

Great Master 401

Chapter 401: Here she comes again!

Upon spotting Potterman, Arthur was instantly on high alert.

Despite some prior groundwork, facing a figure like the Left Cantor of the Death Poetry Society, being excessively wary and guarded was hardly excessive.

Unexpectedly to Arthur, the Left Cantor of the Death Poetry Society had only appeared at the crossroads between Dar Alley and Cork Street.

Afterward, he handed an invitation along with a Zeroes to the children of Dar Alley, all the while smiling.

Even if his face was partly concealed by a cap, the upward curve of his mouth could not escape Fujin's eyes.

'Is this an invitation card?' he wondered, a frown forming, eyes filled with confusion.

It was not just the invitation card, but also the man's preceding actions.

The Left Cantor of the Death Poetry Society tipping someone for running an errand, and even smiling?!

This was unlike any Mystic Side Person Arthur had ever encountered.

Although it was unspoken, when Mystic Side Persons faced ordinary people, they were always aloof, an attitude clearly visible to the naked eye.

Perhaps these Mystic Side Persons could be very generous.

But to receive such generosity, ordinary people had to grovel.

Otherwise?

They would only invite trouble.

This was the first time Arthur had seen someone from the Mystic Side openly show goodwill towards ordinary people.

'Could he be acting in front of me?' he thought subconsciously as he walked outside.

Outside the door, Merlin knew the child with the invitation card; they were deep in conversation—

"Lord Kledos is sleeping and won't be up until noon at the earliest."

"He can sleep until noon?"

The child delivering the invitation was clearly surprised, followed by a thick envy.

"Because the lord has so many matters to attend to that he must work until late at night, perhaps even all night long!"

As a servant employed by Arthur, Merlin felt he needed to defend his employer.

He didn't want people to spread the rumor that his lord was a slacker, especially when such talk stemmed from his very own playmate.

"Ah!

Working all night long!

That must be so hard!"

The child holding the invitation exclaimed, then looked down at the invitation in his hands, somewhat at a loss.

Clearly, it was highly impolite and perturbing to disturb Arthur now, but doing nothing about the Zeroes in hand—especially since the gentleman promised another Zeroes if he brought back a correct message—put the child in a predicament.

Luckily, the next moment, Arthur appeared in the courtyard.

"Good morning, sir, did our conversation disturb your rest?" Merlin asked, a regretful expression on his face.

The child holding the invitation became anxious.

This child did not want to be disliked by Arthur.

Because that would make him disliked by all the kids of Dar Alley.

The generous and kind Arthur was the favorite person of these children.

Arthur smiled and waved his hand, explaining.

"Not at all, I haven't gone to sleep yet.

Come, let's see what good news the 'lucky boy' has brought me."

The child holding the invitation immediately breathed a sigh of relief, and then handed over the invitation.

"A gentleman asked me to give this to you, and he said if you're willing, you can tell me your response. He will come to me later."

"Oh, is that so?"

Arthur lightly touched the invitation with the "Hand of Void," after his "Death Intuition" also gave no alert, he then took this invitation card.

It was written in black ink—

Looking forward to visiting late this evening.

It was a vague statement, but Arthur knew, the other party must have spotted Fujin on the rooftop at No. 2 Cork Street to write this way.

Arthur was not surprised.

Crows during the day were quite conspicuous already.

All the more so for a crow tainted with the "Aroma of Death."

To others, this crow might only be conspicuous.

But to the Left Cantor of the Death Poetry Society, this kind of "Aroma of Death" must have been strikingly dazzling.

After contemplating for a short while, Arthur gave a precise reply—

"A moment before dawn, I will be waiting for him at No. 2 Cork Street."

"Thank you for your reply, Mr. Kledos."

The child carrying the invitation nodded repeatedly, smiling.

Just as the child was about to leave, Arthur thought for a moment and then asked,

"What's your name?"

"Gawain!"

After the child responded, he bounced happily back to Dar Alley.

Arthur watched him leave, then turned to Merlin and said,

"If there are future errands and you need to look after this place and cannot leave, consider hiring Gawain—he's a good kid."

"Thank you for your kindness; Gawain will surely be overjoyed to scream,"

Merlin replied with a smile.

For a child of that age, working with peers is truly great.

As for Arthur?

Although he was certain that Merlin and his uncle Gaius were not in danger, he still planned to arrange some 'ties' as 'alert lines.'

Not just because they were cost-effective.

But because...

Such instincts were deeply engraved in Arthur's soul.

Changing them would be too difficult.

Moreover, Arthur had no intention of changing them.

Just as he now habitually held Pendragon while sleeping—even if the little cat was reluctant, Arthur would definitely not change.

As for Pendragon?

He definitely showed reluctance before Arthur fell asleep.

However, as soon as Arthur was asleep, Pendragon immediately snuggled into Arthur's arms.

Kuliqi lying on the corridor clearly saw this scene.

Pendragon immediately raised his right paw and flicked out his sharp claws.

Kuliqi immediately turned his head and pretended to be asleep.

Above on the beams, Wuni, who was resting, opened one eye at the scene, emitted a low sneer, then closed his eyes again.

Immediately, only the prolonged breathing could be heard inside No. 2 Cork Street.

Until noon—

Thud, thud thud!

The forceful knocking broke the silence.

Wuni was the first to open his eyes and, without looking at the door, flew through the skylight to the roof to relieve Fujin from his shift.

Pendragon grumbled unhappily and distanced himself from Arthur.

As for Kuliqi?

He had already started wagging his tail.

Because the one standing outside was Marinda.

Marinda, with lunch in hand.

"There are still two hours left until the quarterfinals of the Swordsmanship Competition—I think I can sleep a bit more!"

Arthur saw the lunch, but still couldn't help complaining.

Not having his daily six hours of sleep made the young 'Spirit Medium' feel so dizzy and light that he thought he might drop dead at any moment.

"You can take a nap after eating!"

Marinda said as she walked into No. 2 Cork Street, holding the basket.

Arthur raised an eyebrow.

Even though he was still half-asleep, he sensed something amiss at this time.

When had this woman become so polite?

She usually entered directly by 'Shuttling' through 'Smoke.'

Arthur immediately narrowed his eyes and sat directly across from Marinda.

Watching Arthur's reaction, the lady bit her pipe and snorted—

"Amusing yourself at my expense, is that fun?"

The great Southern Lost Spirit Medium, the contemporary 'Black Cat,' Lord Arthur Kledos!"

She blew out two heavy puffs of smoke, watching as Arthur was enveloped by the smoke and frowned in disgust. The lady did not give up; she blew out two more puffs of smoke until Arthur glared at her, only then did she pleasantly start to speak—

"When did you find out about that place?"

Chapter 402: My Strength is All Up to Your Imagination!

Where is that place?

"Riddle Master, get out of South Los!"

Arthur, lacking sleep, slumped into the chair with a listless air, obviously not in the mood to bother with Marinda.

Marinda wasn't in a hurry either, just puffing on her pipe, then blowing out mouthfuls of smoke, mint-flavored and mixed with a hint of medicinal scent, which Arthur didn't mind.

But that absolutely didn't mean Arthur enjoyed being shrouded in smoke.

In fact, Marinda was someone he had too much cooperation with.

Someone else?

Arthur would definitely make them understand what 'fate's cruel beating' meant.

Waving away the smoke with his hand, Arthur, yawning, walked towards the "Spirit Medium Parlor," and as he turned his back to Marinda, his bleary eyes began to sharpen, while his mouth muttered indistinctly—

"The ruins in the Docklands aren't known only to me."

He knew!

He indeed knew!

Marinda, clenching her pipe between her teeth, pursed her lips.

After dealing with Lord Bern's three sons today, this lady felt more and more that something was off, especially after confirming that Arthur was not critically wounded and dying. She always felt that Arthur had been setting a trap for her before, and more importantly, afterward, she discovered that someone had visited that secluded beach.

Her people had not noticed, and yet someone had managed to come so close.

What did this indicate?

It meant that that group of people were definitely experts.

And with Arthur's words at this moment.

Suddenly, a guess emerged in this lady's mind:

'Not only did Arthur know about the ruins there before, but he also knew that others were eyeing the place. He planned to swoop in and clean up when someone plundered those ruins—this wouldn't violate our contract, and he could gain more benefits from me!'

And this is why he was acting strange before!

He was testing if I could find out.

If I could find out, he would continue to cooperate in a friendlier manner as before.

If I couldn't detect it, then he would choose a more direct way to cooperate.

Heh, what a bad guy!

But you underestimated me way too much, didn't you?

Do you really think I'm that foolish?'

Thinking of this, Marinda blew more smoke towards Arthur.

The lady was somewhat annoyed.

She had been preparing in secret for so long, and to be under someone's 'surveillance' all this time wasn't a good feeling, and what's most important is that this 'surveillant' knew even more than she did.

Annoyance and a sense of powerlessness almost made the lady kick Arthur in the rear.

However, the lady knew it wouldn't do.

Kicking Arthur would be easy.

But dealing with the aftermath would not be so easy.

Moreover, most important of all, she felt an inexplicable admiration for Arthur in her heart.

'Always one step ahead in planning.

At ease at any time.

Such a bad guy...

It's a pity he's a man.'

Sighing with this thought, the lady bluntly said—

"Who else has their eyes on that place?"

Hooked!

Arthur thought to himself, then turned his head towards Marinda with a face that seemed to say, 'how could you ask such a stupid question.'

Marinda was startled, her memories rapidly replaying.

"'Storm Sword' Deljo!"

The answer came out spontaneously.

Not only was 'Storm Sword' Deljo a renowned ruins explorer, but the traces left near the beach that day were of a group of more than ten people but definitely not exceeding twenty, which perfectly matched Deljo's group of adventurers.

"Damn it!

I knew the emergence of people like 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion and 'Storm Sword' Deljo would not bode well. The 'Entry-level Atlas' is important, but it is still not enough to attract them!

I'm going to find a way to get rid of them right now!"

Marinda cursed under her breath and turned to leave.

'Deljo has no idea that Kangsion was actually drawn here initially because of the 'Entry-level Atlas'.'

Arthur thought to himself, but of course, he couldn't say that aloud.

The young 'Spirit Medium' raised his hand to stop Marinda, then showed a smile.

"Don't worry; I won't forget what's yours."

Marinda clearly misunderstood something.

Arthur shook his head repeatedly.

"I am well aware of your generosity, and that's why we have always worked together."

"What is it?"

Marinda frowned.

"Kangsion is my man."

Arthur declared.

"What?"

Kangsion is your man?"

"Whale Island?"

Surprise surfaced on Marinda's face, as she stared unblinkingly at Arthur, while the young 'Spirit Medium' gave a slight nod under the lady's gaze.

Arthur conducted himself quite calmly.

After all, he had not lied.

Kangsion truly was his man, and Whale Island would also fly the Kledos Family's flag following this 'public' declaration.

He had merely 'slightly concealed' the time Kangsion became his subordinate.

Of course, it was not his fault.

Marinda didn't ask, did she?

Under Arthur's scrutiny, the 'Lady of the Long Night' furrowed her brows slightly.

Clearly, the lady was reassessing the Kledos Family once again.

"I knew the Kledos Family couldn't have remained hidden for so many years without doing anything. The 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion is your man, and so is Whale Island.

What about the others?

What else are you hiding?

Don't tell me the 'Storm Sword' Deljo is also your man!"

Marinda's voice rose involuntarily.

Arthur responded with a smile to the lady.

He certainly hadn't said he was.

And he hadn't said he wasn't.

He left it all to Marinda to guess.

'My power is entirely up to your imagination!' Arthur thought silently to himself.

Marinda, however, suddenly calmed down, eyeing Arthur with a bizarre look.

Then, that look turned into one of appreciation.

And a little...

Excitement.

After pacing twice in front of the Spirit Medium Parlor with her pipe in her mouth, Marinda finally entered the parlor and pulled out a piece of paper, writing on it—when are you planning to take action against Baron Korol and Baron Hausman?

Arthur glanced at the note and let out a cold laugh.

He then folded the note and threw it into the furnace, watching it burn to ashes before turning around.

"What's for lunch?"

Arthur shifted the topic abruptly.

But Marinda didn't press further.

She had gotten the answer she wanted.

What followed was naturally...

To meddle!

But that couldn't be rushed.

Arthur's attitude had already informed her that he wouldn't act anytime soon.

So, she had plenty of time to prepare.

And why was Arthur so cautious and taking such a long time?

Of course, it was because of the Countess.

Marinda deeply understood this.

With that in mind, her gaze towards Arthur grew even more gentle and bright, while she said with a smirk—

"Cheese beef stew pot, mustard-flavored broccoli, 6 pounds of mixed roast pork, beef, and lamb, along with spinach egg soup and white bread.

The dessert is egg tarts.

All made by Cook Mary.

The taste is quite good."

As she spoke, Marinda walked out carrying the food.

Once the food was served, Arthur had already picked up an egg tart.

Pendragon ran over from the side, circling the table's edge, occasionally rubbing against Arthur's trouser leg, almost looking as if it were about to speak.

Selecting two pieces of beef, Arthur placed them into Pendragon's cat bowl.

Throughout the process, Marinda just watched, saying nothing, only smiling.

She too once wanted a cat.

Unfortunately, she lacked the time to care for one.

Naturally, her preferred option was to stroke Pendragon at Arthur's place.

But Marinda wasn't rash.

She could see Pendragon's wariness towards her.

So, after Arthur devoured his dinner and continued with his afternoon rest, she took out a handful of dried fish from a basket and placed them directly into Pendragon's bowl.

To Marinda's surprise, Pendragon didn't leave Arthur's side.

Arthur, with his back to the wall, opened one eye, revealing a smile.

'Good son!' he praised in his heart, and naturally, actions followed suit.

At the afternoon's 'Swordsmanship Competition,' Arthur brought Pendragon along.

Without a cage, just holding him in his arms, he took him there directly.

However, upon seeing today's top eight contestants, Arthur paused—

"Hm?"

Chapter 403: The Top Eight!

In Elta Square, Arthur saw Bern from the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club and a somewhat unfamiliar face in the area designated for the top eight contestants.

It wasn't surprising to Arthur that Bern was there.

The other party was originally in the same division as Little Lisop.

After Little Lisop volunteered to pledge his allegiance to him yesterday, it was not difficult for Bern, with his strength, to qualify from the division.

What did surprise Arthur was the other contestant.

He was from Division E.

Clearly, the fight between the three sons of Lord Bern's family allowed this contestant, also from the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club, to take advantage of the situation!

Why was he sure it was the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club?

Because the contestant wore clothing emblazoned with the lettering and emblem of the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club!

After confirming that he was the new owner of the Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club, Arthur introduced this policy—no one understood the importance of advertising more than Arthur did.

And an advertisement for making the 'top eight' couldn't compare to two such advertisements.

Similarly, two advertisements for making the 'top eight' couldn't compare to one for making the 'top four'.

Of course, the most important thing was that the champion was still the owner of the Swordsmanship Club.

With this in mind, Arthur looked towards the Female Swordmaster Countess.

No need for any verbal communication.

A single glance, and the Female Swordmaster Countess understood Arthur's meaning.

Cheating?

How could that be possible!

This was merely a fair allocation of the competition order.

After all, the champion had already been 'predetermined'!

And before the drawing commenced, Bern approached Arthur with his young and somewhat naive apprentice—

"Master, this is our club's new apprentice, Bedivere.

A very talented apprentice, quick and agile."

Bern introduced the slender and young man beside him, who had a shy, awkward smile.

"'Lucky boy', the future is yours!"

Arthur repeated a sentiment similar to Gawain's and patted the young man's shoulder for encouragement.

Instantly, Bedivere was taken aback by the favor.

Though Arthur was not much older than him, Arthur's demonstrated strength, prestigious reputation, and noble character led Bedivere and everyone present to overlook Arthur's age.

Furthermore, yesterday's 'mentoring match' had paved the way for many, like Bern, to begin instinctively calling Arthur 'Master'.

"Master, I'll definitely work hard!"

Bedivere exclaimed loudly.

This drew the attention of the people around him.

Immediately, the young and naive swordsmanship apprentice blushed with embarrassment.

Meanwhile, Arthur looked at the remaining five top eight contestants with a smile.

The arrogant 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion nodded subtly with a sense of self-importance.

'Storm Sword' Deljo smiled in a friendly manner.

The rest—'Lord Ernest', 'Lord Dibwa', and 'Lord Bass'—the nephews of noble families, bowed respectfully.

Although all three were descendants of nobles, they were aware of the gap between themselves and Arthur.

Arthur's strength was simply beyond their ability to guess or estimate.

As for their proud noble heritage?

It's only temporary.

Once Arthur won the championship and was knighted, he would become a noble himself, and thus superior to them...

No!

He would be more noble than them.

After all, they were just noble descendants, not truly nobles in the full sense of the word.

Moreover, it was highly likely they wouldn't inherit the title and could only become Wanderer Knights earning a living.

So, of course, they knew how to treat Arthur with the appropriate respect.

No one is truly foolish.

Even the spoiled children of nobility knew who they could provoke and who they could not.

The harmonious scene in the drawing area sparked many discussions among the spectators.

Of course, most of the gazes were focused on the proud 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion—

"Who's that tall guy over there?"

"Right!"

"Why does he act so arrogant towards Lord Kledos?"

"That is the Island Master of 'Whale Island,' rumored to be very strong!"

"But is he stronger than Lord Kledos?"

"Certainly not!"

"That's not necessarily true. 'Whale Island' has survived among so many pirates; it must have faced countless life-and-death struggles. This 'Whale Slaying Sword' is rumored to be able to cut a whale in half with a single strike. Even if Lord Kledos is strong, he may not be capable of that, right?"

"Hiss, cut a whale in half with a single sword strike?!"

"That's terrifying!"

"Does that mean Lord Kledos is in danger?"

...

Marinda naturally heard the audience's discussions.

The lady scoffed inwardly.

'Danger?

What danger?

If it weren't for the 'performance' for you all, would you believe that the 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion would immediately kneel before that guy and call him master?'

To Marinda, Arthur's performance under 'the watchful eyes of the public' felt utterly childish.

Nevertheless, she felt a strange sense of relief.

The pressure Arthur had put on her was too great.

Always one step ahead, as if he knew everything.

Furthermore, he seemed like he never made mistakes.

And then there was his ambition he did not hide when facing her.

The lady was always worried that one day she would wake up to find that her own properties had become Arthur's.

But now, Arthur's childish display allowed the lady to see the 'human' side of Arthur.

'Hmph, always concealing and suppressing oneself; when there's a chance to perform, naturally one would add a little extra to their role—no wonder he cared so much about the reports on him in the newspapers.'

Marinda thought to herself as she picked up her pipe.

But after a single puff, the lady furrowed her brows once more.

Because she wondered—

Could this be a performance for her to see!

'Damn him!

When is it real, and when is it not?

I can't tell at all!

Instantly, the lady felt torn.

Then, her gaze towards Arthur became fierce.

Arthur keenly sensed that Marinda's look at him was amiss.

'What's gotten into this woman?

Why does it feel like she wants to bite me?'

Arthur thought to himself, but followed the instructions of the Countess Swordsmanship Chief to the drawing box.

He reached into the box, and immediately a token fell into his hand.

'Tsk, high-tech, fully automatic draw!'

He pulled out the token marked with an A.

Afterward, the eight quarterfinalists drew in turn.

Kangsion also drew an A and immediately showed it to Arthur, revealing an excited look with a hint of savagery, which made the audience in Elta Square grow more anxious.

Bern and Bedivere got B's.

'Storm Sword' Deljo drew a C, and Lord Ernest's nephew also got a C.

Immediately, the face of this noble descendant fell.

But 'Lord Dibwa' and 'Lord Bass's' two nephews were both relieved, both were grateful for their luck.

Neither Arthur, 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion, nor 'Storm Sword' Deljo considered themselves a match for each other.

Only the two commoners felt they stood a chance.

Unfortunately, they didn't draw each other.

However, it wasn't too bad; at least they knew each other well and had a chance of victory.

The two noble descendants exchanged glances, their eyes brimming with fighting spirit.

After the drawing and confirming that there were no issues with the participants, the Countess' Swordsmanship Chief loudly announced.

"The Swordsmanship Competition quarterfinals, begin!"

And just as her voice fell, the towering figure of Kangsion appeared in the arena.

The 'Whale Slaying Sword' gestured to Arthur, beckoning with his finger—

"Come!"

Chapter 404 The me who cooperates with your performance...

The Countess's Swordsmanship Chief had just announced the start of the quarterfinals, and Kangsion, wielding the "Whale Slaying Sword," couldn't wait to jump onto the platform and provoke Arthur.

This disrespect upset the audience at Elta Square.

Arthur had gained considerable favor from the audience with yesterday's "guidance match."

Moreover, Arthur was from South Los, while "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion was from overseas.

Suddenly, someone started shouting—

"You uncultured brute!"

"Lord Kledos will teach you a lesson soon!"

"Barbarian from overseas!"

...

The curses made Kangsion feel extremely aggrieved.

He didn't want this!

All of this had been arranged by Arthur!

Originally, Kangsion planned to simply forfeit if he and Arthur were drawn to compete together, but Arthur disagreed.

Arthur hoped the match would be "more spectacular."

Upon realizing this, Kangsion understood what was happening.

Due to the "Swordsmanship Competition," not only did Elta Square attract a lot of merchants, but also some inconspicuous small tents.

Most of these tents stored goods.

And some were...

Casinos!

Tiny, yet fully functional betting casinos were mixed among the merchants, open to wagers from anyone.

And among them, many were owned by the "Lady of the Long Night."

Who among the people of South Los didn't know about Arthur's relationship with the "Lady of the Long Night"?

Before siding with Arthur, Kangsion had thoroughly investigated these matters.

So, the "Whale Slaying Sword" naturally assumed that this was Arthur helping the "Lady of the Long Night" collect money.

He had no sympathy for those gambling fools.

Gamblers deserve to die!

With such simple thoughts, Kangsion, already bound to raise the banner of the Kledos Family, saw no issue in cooperating.

Thus, today Kangsion acted with two hundred percent effort.

However, it seemed a bit over the top.

Hearing the insults around him, the "Whale Slaying Sword" felt he should visit South Los less in the future. It wasn't because he feared for his life—with his "Great Arcana Level" skills, he would be safe in South Los as long as he avoided a few specific individuals.

But you still need to eat and drink, right?

What if someone spit in your food or water?

What if someone rubbed your sausage against something below?

Ew, disgusting.

Just the thought made Kangsion's stomach churn, and his gaze towards Arthur became urgently pleading—the longer he stood on the platform, the "Whale Slaying Sword" felt the chances were higher he'd end up consuming "spiced-up" water or "flavored" sausages.

Arthur noticed Kangsion's gaze and immediately gave his subordinate a reassuring look.

Since he had planned everything, he naturally had the aftermath arranged—just as Kangsion had guessed, Arthur was cooperating with Marinda.

This was a plan set in advance.

However, besides cooperating with Marinda,

At this moment, Arthur was more focused on XP.

Grievously lacking XP, Arthur was certainly not going to let anything slip out of his control.

Slightly adjusting his mood inwardly, Arthur took a step and walked towards the platform.

Upon seeing this, the audience at Elta Square immediately erupted into cheers vastly different from the previous cursing—

"Go, Lord Kledos!"

"Lord Kledos, teach this barbarian a lesson!"

"Lord Kledos, let this barbarian understand the 'etiquette' of South Los!"

...

Amidst the cheers, Arthur ascended to the platform.

The young Spirit Medium, with a smile, greeted the audience around the platform and across Elta Square.

This polite gesture prompted the audience at Elta Square to burst into applause.

However, this applause seemed to irritate Kangsion.

"Hmph!"

A cold snort, and the wielder of the "Whale Slaying Sword" directly pulled out the giant Plank Sword from behind and swung it powerfully.

Woo!

A dull howling noise raised a gust of wind that swept over the heads of the audience at Elta Square.

Instantly, the audience was startled.

But what surprised them even more had just begun—

Whoosh! Whoosh, whoosh!

"Waves?"

"Where did these wave sounds come from?"

For the people of South Los, the sound of waves was all too familiar.

More than half of the residents of South Los worked in the Docklands of Xisis Port, and most of the remaining populace worked in services related to the port.

So, they were more than familiar with the sound of waves.

Therefore, everyone knew it was impossible to hear the sound of waves in Elta Square.

Where did these wave sounds come from?

Just when everyone was puzzled, suddenly someone exclaimed,

"Look there!

On the stage!"

An exclamation drew the attention of everyone in Elta Square.

People looked towards the stage.

Immediately, everyone was dumbstruck.

It was the sea...

No!

It was a wave!

Waves!

A wave, about twenty-some meters high, appeared behind Kangsion, and just looking at it felt crushing, making the breath of everyone at Elta Square seem to stop.

As ordinary people, they couldn't tell whether what they were seeing was real or fake.

Even a serious look would reveal a sense of illusion about the waves behind Kangsion.

"This, this..."

"How is this possible?!"

"It must be fake!"

Uncontrollably, people exclaimed, and some even instinctively wanted to run, but their legs wouldn't obey, leaving them only to stare wide-eyed at the giant wave and...

The whale!

A huge blue whale broke through the waves and charged directly at Arthur.

The audience behind Arthur, upon seeing this whale, collapsed to the ground in fright.

Yet, Arthur still wore a smile on his face.

'To battle against the wind and waves in the sea, and then to hunt whales, huh?'

Arthur didn't know what ritual or secret technique Kangsion was using.

But the scene before him reminded the young Spirit Medium of an old fisherman named Santiago, who went out to the sea to fish after eighty-four days without a catch.

Only, Santiago was hunting a marlin.

While what Kangsion sought was—

To slay a whale!

"Haah!"

Kangsion raised the Plank Sword in his hands and with a loud shout, he slashed fiercely.

The giant wave was cleaved by the Plank Sword, and its force seemed to grow by a third.

The blue whale was also cleaved by the Plank Sword, its force growing another third.

It was as if everything in front of the Plank Sword would be split in two.

This sword, unstoppable!

This sword, unparalleled!

This sword, was about to strike Arthur.

Many covered their eyes, no longer daring to watch the impending carnage.

Therefore, they missed the subsequent scene that left onlookers, who had their eyes open, wide-eyed and mouths agape.

All they heard was a calm echo—

"Silent Whisper. Formless!"

Chapter 405: Who Hasn't Dreamed of Being a Hero

The blue whale disappeared.

The huge waves shattered.

The door-like greatsword stopped in front of Arthur, and the roaring sound of the blade had dwindled to a mere creak when the teeth clenched tight.

Everyone turned towards the source of the sound—

Kangsion, wielding the sword!

His teeth, tightly clenched in his mouth, kept on clattering. Veins popped on his forehead, and from his forearms to his upper arms, his muscles had bulged out, completely tearing his sleeves amidst the people's cries of astonishment.

Everyone could tell that Kangsion, the 'Whale Slaying Sword,' had exhausted all his strength.

But the door-like greatsword in his hands couldn't advance even an inch further.

It was as if an invisible giant hand had grasped the blade.

No!

More precisely, it was as if a mountain was pressing down on the 'Whale Slaying Sword.'

Creak, creak!

This time, it wasn't just Kangsion's teeth that made a noise, but the bones throughout his entire body began to sound off.

"So formidable!"

"Lord Kledos is too strong!"

"The gap!"

"It is simply the gap between heaven and earth!"

...

Finally, the people in Elta Square came back to their senses, and involuntarily, everyone burst into exclamations. Some shouted repeatedly.

Marinda looked at this scene, and the corners of her mouth twitched again.

However, looking at Arthur, her eyes held more mirth.

She didn't dislike the ambitious Arthur.

So naturally, she wouldn't dislike the Arthur now.

And when the two were combined?

Marinda liked it even more.

It was a like of partnership.

However, Arthur had no time to pay attention to the current Marinda, and he was oblivious to the cheers around him. He was meticulously feeling the Kangsion before him—

'Every muscle, every bone under control?

Already able to wield his own power with ease!

And that illusory shadow...

[Spirituality] is fluctuating violently!

Arthur thought to himself.

One knows one's own affairs best.

Arthur was very clear how his 'Entrant' strength came to be—

It was entirely thanks to his exceptional talent!

[Breath of Death]!

Through the use of [Breath of Death], though in a way he really did qualify as an 'Entrant,' it came with many restrictions.

Therefore, Arthur wished to see what a normal, extreme 'Great Arcana Level' looked like.

Simply put, Arthur, who was referred to as an 'Entrant' thanks to his 'Talent,' was not satisfied; he wanted to try the 'Effort' aspect as well.

After all, often times, $1+1 > 2$.

But Arthur wanted $1+1+1 > 3$.

Don't forget, he also had the Bloodline [Serpent of Death]!

With Talent and Bloodline both in hand.

What about 'Effort'?

Of course, Arthur wanted to give it a try.

And there hadn't been a suitable opportunity before, but now with Kangsion, the Whale Slaying Sword, playing along, it was a rare opportunity.

Likewise, that was why Arthur insisted on having Kangsion perform with him.

It definitely wasn't just for XP!

Absolutely not!

Arthur emphasized in his mind, and once again, after carefully sensing Kangsion, the young 'Spirit Medium' who knew it was about time, said directly—

"Silent Whisper. Return to Formlessness!"

His voice was as indifferent as before.

The struggling Kangsion, upon hearing this indifferent voice, was like being struck by lightning.

His entire body not only convulsed, but he also began to tumble.

This wasn't a tumbling fall to the ground, but a rolling backwards with his body taut, flipping five consecutive somersaults before landing beneath the arena, shaking all over.

"He won!"

"So amazing!"

"Ferals from overseas, witness this—our Spirit Medium of South Los!"

Cheers and boisterous shouts were unceasing.

But the next moment, it came to an abrupt halt.

Having confirmed his victory and smooth entry into the semifinals, Arthur immediately jumped down from the arena to help 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion up.

However, this 'Whale Slaying Sword' was quite unappreciative.

Not only did he slap away Arthur's hand, but his face was also dark with anger.

This action immediately infuriated the nearby audience.

"Barbarians will be barbarians!"

"Get out of South Los!"

"Go back to your island!"

Amidst the rising and falling curses, 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion remained silent, hanging his head, while Arthur seemed utterly unfazed by his previously rejected hand.

Once again, Arthur stretched out his hand.

This time, 'Whale Slaying Sword' didn't slap away the hand extended by Arthur, but instead stared blankly at the palm in front of him.

After a full four or five seconds, 'Whale Slaying Sword' finally asked—

"What secret technique is this?"

"Want to learn? I'll teach you!"

Arthur said lightly, with a smile on his face.

'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion trembled all over. Then, as if all his strength had been drained from him at that moment, he collapsed to the ground, murmuring.

"I lost!"

Seeing this scene at Elta Square, the audience was thoroughly struck by Arthur's gentlemanly demeanor and the spirit of knighthood, touching the deepest yearning in their hearts.

That was the portrayal of heroes they had from childhood.

As they grew up, though, that portrayal was thoroughly defeated, torn apart, and trampled by reality.

The strong ones we met always left us naive kids bruised and bleeding.

Therefore, everyone scoffed at the heroes they yearned for as children.

They considered it childish.

Numbed, we claimed, not believing in any of it.

But in the quiet of the night, when alone, gazing up at the night sky, you still couldn't help but recall those naive dreams of childhood!

Because ah—

Though unable to become such a hero themselves, their portrayal of a hero, however...

Had never changed!

Looking at Arthur at this moment, many people thought of the portrayal of heroes from their naive and childish days, no longer able to clearly see the face of that hero.

But perhaps, maybe, it should be Arthur's likeness, right?

"Is this what a master is?"

Many people murmured to themselves.

And then—

A resounding applause like thunder erupted.

In the midst of such applause, Arthur helped Kangsion towards the makeshift 'resting room' beneath the Bell Tower.

Inside the 'resting room,' Marinda was already waiting there.

"Naïve!"

Looking at Arthur, this lady gave her blunt assessment.

Arthur just stuck his tongue out at the lady.

"Blah, blah, blah."

"Naïve child!"

The lady stressed.

"Please refer to me as Dream Weaver—if you don't mind, I wouldn't mind you calling me Dream Weaver!"

What the people of South Los needed, Arthur created.

Need a hero's dream?

Arthur would create a hero's dream.

Although it was for XP, it wasn't just about that.

Arthur once had a hero's dream, too.

In those sweltering summer holidays, seated in front of the TV, watching a monkey pop out of a stone, watching him somersault tens of thousands of miles, watching his 72 transformations, watching him wreak havoc in the Heavenly Palace...

That vacation seemed so long, so long that it seemed the monkey never actually became the Great Sage Equal to Heaven.

So long that, he believed it would last forever.

Who knew that monkey was only in a 25-episode series.

And the holiday?

It was only 60 days long.

'Ah, there's no going back! No going back now!'

Arthur raised both hands, stretched with a yawn, and then collapsed onto the soft bed.

He was sleep-deprived; he needed to catch up on some sleep.

But just as Arthur was about to close his eyes, heavy footsteps approached from far to near.

Chapter 406 Undoubtedly, Old Charlie's Bloodline!

The next moment, the curtain of the temporary tent was lifted, and Swordsmanship Chief Julie of Earl of South Los, towering to a height far beyond the average person's limit, walked in with a smile.

That smile contained delight.

And a touch of...

Strange!

Moreover, as soon as she entered the tent, the Swordsmanship Chief's gaze fixed straight on the lying Arthur.

'Hmm?

What has this guy done this time?'

Marinda, holding her pipe, squinted her eyes and after a glance at Arthur, turned her attention straight to the figure behind the Swordsmanship Chief—hidden by the Chief's tall, robust stature, three cloaked figures walked in.

Little Lisop!

Even with the cloak's concealment, Marinda confirmed the identity of the leading figure in an instant.

Why would they come to South Los?

In an instant, a torrent of thoughts flooded the lady's mind.

Just last night, South Town had suffered what could be called a 'disaster.'

Lord Lisop was assassinated.

South Town was thrown into utter chaos.

Only this morning, her scout had detailed to her the destruction of South Town's buildings, more than twenty percent had been bombed or burned, and a preliminary estimate of at least five hundred dead miners and residents.

With such a backdrop, Little Lisop couldn't possibly leave South Town.

Even if Little Lisop had no right to inherit Lord Lisop's title.

But Little Lisop had indeed inherited that coal and iron mine!

To ensure smooth mining operations in the future, appearances had to be maintained.

Unless...

The title!

Little Lisop had inherited the title!

Almost instantly, Marinda guessed the answer.

The Little Lisop before her had traded part of the coal and iron mine's revenue for the inheritance of the title...no, hereditary succession!

'He's completely sided with the Earl of South Los, huh?

That Old Lion is probably fuming with rage, right?'

As she thought this, even more doubts surfaced in her eyes.

After meeting the Lord Count in South Los, Little Lisop had gained his hereditary title, which was the normal procedure, so why did he need to see Arthur?

In the midst of the lady's puzzled gaze, the Swordsmanship Chief of Earl South Los spoke—

"Lord Little Lisop, I believe it is best that you explain the next part personally, as, after all, it concerns the future of the Lisop Family."

With that said, the Swordsmanship Chief stepped aside.

However, her gaze towards Arthur grew even stranger.

The 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion also shifted imperceptibly, making room in the center of the tent for Arthur and Little Lisop.

Then...

The 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion's eyelids began to twitch rapidly.

Because Little Lisop, having removed his hood, directly knelt on one knee before Arthur.

"My Lord!"

While addressing Arthur reverently, Little Lisop's face was filled with frustration, regret, and helplessness.

The young lord's voice even took on a crying tone—

"Your multiple reminders yesterday were all maliciously misinterpreted by me, and as a result, an irreparable loss was inflicted on South Town, and my father was assassinated.

Holding the inheritance of the South Town Coal and Iron Mine, my heart is not only fearful and anxious but also filled with trepidation.

Therefore, I pleaded with the Lord Count for the hereditary title and land of South Town using twenty percent of the coal and iron mine's revenue, as I believed I needed to make the South Los House complete.

But, I know I lack ability, I am too young, I am too blindly arrogant.

So...

I request that you take over the management of all matters in South Town."

Listening to Little Lisop's words, 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion's head buzzed.

What's going on here?

Why can't I understand a word?

Because of his unease, he traded the South Town Coal and Iron Mine for the hereditary rights to South Town, and then, believing himself incompetent, gave South Town to Arthur?

What, what, what?

What's he scheming?

Is Arthur his father?

So dutiful?

'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion had never doubted Arthur's strength or ability, recognizing Arthur as his Master from the time he started addressing him as such.

But never had the 'Whale Slaying Sword' imagined he'd witness something like this before his eyes.

Should such matters not exist only within the pages of illustrated novels?

Should they not be merely legends?

Hey!

It seems there really is such a legend!

In legends, didn't the founder of the Empire also arrive somewhere, with people bringing soldiers and provisions to join him, imploring that young man to take them in, and willing to offer up their territory?

But legends are legends, while seeing is believing, are factual truths.

How can they be compared?

'The Master is truly deserving of his title!'

In the end, Kangsion, the 'Whale Slaying Sword' expressed such admiration, looking at Arthur with reverence, not merely willing compliance.

This 'Whale Slaying Sword' somehow felt that he had just witnessed history.

And in the deep blue eyes of Marinda, there was also a strong flash of surprise.

When?

When had Arthur earned Little Lisop's loyalty?

And it wasn't just ordinary loyalty, but diehard loyalty!

Otherwise, how could Little Lisop possibly entrust his territory to Arthur!

Was it during that time last night when he excused himself to 'meditate'?

Impossible, right?

Could a couple of hours truly transform someone into a diehard loyalist, even the Old Lion's 'Lion Group' couldn't achieve that, right?

'No wonder Julie had that expression!'

Marinda thought to herself, the tobacco in her pipe burning more fiercely.

Like the Swordsmanship Chief, Marinda's gaze at Arthur also turned peculiar at this moment.

While everyone was watching, Arthur slowly rose to his feet.

The young 'Spirit Medium' raised his hand to help Little Lisop up, and gestured for him to sit beside him before slowly saying—

"Little Lisop, I am very grateful for your trust.

But I am just a 'Spirit Medium'.

When it comes to managing a piece of land, I am not skilled.

Even to manage a manor, I would need the help of a professional steward, and it would have to be entirely entrusted to him.

Otherwise...

It would be nothing but chaos."

Arthur's tone was unhurried, and his voice was even gentler, instantly making his words seem all the more modest.

However, Marinda just curled her lip.

'What a hypocrite, spouting off all that, and in the end still 'reluctantly' accepting, right?

Hmph, seen right through you!'

The lady hummed this to herself.

And indeed, just as this lady had predicted.

"However, I want to try it."

Hearing such words, the Countess's Swordsmanship Chief, Kangsion the 'Whale Slaying Sword,' Little Lisop's combined Guard Commander and Swordsmanship Chief Gold, and the Head Hunter Leixide were not surprised at all.

They all thought like Marinda, believing that it should be so.

But...

They couldn't help feeling a tiny bit of disappointment.

They believed they would see something different in Arthur.

At least, that's what they thought before.

And now?

It was just as expected.

Only Little Lisop felt differently, the young Lord looking at his kind father with fervent admiration.

'If father manages South Town, will he live at South Town Manor?

If so, that would be wonderful!

I could listen to father's teachings every day!

Thinking this, Little Lisop immediately said—

"You'll have no problems at all, you..."

"Me?"

No, no, no!

I didn't say it was I!"

Arthur laughed while waving his hand, interrupting Little Lisop's words.

Then, he looked towards Marinda, his eyes filled with endless tenderness and love—

"My dear, would you help me manage South Town?"

Chapter 407: Different, Yet the Same!

Marinda was dumbstruck. It was not a pretense, nor was it a performance. She was genuinely stuck in place, dumbfounded. The lady foolishly stared at Arthur, her heart churning ceaselessly with emotions that could not be expressed in words, filling her heart. Arthur had previously mentioned using coal and iron mines in his plans for South Town. Although that twenty percent of coal and iron mine business eventually turned into a trade involving "Cat Faction, Cat Cave Mystic Arts, Ritual, Props," and furthermore, since her own collection couldn't match up, she also owed Arthur a debt, the kind that included interest. And this was still under the basis that the two were cooperating in managing that twenty percent of the mines. But now! Arthur had truly given her the entire South Town! Saying is one thing, doing is another. Saying and doing are complete opposites. The former is elusive and boundless, which only disgusted Marinda. But the latter? Marinda felt the odd sensation in her heart and quickly shifted her focus. 'Doesn't he have any regrets at all?' Marinda hoped to use more doubts to refute the feelings inside her heart. Unfortunately, it was useless. Because— The answer was affirmative. Arthur indeed had no regrets. A moment ago, she had observed everything from start to finish. From the beginning to the end, Arthur did not hesitate at all. Such decisiveness, Marinda admired. But... 'What can I use to repay him!' Marinda felt a trace of helplessness deep inside. Then, suddenly a doubt emerged in the lady's heart. 'He wouldn't really want to sleep with me, right?' Instantly, Arthur perceived the meaning in the lady's eyes. Six "Hands of Void" invisibly floating beside him all collectively flipped off the lady, even the one carrying "Atos's Box" with its little finger awkwardly hooking the box— this "Hand of Void" also flipped the bird. Of course, Marinda could not see this. However, Marinda could clearly understand the meaning in Arthur's eyes— 'You wish!' 'Heh, you put it down!' 'Put it down right now!' 'Once you do, I'll prove it!' Marinda immediately responded with her gaze to Arthur. Arthur and Marinda communicated purely with an understanding exchanged through their eyes. However, to the onlookers around them, the situation appeared different. The people around them felt the two were exchanging affectionate glances. Is this what love is? The people around couldn't help but think to themselves. Yes, this must be love. Otherwise, why would someone casually gift an entire territory to someone? Especially since this territory, near South Los enriched with mineral resources, was truly a land of abundance. Managing such a territory, the wealth it generated in a year was enough to make any noble in South Los look at it enviously. Such wealth... The people around couldn't help but think, but soon they started feeling ashamed. Watching Arthur and Marinda, who only had eyes for each other, they felt they were vulgar, sinners tarnishing love, the most nonsensical people in the words of poets and writers. 'Whale Slaying Sword' Kangsion scratched his head and started moving quietly towards the tent exit. Though there were still some things he wanted to say to Arthur, the 'Whale Slaying Sword' felt it was not the appropriate time. Just look at the deep gazes exchanged between Arthur and Marinda. At such a moment, how could there be room for anyone else. The Countess's Swordsmanship Chief did the same, choosing to walk outside. Indeed, as soon as the Countess's Swordsmanship Chief stepped out of

the tent and felt the rare warm sun of a South Los winter day, her mind still felt foggy. The shock Arthur had given her was too great. From her birth till now, she had never met anyone like Arthur. He was really... Irresistibly intriguing. Without mixing any other purpose. She wanted to talk more with Arthur about some things that confused her. She always felt that Arthur would give her some interesting answers from different perspectives. Then, the Swordsmanship Chief thought of some rumors about the Kledos Family. No! More precisely, rumors about Old Charlie, the patriarch of the Kledos Family. Suddenly, the Swordsmanship Chief had another idea. However, he immediately shook his head— "Pity! Too frail!" The Swordsmanship Chief turned to glance at the tent, and after letting out a sigh whose meaning even he didn't grasp, he walked toward the side. When Gold, the Swordsmanship Chief and Guard Commander of Little Lisop, and Leixide, the Head Hunter, stepped out of the tent, they did so with smiles. This was in accordance with what the Lord had said about the 'Kind Father'. The Kind Father, full of love and compassion. The 'Lady of the Long Night,' notorious for her bloody carnage, must have felt this love too, right? It would be very warm, wouldn't it? Among all those who exited the tent, only Little Lisop had regrets in his heart. "Father always surprises us. But, if Father can't stay in South Town Manor, then I'll just visit South Los often." Little Lisop would not contradict Arthur's decision. The only thing he could change was himself. In the tent, only Arthur and Marinda were left. Suddenly, their actions became much bolder. Almost simultaneously, they both raised their hands and gave each other the middle finger. Then, they paused. Next, they each lifted a foot, preparing to step on the other's toes. Watching their counterparts raise their feet, they both cautiously took two steps back and opted for a more civilized approach—they simultaneously opened their mouths. Ha, spit! The spit they expelled crisscrossed in the air, and as they dodged, it all landed on the ground. But the two, still in the act of spitting, frowned with their features contorted. The image of their crisscrossing spit replayed in their minds, making them feel somewhat... Disgusted. The next moment— Blargh! Marinda let out a retching sound. Arthur, who had also felt nauseous and almost vomited, immediately perked up. "Come on, let's talk business. I'm leaving South Town to you. With your skills, aside from what you must hand over, you'll still manage to earn quite a lot. So... What can I get in return?" Arthur gestured with his mouth. Their relationship had long since become one where they didn't need to beat around the bush. A frank discussion was the most appropriate way. "What do you want?" Marinda, suppressing her nausea, responded. She didn't know what to offer in return. So she might as well hear what Arthur wanted. "Ships and knowledge about the Mystic Side, including but not limited to secret techniques, rituals, and more." Arthur's response made Marinda pause. Ships, she had guessed. She knew of Arthur's insistence on the matters of the fleet. For that, Marinda approved. After all, with tax exemption policies, she would be just as insistent. But the knowledge of the Mystic Side surprised her. With the resources of 'Cat Faction.Hei', they shouldn't be lacking in those areas. Could it be... Compensation for me? This thought crossed Marinda's mind, and her heart skipped a beat, but she immediately shook her head. "Impossible, that guy Arthur would never be so kind!" "So, this guy must be aiming for..." Thinking this, the lady narrowed her eyes, ground her teeth at Arthur, and said in a low voice— "Did you plan this all along?"

Chapter 408: Entry-level Atlas!

Scheming? I really just need ships and more knowledge of the mystic side! Arthur let out a helpless sigh from the bottom of his heart. Telling the truth, why does no one believe it? Are the proceeds from South Town large? One could say they are large! One could also say they aren't! For a small town of twenty thousand people, which sprung up around a mine, as long as the mine does not run dry, it is a constant

stream of wealth. But, such wealth couldn't possibly all fall into one's own pocket. Because there are taxes! And there is the maintenance of South Town! Among these, taxes must be paid, otherwise in South Los you could be literally struck by lightning! This is absolutely not a metaphor. It means being literally struck by lightning in various senses. The Countess, who claimed to live in isolation and truly did stay out of the public eye, was absolutely unforgiving towards anyone who dared evade taxes. If the circumstances were severe enough, there would be a strike of lightning. If more severe, there would be two. In any case, taxes are a major concern. Even if the Countess received a part of the profits as dividends, it would be the same, unless the coal and iron mine became entirely hers, which might exempt her from taxes. And the maintenance of South Town was also a major concern, And it was stressful and demanding. A small town of twenty thousand people is absolutely not simple to manage; just the basics of eating, drinking, and sanitation were enough to give Arthur headaches. Add to that security, transportation, and communication issues, Arthur simply did not have enough manpower. Especially in terms of communication, with the Countess getting involved in the South Town coal and iron mine, it was bound to become extremely important — and among his men, there was no one who could truly deal with the people the Countess sent. Arthur himself was capable of handling it, but for Arthur to invest himself fully in it was not worth the loss. Moreover, one thing Arthur could be sure of was that if he truly showed up, the Countess would certainly not mind sending more people to 'solve the problem' with him — because tying up all of his energies in South Town would very much suit the Countess's interests. An 'Entrant' who could be seen every day and was exhausted with trivial matters was something any lord would loudly praise and reward. Thus, Arthur had very straightforwardly exchanged a portion of the profits for things he needed more with Marinda before. Now was no exception! Compared to him, Marinda had much more experience dealing with the Countess, and she also had ample manpower. Moreover, Marinda needed South Town more. To him, South Town was a complex and exhausting 'profit', far less appealing than acquiring more ships for 'tax-free' coastal trade. But for Marinda, owning a piece of land like South Town meant there was much she could do. Not to mention the distant future, just the 'Lady of the Long Night's Salon' would move up two levels! More importantly, the subsequent 'auctions' would be greatly enhanced, able to attract more people — compared to South Los, South Town was safer for some. As for mystical knowledge? The books brought from Yumir Manor had all been read by Arthur; he needed more books to broaden his 'mystic side's horizon.' However, he could not say that directly. And his original excuse could no longer be used after hearing Marinda's words. At that moment — The young 'Spirit Medium' looked at the 'Lady of the Long Night' in front of him and sighed softly. "I say I don't, do you believe me? I really just simply want twelve brand new Kirk Sailboats and some mystic side knowledge." Marinda blew a thick puff of smoke towards Arthur. The lady answered with her actions instead. In the rich scent of mint mixed with a faint medicinal aroma of the smoke, Arthur spread his hands wide. Then, Marinda did not advance further. The lady was very good at keeping a measured distance. The next moment — A large smoke ring came out, and Marinda entered back into the smoke ring. About ten seconds later, Marinda came back out again, her hands now holding a brown notebook the size of a palm, wrapped with a black string. After untying the string, Marinda tossed the notebook directly to Arthur. "Here for you! This is a combination of various necromantic mystiques I learned and some conclusions I drew — although it only reaches the entry-level part, the entry-level atlas I read back then was the core legacy of the 'Black Robe' at the Tower of Mist: the Rite of Souls! Moreover, I can guarantee that this chart is complete and intact! So... Skip the ships!" Entry-level Atlas! Arthur felt a chill inside, but his expression remained unchanged. "Heh heh, you think it's still useful to me now?" Arthur said as he rolled his eyes. The seemingly normal words

were hiding tests. Arthur was quite familiar with Marinda's power, beyond the "Undead". There was also smoke! Moreover, the proportion of smoke was significantly larger. Could one person use two "Entry-level Atlases"? Arthur guessed at the bottom of his heart. At the same time, he awaited Marinda's response. And this lady, naturally, did not disappoint Arthur — "Why would it be useless? Although most people would choose only one chart close to their own power, you are the 'Black Cat' of this era! The 'Communicate with Spirits' secret technique you hold and the entry-level chart you choose are inevitably related to death. And this 'Rite of Souls'? It also possesses traits of death. So, there is no conflict! And... You had already calculated everything, hadn't you? From the moment I appeared before you, you were scheming it! I suspect now that the day I went to see you was also arranged by you!" Saying this, the lady took a deep drag of smoke. And Arthur? While memorizing this information, he raised his hand and gave her the finger. "Arranged by me? Isn't it because you wanted to use me casually, then suddenly realized something was off about my identity, investigated thoroughly, discovered clues, and then coveted the 'Communicate with Spirits' secret technique and entry-level atlas of my Cat Faction?" At this moment, Arthur was giving no ground. Because, Arthur had discovered that this woman wanted to make him feel guilty. And then... Give him fewer boats! This wouldn't do! My friend, a Spirit Medium's boats shouldn't be in debt! However, Arthur still had some doubts in his heart — "Have I been shearing Marinda's wool too much recently? Why does it feel like I'm being a bit petty? Should I give Marinda a break, too much shearing will lead to baldness!" Thinking thus, Arthur's gaze swept over Marinda's head, where a fine Deerstalker Cap sat. "Could she really be bald? Why else would she always wear a hat? Or is it... She hasn't washed her hair?" Arthur thought to himself. "I think you're thinking something quite offensive to me—6 boats!" As she spoke these words, Marinda suddenly made a counteroffer. Having been found out, the lady stopped pretending and went straight to business. Faced with such a straightforward 'price tag', Arthur wasn't afraid, and immediately responded. "12 boats!" "7 boats!" The tug-of-war bargaining began. It finally settled on 8 boats. In the end, Marinda clung to it stubbornly. Arthur could only agree. However, looking at the notes beside him, Arthur knew that he had made a major gain. If it weren't for the absolute asymmetry in information, that everyone thought he was already an 'Entrant', this notebook with the entry-level charts, even if he had a cooperative relationship with Marinda, would have exploded into a price unimaginable to him. And this was still due to 'friendship'. After all, rarity breeds value! And now? It might as well be 'dirt cheap'? Arthur thought to himself, as he reached out to pick up that notebook. And just as Arthur's fingers touched the notebook, the young Spirit Medium was taken aback because— Rows of text surged upwards. Looking at these texts, only one thought remained in Arthur's mind. This time, he had really earned a fortune!

Chapter 409 Are You Polite?

Arthur quickly scanned the text before him— [Rite of Souls: In the notes recorded by Marinda, there are various secret techniques related to 'Undead'. Among them, the core legacy 'Rite of Souls' of the 'Black Robe' from the Tower of Mist is particularly coveted. These secret techniques and Entry-level Atlases usually take countless hours to learn, and one must possess exceptional Talent to succeed. But for you, who possess the Talent of 'Breath of Death' and the Bloodline of 'Serpent of Death - Remnant', it is far too simple, as if you had merely forgotten these advanced techniques. And now? You simply remembered them! Moreover, due to the traits of your Talent and Bloodline, they also underwent mutations and were promoted, becoming wholly different from the original versions— The soul? It's merely a part of 'Death'.] [Effect: 1, Soul Bind; 2, Whipping; 3, Bone Divination;] [Soul Bind: Due to your

Talent and Bloodline, after mutating and promoting the 'Rite of Souls', every time you kill an opponent, you can use 'Aura of Death' to imprison the opponent's soul to serve you] [Whipping: Construct an invisible whip with 'Aura of Death' that can inflict double damage and ten times the Pain on specters, evil spirits, fierce spirits, and evil spirits] [Bone Divination: When you choose to extract the bones of your slain opponent, you can use them for divination] (Note 1: Soul Bind requires occupying a part of 'Spirituality', starting from 'Spirituality' 0.1 up to 3. When it exceeds 'Spirituality' 3, 'Aura of Death' will automatically trim the opponent's soul to fit the maximum limit, but this will cause irreparable loss of memory) (Note 2: The imprisoned soul will completely lose all Bloodline, secret techniques, and Talent related to the body, but the secret techniques and Talent related to the soul can be retained) (Note 3: The soul retains memories from its life, but under the influence of your 'Aura of Death', such memories will become chaotic and fade away. After the memories have fully vanished, the imprisoned soul will become your slave; they will be numb, loyal, tireless, and the occupation of 'Spirituality' will be greatly reduced, almost negligible. You only need to spend a little Aura of Death daily) (Note 4: After the memory of the imprisoned soul completely disappears, they might be promoted to specter, evil spirit, fierce spirit and, if specific conditions are met, there is a very low possibility of becoming an evil spirit. Promotion failure will cause the soul to vanish completely. The likelihood of promotion depends on the soul's innate Talent; specific conditions include but are not limited to one's own talents, environmental factors, and artefactual factors, etc.) (Note 5: The construction of the Whip of Death entirely depends on the 'Aura of Death' you provide, and its length also depends on the strength of your 'Aura of Death'. Moreover, when facing a soul you have imprisoned, as long as it is in your line of sight, the Whip of Death is utterly locked on. When the imprisoned soul is promoted to specter, evil spirit, fierce spirit, or evil spirit, this effect still exists.) (Note 6: During Bone Divination, using Deathly Fire to roast will yield more accurate divination results, but it is still not 100 percent accurate) ... As Arthur read the text before him, he couldn't help but silently criticize— '[Soul Bind]? To kill the opponent, and then imprison their soul? What kind of hellish, devilish act is this? And this is a result of my mutated and promoted Talent and Bloodline? Are you polite? Am I this kind of person? You're describing me as some kind of villain!' The young 'Spirit Medium' thought to himself, yet there was an undertone of excitement in his eyes. He wanted to experiment! No! He was definitely not some pervert! He just wanted to see if he could learn more secrets from an opponent's soul. According to [Note 3], it should be feasible. However, he needed to consider timing, and... Bluff! Dead people don't lie. But the souls of the dead do lie. Having full memories means having the memories of being killed, so Arthur could totally imagine the hatred in their hearts when he appeared before them. Under such hatred, it would be natural for them to lie to him. After all, ghosts are full of deceit. 'I wonder if [Insight][Eagle Eye] can see through the lies of the soul?' Arthur thought to himself but wasn't too anxious. Because— Whether [Insight][Eagle Eye] could see through the lies of the soul, Arthur didn't know. But one thing Arthur did know. That is... "Bluff — capable of deceiving even ghosts!" Arthur was absolutely sure of this. As long as they believed, he could deceive them. To make them believe was a bit challenging, though not overly so. 'In life, I had killed them all! How much smarter could they possibly be in death? Especially as time passed, their memories starting to fade and disintegrate, deceiving ghosts seemed hardly fair with a tiny bit of challenge!' Arthur smirked inwardly. However, he did not truly disdain them. Because he was well aware of how complex and erroneous the information became once the souls' memories became muddled and dissipated, and what a massive undertaking it was to sort that all out. But Arthur was not daunted by this. Having something was better than nothing. Even if it took a great effort to sort through, it was still less trouble than creating something from scratch. Bear in mind, he could also "corroborate" from the side. Where

there's action, there are traces. A thing never simply springs from nothingness. The things the soul knew could also be known by others; he just had to slightly "adjust" and he could discern the truth from lies. Thinking so, Arthur looked at Marinda with a smile in his eyes. The lady before him always brought surprises. Filled with fairness and surprises, Marinda suddenly seemed extraordinary in Arthur's eyes at that moment, even as she was puffing on a pipe toward him, but to Arthur, she appeared slightly adorable. Of course, if this notebook contained the secret technique of the 'Ghost Carriage,' Arthur promised Marinda would not just be slightly adorable, but exceptionally adorable. 'So, that so-called 'Ghost Carriage''s secret technique isn't 'Undead,' but 'Smoke'? Arthur believed what Marinda said, that this notebook was her summary. And if such a summary didn't mention the 'Ghost Carriage,' then that was the only possibility left. As for the undead around the 'Ghost Carriage'? Clearly, that was a disguise. Entirely to fit the title of Marinda, the 'Lady of the Eternal Night.' Because, according to rumors, when that lady traveled, she was carried by undead in a carriage that materialized out of thin air. "Don't look at me with that kind of eyes! Are you trying to trick me again? I'll tell you! I definitely won't be fooled again!" Marinda spoke such words. However, it was obviously bluster — No sooner had she finished speaking, Marinda completely disappeared into a ring of smoke. Clearly, she had been scared away. Seeing this, Arthur couldn't help but laugh. 'Do I still need to devise plans for you? Aren't you always the one walking into the line of fire?' "Tsk." With that teasing sound, Arthur picked up Pendragon, who was utterly puzzled by the human world, to continue napping, when the voice of his good friend Scott suddenly came from outside the tent— "Arthur, get dressed, will you? I'm coming in!"

Chapter 410: South Los Love Story

Scott's words made Arthur sit up abruptly. He swore, Scott had definitely done it on purpose. And indeed, it was so— As the words fell, the newly appointed editor-in-chief of the "Horn Report" quietly lifted the corner of the tent flap, not fully, just a crack. Upon discovering that the tent housed only Arthur and Pendragon, a clear look of disappointment crossed Scott's face. "What are you disappointed by? Are you being polite? Are you sullyng my character?" Arthur repeatedly said to his friend. "I absolutely wouldn't doubt your character, Arthur, let alone think you'd do something dishonorable—I'm just making a simple deduction!" Scott lifted his right index finger and shook it several times. "Deduction?" Arthur, taken aback, looked at Scott with surprise. "Yes, deduction! You gave South Town to Miss Caesar, wouldn't she be moved? And under such emotions, isn't it natural she might be unable to restrain herself? If you wouldn't initiate, but she does, shouldn't there be sparks flying passionately? Scott said solemnly. "Ah yes, exactly! You're right! It's a waste of Talent if you don't write novels! Do you believe if Marinda were still here, she'd have already slapped your face and thrown you out by now?" Arthur rolled his eyes and lay back down. "I believe it! But, isn't it because Miss Caesar isn't here? Only my good friend Arthur is!" Scott chuckled as he moved closer, the young editor-in-chief pulled up a stool and sat down next to Arthur's couch, taking out paper and pen. Clearly, an interview was about to begin. Arthur didn't mind. To earn more XP, he needed such interviews. However, before starting, Arthur specifically inquired— "Did Swordsmanship Master Julie remind you?" "She reminded me, what shouldn't be written must not be written. Moreover, the Swordsmanship Master has already taken action with her team. She assured me that by the time the top four are decided, your match with Kangsion of the 'Whale Slaying Sword' will appear justifiable, at least in the eyes of the common folk." Scott's face bore a bitter smile. However, he didn't complain further. Having seen part of the world's truth, this newly appointed editor-in-chief understood that some things were better known by only a few people. Otherwise, it would only cause panic and chaos. Just like the 'Blazing Wind' Greta they

encountered that day. If people knew that this pirate was not just cruel but possessed strength beyond ordinary humans' imagination, most would be driven to despair. And when such despair spread, no one could be sure of the outcomes. "Alas, so my special issue must now tackle other aspects! If you want to depict the 'Swordsmanship Competition' of South Los, you can't just write about the 'Swordsmanship Competition' of South Los, you have to write about its local customs, its richness and beauty, you have to write about the competitors— Like: the love story between the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los and the 'Lady of the Eternal Night'?" Scott said, looking at Arthur with an expectant face. The curiosity brimming in his eyes was palpably tangible. Arthur could assure that Scott was not just in it for the report, he simply enjoyed gobbling up the gossip. And him? As a friend, how could he not satisfy his friend's appetite for juicy stories? Definitely not for XP! "It's all about helping others for fun!" Arthur thought to himself, his voice slowly breaking the silence— "The moment I first saw Marinda, I knew she was the love of my life..." Because of the "Mystic Side," horror stories could not be written. But one could always write love stories, right? Sappy love stories wouldn't attract any dreadful peeping, would they? Arthur began to spin his tales. These stories were highly exaggerated, but with the premise of 'from South Town,' everything seemed plausible. "Gasp, you even climbed up onto Miss Caesar's garden window ledge?" In the records, Scott looked at Arthur with admiration usually reserved for warriors. Not me! It wasn't me! Don't make things up! I was just purely dedicated to 'art'! Paying homage to 17-year-old Romeo and 13-year-old Juliet. "You know, love always clouds the judgment—even for me, and for Marinda, I did some things that were completely illogical. Those things, even to the current me, remain unbelievable." Arthur revealed a wistful smile. "So, after encountering those things now, would you refuse them?" Scott, now in professional mode, began to keenly identify points of interest in the conversation. "No! I would still do it the same way. Even if it's unbelievable, even if it's baffling, I'd still do it because— She is Marinda." Arthur shook his head firmly, his gaze then softened. It was a softness Scott had never seen before. Until now, Scott had not understood love. Because it was invisible, intangible. But from that moment on, Scott understood what love looked like. It was the way Arthur spoke of Marinda. That was, indeed, love! As if inspiration had sparked deep in his brain, Scott began to write fervently. Moreover, unconsciously, this new editor began to embellish the love story between Arthur and Marinda. Arthur, holding Pendragon, quietly left the tent. He was not in the habit of disturbing others at their work. 'If you have to create a weakness, let it be a thorough one! Thank you, Marinda! Thank you for volunteering to be 'lovers' with me!' Feeling the warm afternoon breeze, basking in the sunlight, Arthur let out a heartfelt sigh and then turned his attention to the arena. The match between Bern and Bedivere had already concluded. Even though Bodweil was talented, fast, and agile, he still lost to Bern, who also had exceptional talent and more extensive combat experience. Bern had smoothly advanced to the semifinals. The coach from Joe Jock Swordsmanship Club was full of joy and excitement. While his opponent, Bedivere, felt saddened yet kindly and sincerely congratulated his own coach and rival. As the two walked down from the arena. The third match did not start immediately but followed the previous pattern, featuring a song and dance performance—a paid attraction during the intermission. Similarly, such performances were intended to attract more spectators, allowing the surrounding vendors to feel their money was well spent. Arthur was not well-versed in song and dance. However, at the end of the performance, he still gave a round of applause. Then 'Storm Sword' Deljo and Lord Ernest's nephew stepped onto the arena. While everyone's attention was drawn to the arena, a figure quietly approached Arthur.