofia, do you think I can't handle you two little things?

The Judge felt invigorated and grabbed his long-handled scythe.

He even saw hope for survival.

To triumph over Roland and Sif with perfect form, and then use them to force Sofia to accept a peace agreement.

These three harbingers of calamity are, after all, outsiders and will eventually leave.

As long as he survives, he can continue to exercise power in the Netherworld, or, ahem, serve the freedmen.

Survive!

Indeed, the desire to survive is the strongest craving. Driven by this intense survival instinct, the Judge fought the most spectacular battle of his life.

Even Sofia, with her critical eye, slightly praised his performance.

Sofia watched the aggressive Judge and the disadvantaged Roland and Sif, and coldly pronounced a death sentence.

"Take him down."

In the Sea of Annihilation, Roland and Sif's souls were connected, becoming inseparable.

This opportunity for complete soul connection is exceptionally valuable, greatly enhancing Roland's soul tenacity and spiritual power.

Now Roland, even when facing the descending Goddess, would not have the slightest stage fright and could confront her calmly.

Of course, whether he can defeat her is another matter.

As for this mere Judge, who stands at the Peak of the Holy Realm, he naturally cannot shake Roland.

While Roland has yet to reach his peak power, Sif, having retrieved all soul fragments, has long returned to her prime during the Third Era.

Currently, she possesses the advantages of both the Elf Race and Human Race's peak groups, with the Elf's affinity for Nature and magic and the Human's creativity, her combat power even surpassing Roland's.

Roland and Sif, even individually against the Judge, would not be at a disadvantage; now, with two against one, they naturally have the upper hand.

Upon receiving Sofia's execution order, Roland abandoned the idea of using the Judge for practice and attacked with full force.

Holy Light burst forth, turning the entire Netherworld into a land of Light.

The fleeing inhabitants of the Netherworld, seeing the Holy Light sweeping from behind, instinctively assumed it was a Divine Envoy sent by the Goddess of Light and fled in panic, vanishing without a trace.

Everyone was running.

Their goal was not to outrun the Light Messenger, but to outrun slower fellow Netherworlders.

Let others die, not oneself—a simple escape logic.

The Netherworld Prison City, now abandoned and empty, resembled a ghost town.

Roland need not worry about inadvertently harming too many innocents, so he held nothing back, letting the Holy Light engulf the entire battlefield.

The sacred rays shone on the Judge, causing his skin to sizzle.

After all, the Judge possessed negative attributes and was greatly discomforted by the Holy Light, the sacred energy clashing fiercely with his internal negativity, causing piercing pain that made him cry out, and the scythe in his hand began to tremble.

What was once a flawless strike turned into a farcical swing.

Once he lost the initiative, his one advantage was completely gone.

In the instant Roland acted, Sif, connected to Roland's heart, also took action.

A phantom of a Golden Ginkgo Tree descended from the sky, landing behind her.

This was her Lifebound Ginkgo Tree nurtured with her own blood. Though the main body couldn't traverse space to appear, parts of its power were bound to Sif herself and could be summoned at any time.

The stronger the Ancient Tree Controller, the more power the summoned ancient tree phantom preserves.

Given Sif and the Ginkgo Tree's power gap, the summoned phantom retained at least seventy to eighty percent functionality.

The Golden Ginkgo Tree spread its canopy, scattering countless seeds.

The gloomy Netherworld was illuminated by the Holy Light in the sky, the ancient tree unfurled a canopy of life, followed by a sea of blooming flowers.

If an outsider came here, they might think this was some earthly paradise.

Seeing this scene, the Judge's expression changed.

"You, you're that Elf?!"

He recalled the pitiful Elf he had seen countless years ago; she had her legs chopped off and couldn't reattach them in time, so she ran barefoot, holding her severed legs with energy-formed makeshift feet.

At that time, he wasn't yet the Judge, just a henchman summoned by the former Judges to help pursue and block.

After all these years, the Elf's poignant beauty and desperate expression remained vivid.

He hadn't recognized Sif earlier mainly due to her entirely different aura, and he never imagined the unfortunate soul who dashed into the Sea of Annihilation millions of years ago would emerge alive.

Faced with such a miracle that defied reasoning, his heart trembled.

He had a vague foreboding that today might be his last day.

He was unwilling; why?!

Among all the Netherworld Judges of generations, he was the most caring for everyone, with the best relationships and offended the least people.

When Roland sneaked in, he pretended not to see; when Sofia arrived openly, he also pretended not to see.

He feared any interaction with these transient monsters.

He strove with all his might to eliminate grudges, doing everything possible just for peace, yet trouble still came.

The Judge was seething with anger, unwillingness, and despair.

Even if he defeated Roland and Sif, what then? Sofia was like an insurmountable mountain standing there.

Despite his collapsing composure, the Judge, after all, was a super expert; he had seen too much hardship, adjusting swiftly without panic, swinging his scythe at Sif again.

This time, his target wasn't Roland or Sif, but the summoned ancient tree and Flower Sea.

Humans can run, but the Flower Sea and ancient tree can't, right?

The scythe slashed through the sky, tearing space; a deep chasm appeared, even Roland and Sif wouldn't want to take this blow head-on.

The ancient tree phantom wavered, and a smile touched the Judge's lips.

No matter how formidable a fortress is, as long as you breach it, the flaw can only grow.