

Great Master 161

Chapter 161 Before the Explanation

The whistle was made of iron and painted entirely black.

When Arthur touched this whistle, the text in front of him began to flicker—

[Name: Sound of Advancement]

[Type: Other Items]

[Quality: Hero]

[Attributes: 1, Exhilaration (1/1); 2, Burden]

[Remarks: The Master Alchemist 'One' is a very special one among many Master Alchemists. Born into a knight's family, 'One' possessed unimaginable courage, always charging forward in every battle. Even after becoming a Master Alchemist, it was still the same. Facing the oncoming 'Shadows', this Master stepped out of the Alchemy Lab, donned his armor neatly, took up his warhammer, and launched the last charge of his life—The apprentice Saga witnessed this scene and etched the image of his teacher deeply in his heart. To honor his teacher, he crafted a whistle, and whenever the whistle sounded, it was the 'time to charge forward through the darkness'—Many Master Alchemists in later generations imitated this whistle, and the one in your hand is one of the fine reproductions.]

...

[Exhilaration: Instantly restores all health, physical strength, and energy, clears all negative states, and increases [Physique] by 3, raises the level of a designated skill by +1; duration 30 seconds]

[Burden: After Exhilaration ends, you will return to the state you were in before using Exhilaration and fall into weakness for 3 days. The designated skill will also be temporarily unavailable for use for 3 days]

(Note 1: The level of the designated skill cannot exceed its original limit.)

(Note 2: The weak state can be cured.)

(Note 3: Once the item attribute Exhilaration is used up, it cannot be replenished.)

(Note 4: If the body cannot withstand the pain after returning to the state before using Exhilaration, it will be judged as dead.)

...

Arthur looked at the Sound of Advancement in his hand, his brows slightly furrowed.

Without a doubt, Sound of Advancement was very powerful.

But at the same time, the side effects of this item were also terrifying—if not careful, you could really die!

"It must be used in a relatively complete, healthy state!"

Arthur quickly made a decision.

If he was seriously injured before using it, plus the weakness after using [Exhilaration], the likelihood of death was quite high.

Weakness, Arthur could accept.

Death, Arthur absolutely could not accept.

'Terrifying indeed!'

'Casually, it's death!'

Arthur inwardly expressed his exclamation, raised his hand, and put the Sound of Advancement together with the Protection Copper Coin into Atos's Box. Then, Arthur glanced at the changes in [Bluff].

[Bluff +5]

[Bluff Lv6: 5/40]

...

'Indeed, being a Spirit Medium has a bonus for [Bluff]—it's not much related to me personally!

Yes, that's it!'

Muttering to himself, Arthur held Pendragon in his arms.

As the young Spirit Medium sat in the chair stroking Pendragon, he began to close his eyes and ponder about the person who had hired mystic side individuals like Jennifer—he still didn't know who the other party was.

Did not know the name.

Did not know the appearance.

Even, did not know the gender.

But he did know one thing, the other party most likely was there for the fake 'cheques'.

Not just the paper and the ink.

But also those complete 'cheques'.

Their decision to hire Jennifer and others was for precaution—because the other party was certain someone would target those special papers and ink, and to avoid unnecessary trouble, they chose individuals from the mystic side.

At the same time, to ensure the secrecy of the complete 'cheques', the other party would silence anyone involved.

That's why they selected weaker mystic side individuals.

Therefore, he concluded—

'Jennifer and the others must have had a certain reputation in the previous South Los Secret Assembly, well-known by others.

The other party's identity must be sensitive, appearing in public would be problematic, and they would be easily recognized.

The other party must know the truth behind the previous fake 'cheque' case, or even, have connections with one of Elron, Jenkins, or that financial advisor of the Old Lion.

Thus, they would be informed about these matters...

Wait a moment!'

Arthur, who was deep in thought, suddenly straightened up.

He considered another point: Truda!

The appearance of this Spy had greatly hindered his speed to 10 Clara Street; could it be that the other party deliberately instigated Truda to smoothly obtain those complete 'cheques'?

Could this person be...

A member of Death Poetry Society?!

If the one inciting Truda, hiring Jennifer and the others, and collaborating with one of the Old Lion's financial advisors was the same person...

Then the scope just narrowed significantly!

'Now, it really becomes interesting!'

Arthur murmured to himself, stroking his chin.

He seemed to see a spider hiding in the darkness, weaving its web, the shelter made by the shadows making everyone wary of the spider's ferociousness, and by the time one fell into the web, it would be too late.

Thinking of such an image, a smile unwittingly curled up on Arthur's lips.

As a child, one of his favorite pastimes: was poking at spider webs!

Now?

It was still the same.

Arthur took out those complete 'cheques', meticulously flipping through and checking them.

No special markings.

No special numbers.

No hidden messages.

So, there was only one possibility left—

These complete 'cheques' could pass for the real thing!

This...

Is just too good!

Arthur's fingers trembled slightly as he put all the 'cheques' back into Atos's Box, resisting the urge to write a 10,000,000 figure on a cheque signed by the Old Lion of Inner Bay.

Even though Arthur knew that reaching such a figure, such a cheque would definitely not be honored.

But what if the figures were made a bit smaller?

To reduce it to an insignificant extent?

As for there being only one complete "cheque"?

With such a template available, along with ample special paper and ink, even without seeking others, Arthur himself could replicate many more!

"That guy probably intends to do just that, doesn't he?"

Arthur, who had grasped a tiny bit of that 'Death Poetry Society' member's thoughts, squinted his eyes.

Then, the young 'Spirit Medium' smiled again.

He thoroughly agreed with the other person's idea.

He also had similar thoughts.

So...

At this point, would the other party give up?

Most likely not.

That meant he would probably meet the other party!

No!

Not him!

It was Auburn!

Auburn, the descendant of the 'Blood Marquis' family, had planned everything—what did it have to do with him, a minor 'Spirit Medium'?

He was just an innocent bystander.

Let the other party try hard to find Auburn, the Blood Marquis descendant!

If they could find him...

He would concede defeat directly!

Thump, thump-thump!

Arthur was still contemplating when the door was knocked on.

The familiar secret knock—it was Wiggins.

The door of No. 2 Cork Street opened silently.

On the rare sunny day, Wiggins still held his own 'Sword'—not only because it was a gift from Arthur but also because the Umbrella Sword was just too convenient for people like Wiggins.

They needed such concealed weapons.

In South Los, no one would pay attention to someone carrying an umbrella on a sunny day.

After all, nobody could guarantee when it would rain in South Los.

Seeing Arthur at the end of the hallway, Wiggins was not curious as to why the door opened automatically. Following this gentleman, he had already seen too much strangeness.

"Good morning, Miss 'Anna'!"

After greeting Miss 'Anna,' Wiggins walked straight into the hall and reported the latest developments to Arthur—

"My lord, I have taken control of a third of Rat Street's thoroughfares, and with the progress over these past days, twenty-one more people have joined.

These are all individuals I've previously interacted with and screened thoroughly; their character, style, and family situations assure their loyalty.

The legacy Dotas left behind is enough to provide you, my lord, with twenty subordinates of a similar caliber.

The territory we have now can support us all.

However, the selection of people still needs to be done slowly."

Having undergone the Lionheart Ceremony, Wiggins became Arthur's vassal to some extent, and their relationship naturally differed from others.

There existed a natural closeness and a coexistence of interests.

When the latter was jeopardized, the former would naturally cease to exist.

Thus, Arthur managed this balance quite adeptly.

"Well done!"

"Maintain your original style, secure the current territory—that will be your domain. Whatever you gain, aside from the necessary taxes, will be yours."

Having heard Wiggins' report, Arthur spoke directly.

Arthur's generosity took Wiggins aback.

Then, the Golden Finger originating from Rat Street knelt on one knee—

"Your existence is the faith of my life!"

The voice was resonant and forceful.

Arthur smiled and gently patted the other's shoulder.

The Knight game was sometimes really amusing.

But the real reason was that Wiggins' progress far exceeded Arthur's expectations.

In his mind, Wiggins taking control of just a quarter of Rat Street would have been satisfactory, and recruiting twenty-one reliable subordinates was a pleasant surprise.

It's easy to recruit people in Rat Street, but it's not easy to recruit loyal subordinates.

Undoubtedly, Wiggins had abilities far stronger than what Arthur had anticipated.

This confidence bolstered Arthur's confidence in the subsequent plans—

"For the next phase, I need you to open a grocery store in Rat Street—plain prices, normal quality."

Arthur emphasized.

There were grocery stores in Rat Street too.

However, the prices were exorbitant, and the quality of goods was debatable.

It wasn't that no one wanted to do good business, but the overall environment of Rat Street made it impossible to operate properly.

Would a gang of criminals engage in haggling?

No, they wouldn't.

But that was before.

Arthur believed that with sufficient armed support, such a grocery store would surely succeed.

And this was only the first step.

Once the reputation was established, the second layer of the grocery store could begin—mystic item trading—which wouldn't compete with Mouse Alley. Everything here would prioritize Mouse Alley.

At least that was the plan for the short term.

Robbing the rich to aid the poor?

That would be in the third step.

"Understood!

Lord, does the grocery store need a name?"

After nodding his understanding, Wiggins asked earnestly.

Arthur had not thought about this issue previously, but when asked by his subordinate, a name came to mind spontaneously.