

Great Master 421

Chapter 421: Breakfast in a Small Space!

Arthur looked at Marinda in surprise. Then, the young 'Spirit Medium' rolled her eyes and leaned back into the chair, speaking in a tone mixed with instruction and disdain— "If you want to pretend to be in the dawn of love, you can't be holding a smoking pipe. If you want to feign indifference while actually caring, you can't be wearing hunting attire. Even now, you're unwilling to call me 'dear.'" As he said this, Arthur looked at Marinda with a half-smile. Of course, Arthur knew why Marinda was asking if he was busy tomorrow. Because— Inheriting a noble title! Before the onset of winter, Marinda would inherit Baron Kemir's title. Coincidentally, it was shortly after the 'South Los Swordsmanship Competition' had ended. This was something Marinda had personally told Arthur long ago, and he hadn't forgotten. As for why she chose to start inheriting the title the day after the South Los Swordsmanship Competition ended? It had nothing to do with the South Los Swordsmanship Competition. It had to do with the 'Barriers over the South Los Sea.' It had to do with the 'riots in South Town.' These two matters took up most of the Countess's attention, preventing her from noticing that Marinda was unlocking Baron Kemir's treasury. This was Marinda's real purpose! As for that recent act of death? Tsk, trying to mock him? Marinda, you're a hundred years too early! Arthur conveyed this with his eyes. Marinda took a deep drag from her smoking pipe, visibly irritated. It wasn't that Arthur had guessed wrong and hurt this lady's feelings. It was that the lady herself was angry about her failed acting—she really had intended to mock Arthur, to avenge her 'hasty retreat' from yesterday. But what was the result? A failure. This lady had considerable confidence in her own acting skills. By all accounts, she shouldn't have been seen through so easily. "Indeed, you know me too well!" Marinda sighed outwardly, while internally she began to ponder other methods. Arthur glanced at her then picked up a tart from the food basket, eating while speaking. "Don't bother, it's useless. Unless you can embrace my arm and still remain calm. Otherwise... It's all a futile effort." Arthur spoke with certainty. Marinda, in many respects, had Arthur quite on guard, but he wasn't the least bit worried about her dealings with men or the various designs and layouts stemming from that; she detested men! That instinct emanating from deep within her body. It was something that could never be concealed. To put it simply, it was too easy to see through. The recent scene was no different; Marinda must have pondered for a long time to come up with a way to mock him without making contact. Too bad for her, he remembered how she fled in panic yesterday. Given the nature of this woman who valued face, how could she be so gentle today? He had been on his guard all along. However, more than these, what Arthur cared about was— "There won't be any problems with your 'advance,' right?" He had seen clever schemes backfire more than once. Even if Marinda was the one handling it, Arthur still needed to ask. "No, because it was arranged by Lord Count!" Marinda said, with a trace of amusement in her eyes. Arthur immediately reacted. "Arranged by Lord Count? Someone plans to complicate this matter? Baron Kemir isn't going to suddenly produce a distant nephew or something, is he?" Arthur's gaze turned towards Marinda. Although he knew Marinda probably wouldn't do something superfluous, he still wanted to confirm. "Don't look at me; it was the Old Lion who messed around. The spy of the Lord Count sent back the news, that's why we're cutting the Gordian knot so swiftly." Marinda immediately flipped Arthur the bird in response to his mistrust. Arthur returned the gesture while his mind began to race. Opportunity! An opportunity to unlock the ruins near the beach! That Mother Tigress was heavily preoccupied. There was also Marinda's inheritance of the title as a cover. It truly was an opportunity that comes once in a blue moon. However, Arthur did not take the initiative to speak up. Because he was certain that Marinda would not overlook

this point—being the proactive developer of those ruins, Arthur did not believe Marinda would be indifferent. The previous 'stagnation' was nothing more than a lack of the right moment and manpower. For the covert excavation of the ruins, Marinda must be extremely cautious, definitely not hiring professional Relic Explorers ostentatiously. It was bound to be mostly her own people. At the same time, it had to be under the guise of building warehouses or something of the sort. But the progress was incredibly slow. So slow that the warehouse or whatever else should have been completed recently, and it couldn't be delayed any longer. This was the first point! And then there was the even more important second point— Marinda knew from him that more people were watching that place, especially the Kledos Family, which had been paying attention to it for a long time. Therefore, Marinda showed up at his place. This woman wanted to utilize the professional exploration team of 'Storm Sword' Deljo under his command to finish exploring the ruins, and use this as a reason to shut him up, getting her deserved share in the process. 'What a generous and cooperative woman!' After sighing inwardly, Arthur became even more comfortable enjoying his breakfast. At the table beside him, Marinda also wasn't in a hurry as she began to write with her finger— Beach. Fifty-fifty. Marinda wrote these numbers down thoroughly. Arthur was not moved at all. He knew this was not Marinda's bottom line. In fact, it was so. When Arthur picked up his fifth egg tart, the lady wrote on the table again— Forty-sixty. I've invested too much in the early stage; this is the bottom line. Although the lady wrote this, after just a short pause, she added another sentence. I'll give you four new Kirk Sailboats on top of that. Eight boats. Arthur wrote with one hand while holding an egg tart in the other. Why don't you drop dead? Greedy bastard. This wasn't written with her hand; it was expressed through the lady's gaze. Subsequently, the lady wrote again— Six boats! These are the last of the new boats I can mobilize. 'The last of the new boats? That means there are still... Secondhand boats!' Arthur began to calculate inwardly. After hearing news of 'Bloody John', Marinda gave him two boats; then because of the business with the three sons of the Bern Family in the Docklands, she sent him another new boat. Trading the management rights of South Town, he again exchanged for eight new boats from Marinda. Plus the current six new boats. Unbeknownst to him, he had accumulated 17 new boats, nearly catching up with the fleet of 20 boats in collaboration with Marinda. Most importantly, these 17 brand new Kirk Sailboats hadn't cost him a penny. Considering the cost of 25,000 Gold Coins for a brand new Kirk Sailboat. 'Did I unwittingly shear this woman for 425,000 Gold Coins in wool over these past two or three days? No wonder she has become a bit stingy lately; probably all her orders at the South Los Shipyard are gone. Well, I'll just assume I went soft this time. Who would expect me to be a young, upright, innocent, and kind 'Spirit Medium'? Sighing inwardly, Arthur nodded with feigned difficulty. After all, you can't keep shearing the same sheep over and over. What if it's shorn bald? Best to let it grow before shearing again. When Marinda saw Arthur agreed, she was somewhat surprised. He agreed so easily this time? Was this guy setting another trap for me? The lady pondered inwardly, but then, her gaze landed on the empty basket— "You jerk, you didn't leave me a single morsel of food!"

Chapter 422: The Champion Match!

Marinda's angry glare softened at the sight of "Grandma Andor's Kitchen" delivering "breakfast". But very quickly, the lady's eyes became filled with surprise and astonishment, and then shock. Because— Arthur had eaten the equivalent of twenty people's worth of food right in front of her. 10kg of roast beef, 4kg of salad, and whole 1kg loaves of white bread—one after another, ten in a row, just swallowed by Arthur. Swallowed! His mouth would open, and with a gulp, the food would disappear. Marinda, holding a slice of white bread, watched the scene before her, dumbfounded. She stared at Arthur's

abdomen. Not a tiny bit of bulge. It seemed as if the food he'd just swallowed had been digested immediately. Wait a minute! Digested right away?! Marinda snapped out of it. 'Learned a new secret technique? Or perhaps a bloodline promotion? Or maybe... 'Ascend Step!'. As the last guess came to her mind, Marinda's ears even started buzzing—a physical phenomenon that occurs only when one is extremely shocked and bewildered. About two or three seconds later, Marinda, having come back to her senses, shook her head. 'No unique aura of an 'Ascend Steper'. Then it must be a new secret technique or bloodline promotion!' Marinda thought to herself, yet without any semblance of relief. Even if not an 'Ascend Steper', Arthur's power must have grown stronger. Suddenly, the lady felt a sense of urgency. Arthur had already 'Entered Step'. As his strength grew bit by bit, who knew when she'd come to the sudden realization that her partner had already become an 'Ascend Steper'? 'No good! I must work harder too! I've been too complacent before! Even if I found that thing in the ruins, I must improve myself with even more diligence—otherwise, I'll be completely left behind by this bastard sooner or later!' Marinda thought as she chewed on her piece of bread. The lady knew very well that being on equal footing was a precondition for cooperation. When one far surpasses the other, it's not cooperation but dependence. Even if there was so-called cooperation before, the relationship would subtly change without one being aware. That's reality! Perhaps Arthur would show her some sentiment. But what the lady wanted was not that kind of charity. She wanted a match of equal standing. "I'm full now, Edwin will take you to Elta Square in a while." With those words, Marinda blew out a large smoke ring, and her whole body disappeared into it. Arthur, still feeling hungry, did not care about Marinda's departure; the young 'Spirit Medium' knew why she had left so suddenly. He didn't mind Marinda's positive changes. In fact, he was quite looking forward to whether Marinda would bring him any surprises later on. A stronger Marinda would only be beneficial to him as a collaborator. As long as... He could keep himself strong enough. In this, Arthur was supremely confident. Because— He had extraordinary talent! He was diligent and hardworking! Everything he had now was earned through his own efforts to leverage his talent! But that was all to come later. Now? He still wanted to eat something. Unfortunately, the two apprentices from "Grandma Andor's Kitchen" had already informed him that there was no food left for lunch. Therefore, when Arthur boarded the carriage, he specifically asked Merlin to go to "Grandma Andor's Kitchen" to order dinner for thirty people. In addition, he also had Merlin purchase ingredients such as flour, white sugar, peanut oil, and beef jerky. The emergency biscuits had run out, so Arthur naturally needed to restock. Moreover, compared to regular food, these emergency biscuits were more suitable for Arthur at the moment. As for whether the Secret Medicine and gold could fill the stomach? They should be able. If the Secret Medicine and gold could speed up the cooldown period of the "Snake Wing," then they should be able to satisfy hunger. Later in the night, at snack time, Arthur planned to give it a try. Under Edwin's control, the carriage entered Elta Square swiftly and smoothly. Compared to the previous two days, there were more people in Elta Square today. As the "Champion" match of the "Swordsmanship Competition," its appeal naturally far exceeded that of the previous two days, especially with the build-up from the past two days, the excitement of the crowd today was even higher. When Arthur's carriage drove into Elta Square through the special passageway, many people had already started shouting— "Champion! Champion!" By the time Arthur stepped out of the carriage, the volume of these shouts had risen by several decibels. The sound across Elta Square erupted like thunder. With a smile on his face, Arthur humbly gestured to the surroundings, then quickly made his way to the draw lot platform. The original procedure was to first draw out the four semi-finalists, who would then battle two by two, with the winners fighting for the championship in the evening. But since Lord Dibwa and Lord Bass's nephews both suffered injuries yesterday, even with

Arthur's aid, they were now unable to compete at this time. Therefore, the semi-finals turned directly into the championship match— One by default. The winner of the other two would battle the person who got the default for the championship. Afterward, the losers would compete for second and third place. "Master!" Bern, the coach of Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club, who had luckily advanced, bowed respectfully to Arthur. On the young coach's face was a mixture of apprehension and nervousness, but even more so, openness. Clearly, whether facing "Storm Sword" Deljo or Arthur, the young coach had no confidence in winning. But to have made it into the semi-finals, securing at least third place, the young coach was already quite satisfied. Even, it could be said that this was something beyond his wildest dreams before. Arthur, however, gave the young coach a hearty slap on the shoulder. "Bern, I see the glow of luck upon you! Your luck is bound to be good today! Who knows, you might even draw the default lot in a moment!" Arthur said this. The young coach just scratched his head, his face showing a shy smile. "I'm already satisfied with what I have now, I don't dare to think about anything else." "Still, you should think about it. What if 'Storm Sword' Deljo loses his confidence after I beat him and gives up the match? Wouldn't you then be second place?" Being blessed by Arthur in such a way, Bern did not take it seriously. The young Swordsmanship Club coach only saw this as Arthur's blessing. But what the young coach did not know was that sometimes the blessings of a "Spirit Medium" can be very effective. For example: when the person drawing the lots has a good relationship with a certain "Spirit Medium." A "Spirit Medium's" blessing, then, is foolproof. Cheating? No, it wasn't. It was just social courtesy. Holding the bamboo stick in his hand, Bern looked at the word "default" written at the end, and stared at Arthur with a dumbfounded face. Arthur smiled slightly, then turned and stepped onto the stage. Above the stage— "Storm Sword" Deljo stood with his eyes closed, gripping the sword's hilt, with a slight breeze swirling around him. When he heard the clear footsteps approaching, Deljo's eyes snapped open.

Chapter 423 Wind Like Sword, Sword Like Wind!

Bright, resolute, and sharp. It was as if a sword had been unsheathed. Anyone who saw Deljo's eyes at that moment would have this thought immediately. And then? Pain. Just like the people in Elta Square at that moment. They felt as if their eyes were pierced by something; many cried out in pain, while more covered their eyes and looked down. Only the voice of the Earl Swordsmanship Chief at their ears— "Begin!" His call to start captured everyone's attention. They wanted to witness the battle on the platform, but their tear-filled eyes saw only a blur; everyone's view was obscured. All they could catch was the sound of the wind. The piercing sound of the wind began to howl. It was like a whirlwind that suddenly picked up over the ocean, lifting towering waves. It also lifted the curiosity in the hearts of everyone in Elta Square. That's how people are. The less they see, the more they want to see. And the world? The more you want to see, the less it lets you see. It was like being tormented with endless itching. Curiosity became unbearable. The people in Elta Square began to rub their eyes, and then, with eyes widened, they turned to look at the platform— On the platform, only Arthur remained. Deljo had already vanished from sight. No! More precisely, Deljo had become the wind. The wind concealed the sword, and the sword concealed the man. The wind was as a sword. The sword was like the wind. Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh! On the hard stone surface of the platform, fine cuts one finger deep appeared one after another with the howling wind, piling up layers upon layers and pulling the stone dust into the whirlwind. Suddenly, the invisible wind took on a color. The gray wind howled even louder. Deljo's figure was hidden even deeper. But it was not a hiding of evasion or escape. It was... Gathering strength! As soon as Deljo learned yesterday that the 'Spirit Medium' from South Los would be testing

his strength, he decided the fate of his group and began to prepare actively. Not only because the lives of his group depended on his own skill with the sword. But also because Deljo wanted to truly witness the strength of an 'Entrant'. In the Bert Territory, there were also 'Entrants'. But Deljo never had a chance to meet them. And even if he did, Deljo at the time did not have the confidence to witness their power. Because that would be fatal. But now it was different. He had already encountered an 'Entrant', and moreover, he needed to show his own strength to survive - that meant... there was no need for caution anymore. He could just go all out. At the very least, he had to ensure he had no regrets. With such a mindset, Deljo did not probe or speak. He showed his strongest move from the beginning. Facing an 'Entrant' like the 'Spirit Medium' from South Los, any probing was futile, any words disrespectful. Only by using the strongest move right away could he show the minimum respect. Only then could he show his determination and sincerity to the opponent. Therefore— The wind grew stronger! More and more stone dust was swept into it. The next moment, a ten-meter-high tornado appeared on the platform. "A tornado!" People around the platform from South Los exclaimed; almost instinctively, they prepared to run. Every year during the storm season, tornadoes appear near the coasts of South Los. If a large sailboat is caught, it means sure destruction and death. And every year, similar wreckage would appear. Therefore, no one knows the terror of tornadoes better than the people of South Los. The moment they saw the tornado, even children knew they had to run immediately. However, before the surrounding people could even take a step, the massive tornado did not continue to grow but suddenly disintegrated, transforming into a thousand wind arrows shooting towards Arthur— Whoosh whoosh whoosh! Faced with this skyful of arrows, Arthur merely lifted his head slightly. Even, he still had the leisure to glance at the Earl's Swordsmanship Chief. At the moment the tornado appeared, a murderous intent had flashed in the eyes of the Swordsmanship Chief. Clearly, if Deljo had let that "tornado" fully form within the city of South Los, the Swordsmanship Chief would have executed Deljo immediately. And, no one would question the Swordsmanship Chief's actions. Forget about interrupting the "Swordsmanship Competition". If anyone dared to speak a word for Deljo, they would be torn to pieces by the people of South Los. Luckily, Deljo hadn't let himself be overwhelmed. Or rather... This was the opponent's strategy. To attract his attention with the "tornado". Using the wind arrows to limit his space to move. Then? In the opponent's conception, naturally, it would be a swift demise with a single sword strike. Of course, that was just the opponent's idea. But in Arthur's eyes, it was riddled with flaws! Because, to Arthur... Everything was plain to see! This wasn't Arthur having an infallible strategy, nor having foreknowledge of everything. It was simply because Arthur was all too familiar with "wind"! Don't forget, he has a "General Puppet" that possesses "Storm" abilities. This is a genuine "Entrant". Even if he never had a chance to truly display "Storm", Arthur could still merge with it to feel "Storm," and with this experience, now watching Deljo's "Storm Sword," Arthur immediately had a commanding view and could identify eleven weaknesses in an instant— Whoosh! The dense wind arrows were sharp, and as they fell, they connected into one piece. That oncoming whistling sensation was even greater than the prior tornado, and the people closest to the ring were already blown back again and again. If there weren't others behind to support them, they would have already fallen to the ground by now. Yet Arthur stepped forward. Feeling the strong wind in his face, he even wanted to shout out loud— "On the vast ocean the wild wind gathers the clouds. Between the clouds and the ocean, the seagull, like black lightning, flies proudly." Others panicked. He, contented. Others retreated. He, advanced. Arthur attracted the gaze of everyone present with his own style. All of this was XP, ah! Although the extra issue from yesterday afternoon brought in a substantial XP boost for Arthur, this morning's reports about the "Top Eight" match also resulted in a nice amount of XP— [You smoothly advanced through

the Top Eight, stepping into the Top Four, as everyone expected; generous discussions about your name spread, and you became better known; XP+100] [Your act of saving the nephews of Lord Dibwa and Lord Bass during the Top Eight match left a deep impression of your medical skills on the public, drawing wonder; XP+300] ... Combined, both were still less than one entry from the extra issue. But this did not mean Arthur would give up. He knew all too well the principle of accumulation. Especially now, with a 3000 XP gap to level up the "Swift Bird Swordsmanship" to Lv5, Arthur wished he could treat each XP like ten. Therefore, he tried every possible way to gain more XP. For instance, right now! Arthur leisurely strolled through a thousand wind arrows. Under the watchful eyes of all, he moved towards a corner on one side of the ring. Everyone looked puzzled at that spot. No one was there, and there was nothing there. Nothing at all, right? Why go there? And just as everyone was puzzled, a dazzling flash of sword light suddenly burst forth there. Grey dust was completely scattered by the metallic gleam of the blossoming sword blade. This strike, as swift as a shooting star, thrust straight at Arthur. "Ah!" Everyone cried out in alarm. But Arthur, watching the sword light flash before his eyes, simply smiled gently and softly said— "Not bad." As he spoke, he raised his hand, curved his fingers, and flicked. Ting!

Chapter 425: Dangling the Carrot in Front of Their Eyes!

Under the Bell Tower, the "Storm Sword" Deljo was introducing the main members of his adventure team to Arthur— Apart from the deputy team leader-cum-archaeologist Adi, whom he had already met, the team also included the chef and secondary attacker Pruitt, the riddle solver-cum-mysticist Edwina, and her younger sister Little Winna. And it was Little Winna that Arthur was most interested in. She was actually a decryptor and mechanism cleaner. Riddle solvers and decryptors may seem similar, but they are actually two completely different professions. The former solves puzzles encountered during adventures. And the latter? They unravel secrets hidden within the text, symbols, or images found in ruins. Usually, these roles are filled by highly educated scholars. "Little Winna has a special talent; not only can she sense danger, but she can also detect some hidden information within texts, symbols, or images, which is why she is one of the most reliable people in our team," "Storm Sword" Deljo said, noticing Arthur's curiosity, and immediately explained. The praise from the team leader made Little Winna lift her head proudly. Although she was already seventeen years old, she looked almost like a child, especially her stature, which made her seem no older than seven or eight. 'Affected by her Talent?' Arthur guessed, his smile growing warmer. The young "Spirit Medium" then said— "I acknowledge Deljo's strength. You are Deljo's team members, his partners. If Deljo is willing to trust you, I am also willing to give you a corresponding level of trust. Moreover, once you have completed three adventure missions for me, as compensation, you can keep a part of the items you've obtained during each adventure, aside from the necessary items that must be handed over. You can exchange this portion of the items with me for Gold Coins, secret technique knowledge, or Rituals. If that's not enough, you can use what you get from the next adventure to exchange. And if that's still not enough, I will allow you to borrow from me with the lowest interest rate. All these can be written into the contract." Upon hearing Arthur's words, the eyes of "Storm Sword" Deljo and everyone in the adventure team brightened. They had initially thought that even if they were lucky enough to survive, they would probably end up working for nothing. But to think that they only needed to complete three adventure missions. And afterwards, they could actually obtain a portion of the spoils of war. More importantly, they could exchange these spoils for secret technique knowledge and Rituals. You see, the Spirit Medium from South Los before them was none other than a real "Entrant", and one of the strongest among them at that. Even, one didn't know when they might become an "Ascend Steper". To exchange

for secret technique knowledge or Rituals from such an existence was simply unimaginable for an ordinary person. And they could?! Instantly, everyone in Deljo's adventure team felt as if happiness had come knocking on their door. "Can I exchange for 'Cat Faction' secret techniques?" Little Winna raised her hand and asked. The rumors about Arthur being the contemporary "Black Cat" have been progressively acknowledged overtime, along with the strength Arthur has been showing. As for the members of the adventure team, they, of course, had heard such rumors. However, Little Winna's question changed the expressions of "Storm Sword" Deljo and the others, with her sister Edwina even chiding her. "Little Winna!" All present were not rookies who had just entered the "Mystic Side". They were very aware of the importance of secret techniques. Each school and family treated their secret techniques like precious treasures, associated with severe punishments—any coveters would face relentless pursuit and execution. Therefore, the adventure team members' complexions changed dramatically. They surely didn't want to face danger again, having just dodged calamity. Arthur, on the other hand, waved his hand gently. "You can. However, if you exchange for 'Cat Faction' secret techniques, Little Winna you must live as a member of the 'Black Cat Faction.' Also, you will need to sign a new contract. And your future children will also be members of the 'Black Cat Faction'." Arthur said with a smile on his face. "Is that so?" Little Winna looked hesitant, obviously unsure about giving up her current identity as an adventurer in order to adopt the identity of the 'Black Cat Faction'. But the other members of the adventure team had no such hesitation. They were all excited! Cat Faction! Originating from the renowned Cat Hole! Whether it's the rumors about the former "Black Cat" of "Cat Faction.Hei" or the legends of the Golden Lion Cat from the "Cat Hole," they were enough to make one yearn for them. Even "Storm Sword" Deljo, with his "Great Arcana Level" power, was tempted, albeit slightly. Compassion! Tolerance! The kind and tolerant South Los "Spirit Medium" captured the hearts of most members of the exploration team at that moment. As for "Storm Sword" Deljo, who was merely slightly tempted? Arthur glanced at him imperceptibly and whispered— "The 'Entry-level Atlas' can also be exchanged!" "What?!" "Storm Sword" Deljo exclaimed in shock. Afterward, the "Storm Sword" knelt on one knee. "To serve you is my honor!" "Storm Sword" Deljo knelt. Deljo's team members and partners also knelt down in turn. "To serve you is my honor!" Each one said the same. Even Little Winna mumbled along beside her sister in a daze. For this girl with an extraordinary Talent, whose intelligence and emotions were affected by it, she had no idea what she was saying. In any case, in her mind, since everyone was shouting, it must be right for her to join in too, right? Looking at the people kneeling before him, Arthur's lips curved into a smile. Wasn't this an excellent opportunity to strongly motivate them? Arthur was well aware that garnering the loyalty of "Storm Sword" Deljo's exploration team was just the first step; the key lay in the second step. He needed this exploration team to serve him, not to be listless and underperform. Therefore, he offered the incentive of a share in the profits for completing three exploration missions for him. To make this incentive more alluring, Gold Coins, secret technique knowledge, and Rituals were all used as bargaining chips! If that wasn't enough? Would the "Cat Faction" suffice? Would the "Entry-level Atlas" suffice? It was enough! Under the lash of the whip, oxen and horses will move forward, but if you dangle a carrot in front of them, there's no need for the whip—they will start running on their own. If you give them proper care, they will run even faster. For example: providing them housing in South Los. For example: introducing them to husbands and wives in South Los. For example: enrolling their children in schools he runs. Death Warriors? No, no, no! This is just an ordinary exploration team. After all, the Gold Coins they want to exchange still need to be earned by them. The secret technique knowledge and Rituals they desire? The same applies. It's all just a straightforward transaction. Arthur, smiling, helped the members of his exploration team to their feet

and began to sign contracts. He put everything he had just promised into the contract. Each person signed their name. Watching the contract emit a shimmering glow as it took effect, the atmosphere inside the tent became more relaxed, and everyone's relationship quickly closed the distance by a large margin. "Boss, about that relic on the beach..." "Shh!" Little Winna asked curiously, but Arthur raised his right hand, put his index finger to his lips to signal her, and then whispered quietly— "3, 2, 1..."

Chapter 426 When Arthur Says He's Not Good At...

As the countdown whispered, everyone could clearly see the smile that appeared on Arthur's face. It was a smile that bubbled up from genuine, heartfelt joy. Not a smile born of mere politeness. Immediately, Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword' formulated a guess. Marinda Julius Caesar! Apart from this lady, Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword' could think of no one else who would elicit such a smile from Lord Kledos. The next moment, their speculation was confirmed— A huge ring of smoke appeared inside the tent. Shortly after, a woman in khaki hunting attire, wearing a deerstalker cap, with deep blue eyes and delicate features, holding a pipe in her mouth and possessing a very unique aura, appeared before everyone. "Miss Caesar, good afternoon," Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword' greeted her with a bow. During these three days of the 'Swordsmanship Competition,' they had seen Marinda from a distance. Indeed, even if one had never seen Marinda, just hearing some descriptions of the lady would be enough to recognize her in a crowd. After all— There were ladies who smoked pipes. There were ladies who habitually wore hunting attire and deerstalker caps. There were attractive ladies with deep blue eyes. But when these three attributes combined, and the location was South Los, there was only one. That was: Marinda Julius Caesar. "My dear, why are you here? Is your business taken care of?" Arthur walked up to Marinda from the couch and asked softly. Seeing Arthur's pretentious demeanor, Marinda instinctively wanted to roll her eyes, but considering that Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword' were present, she forcibly held back and instead flashed a sweet smile— that was the kind of smile only a young girl in love would have. Upon seeing this smile, Lord Deljo and others were certain. This was the kind of smile that should only exist in love. And Arthur here? He saw no less than five flaws. Especially those eyes, not focused enough, seemingly looking at him but actually observing the people around. How could a woman in love have room in her eyes for others? Poor rating! However, speaking purely of the smile, it was exceptionally good. Clearly, it was practiced. 'She couldn't have practiced this just for me, could she?' Arthur thought to himself, his gaze growing even gentler. Why was he so sure that Marinda would come? Of course, it was because Marinda had just quietly told him she would come—whenever there were others present, Marinda always maintained proper etiquette. However, most of the time, Marinda preferred to appear in private settings where only Arthur was present. In her own words, it was because she liked the freedom of coming and going as she pleased, 'like using a public restroom.' To this, Arthur didn't mind. Because Marinda knew her boundaries well. It certainly wasn't because Marinda's appearances always brought him considerable benefits. He, Arthur, the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los, how could he possibly lower his standards for trivial gains? Impossible! Absolutely impossible! As for the rare deviation from her own preferences, Marinda's purpose for appearing here was clear to Arthur. It was simply to meet Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword.' Or to be more precise... An unexpected issue had arisen at the archaeological site below the beach, prompting the lady to urgently seek the expert knowledge of Lord Deljo and others from 'Storm Sword.' Arthur thought to himself, silently waiting for Marinda's response. And upon seeing Arthur's tender gaze, the hairs on the lady's back stood on end, and goosebumps sprang up liberally on her arms. If it weren't for the hunting gear providing cover, he would definitely have been discovered by

now. 'This guy must be doing it on purpose! I really want to kick this jerk! Marinda thought, yet her face maintained that sweet smile. "Well, everything has mostly been dealt with. However, there is a door that unexpectedly blocked the way..." Marinda said, pausing almost imperceptibly. The lady was waiting for Arthur to take advantage of the situation, but contrary to her expectations, Arthur did not do so, even though his eyes showed deep regret, he merely nodded slightly. Marinda looked at Arthur, whose expression seemed to say 'what a pity, we negotiated our cooperation too early, if I'd known, I could have cut a harsh deal now,' and couldn't help but smirk. Even though Arthur was annoying, sometimes he was really not bad. He was a suitable collaborator. Marinda thought to herself, her voice becoming clearer. "So, I need your men to help with this." With no attachments, there was no need to hide anything. The lady spoke frankly. "Good." Arthur nodded, neither evading nor refusing. Just like before 'unable to raise the price.' This was also part of the cooperation agreed upon earlier, Arthur couldn't refuse—because, to Arthur, even though he might commit murder or arson, and was of a nasty character, overall, he was still a half-decent person. Because— He kept his promises. And, he never lied. Deljo and others of the 'Storm Sword' grew tense on the side. They viewed this as a test of their capabilities by Arthur. It was about their adventure skills, not their combat strength. After exchanging glances with Adi, Pruitt, and Edwina, Deljo stepped forward— "Sir, if it is what we think it is, I believe you can let us try." Unlike the simple Little Winna, Deljo used a closer form of address to narrow the distance between himself and Arthur. Just like this initiative of volunteering. Rather than letting others handle it, they preferred to volunteer, enhancing their standing in Arthur's eyes. For the Entry-level Atlas! As opposed to those untrustworthy Nobles. Arthur was more trustworthy. Seeing Deljo step forward voluntarily, Arthur knew the big picture he had painted was working, and he nodded with a slight smile. "Good." Afterwards, Arthur looked at Marinda again. "The identities of Deljo and his group are still a bit sensitive." Arthur reminded her. "Leave it to me—they will return to Bert Territory after the 'Swordsmanship Competition' ends tonight." Marinda replied. Then, the two of them exchanged a smile. It was an understanding. Both were very aware that they needed to keep a low profile, low profile, and even lower profile. They absolutely couldn't let that Mother Tigress notice any anomalies. Of course, they also couldn't completely escape the Mother Tigress' field of view. They needed to strike a balance. So, Arthur walked straight out of the tent, speaking softly as he walked— "Do we need a 'Spirit Medium' to save the day and buy some time? I'm not too good at that sort of thing." Arthur said this, his lips uncontrollably curling into a smirk.

Chapter 427: Sincere Arthur!

Arthur was definitely not the kind of man who said he couldn't pick it up but secretly practiced combos. He was genuinely not good at handling the situation at hand: saving the day by stalling for time. The reason he took the initiative to step forward, of course, was because the situation allowed him to gain XP more effectively. "Arthur, it's up to you now. Please make sure to stall for an hour," the Female Swordmaster requested earnestly. "I'll try." Arthur said this as he walked toward the arena. Seeing Arthur reappear, the people of South Los in Elta Square began to applaud voluntarily. By the time Arthur stepped onto the arena, the applause was thunderous. Everyone was looking at Arthur with smiles. Everyone was looking at Arthur with anticipation. This scene almost made Arthur blurt out, "If the mountains and rivers allow me, not making money through evil, Apprentice Arthur, salutes my benefactors," but he held back in the nick of time. And that statement turned into— "Some issues arose in today's championship match, as it ended prematurely due to my reasons, much earlier than expected—our Lord Count had prepared beautiful fireworks for everyone. Although it's not impossible

to set off fireworks in the evening, the sunset is also lovely; we can quietly enjoy the sunset before welcoming the brilliant fireworks. So, I was pulled here by the respected Swordsmanship Master Julie to save the day. My reasons, naturally, are for me to rectify." Arthur did not hide the reason for his appearance on the arena. Although most people could guess, Arthur's sincerity still earned everyone's favor, and the applause, which had just subsided, started again. Arthur waited with a smile for the applause to die down before he continued. "I can't change cards; I can't turn a playing card into any card I want. Neither can I move objects through the air; I can't just summon any item I want with a wave of my hand. I certainly can't summon the undead; I can't make the Lost Souls obey with just a thought. I'm just a regular 'Spirit Medium', maybe with a bit of swordsmanship Talent. So, all I can do here is share some—swordsmanship knowledge." Arthur's words captivated everyone present. As the Champion of this Swordsmanship Competition, Arthur's prowess was verified, witnessed firsthand by them. Even if they hadn't understood, hopefully, with Arthur's instruction, they would get stronger? Many children and young people's eyes were shining. Older folks were also looking on with curiosity. Under everyone's gaze, Arthur looked towards the Swordsmanship Master. "Swordsmanship Master Julie, please fetch me a standard longsword." "Okay." The Female Swordmaster nodded. As the two conversed, the gaze of the crowd in Elta Square naturally fell upon the Female Swordmaster, especially when she picked up a standard longsword, everyone's gaze turned curious. Too small! The standard-sized longsword looked like a mere firewood stick in the hands of this 2.5-meter-tall Female Swordmaster. But in Arthur's hands, it became normal size again. This instant contrast made the people of South Los involuntarily widen their eyes. Arthur saw this scene. This was what he wanted. He himself hated dull teaching. Therefore, he hoped to make his swordsmanship knowledge teaching a bit more lively— "Now, please imagine you are in a duel with Swordsmanship Master Julie." Following Arthur's words, the people of South Los involuntarily immersed themselves in the scenario of dueling with the Female Swordmaster. Then... Everyone shuddered. There was no chance of winning! No chance at all! It could only end up being torn to shreds! The size difference was too great! "This is the first lesson in swordsmanship knowledge. Do not compete with an opponent bigger than you, not just in swordplay but also in hand-to-hand combat. However, life is often not as we wish it to be. You can hardly ensure that you are always safe and never face such situations. That's why you need swordsmanship— swordsmanship and combat skills exist to enable the weak to overcome the strong!" Arthur said as he lifted the standard-issue longsword in his hand and gently rotated it. "Now, everyone, grip your sword tightly, rotate your longsword with your wrist, and feel your sword finely. Once you find its center of gravity, direct your force along the direction of that center and strike down." As he spoke, Arthur's longsword slashed down. Whoosh! The sharp cutting through the air startled everyone at Elta Square. Because it appeared that Arthur did not swing hard, just a gentle flick, yet he produced such a sound of slicing through the air. "This is a kind of accumulation of power. It is not difficult to achieve this..." Arthur explained. This was not any high-level swordsmanship, just as he said, it was merely swordsmanship common sense. Once the center of gravity of the longsword is found, it's just like using a longsword to cut bread. The longsword must quickly slice through the bread while swinging, and when one can slice the bread uniformly thin, that is considered passing. <>Next, it's slicing tofu. Being able to slice the tofu without breaking it and also uniformly means you can go and light incense. Of course, at this stage, it is enough to teach how to find the longsword's center of gravity. For the next period, the people of South Los at Elta Square were doing just that. Most ordinary citizens did not have a sword, but this did not prevent them from making gestures in the air. Seeing that everyone was getting into it, Arthur let out a sigh of relief in his heart. Handled! He could ensure that for the next while, everyone would be immersed in the world of swordsmanship.

Normally, of course, this wouldn't be possible. But with the "Sound of Death" and its "Bewitchment," it was different. Although he didn't add the 'Power of Death', it was enough to persuade those who heard Arthur's voice, and when most people began making gestures, the rest? They would join in too. In fact, this was the case. Under Arthur's guidance, the people of South Los on the scene were all feeling themselves getting stronger, and even many of them were itching to spar with those around them. However, Arthur would not allow such a thing to happen— "Learning swordsmanship is for physical fitness and just in case. We need to thank Lord Count for allowing us to live in a safe and prosperous South Los, not that we really need to live by the blade. So, if you really want to practice swordsmanship, please come to Joel Jock Swordsmanship Club. It is a swordsmanship club under my name. You can exchange and practice there." Arthur honestly advertised for himself. And 'honestly' thanked the Earl of South Los. This wasn't just flattery. It was a way to bridge the distance between them. And this approach was quite effective. During the time that followed, the female swordsmanship chief was always keeping a smile and Arthur was doing the same. After all, it was a win-win! Only when the champion was officially announced did a hint of surprise appear in Arthur's eyes. Is that even possible?

Chapter 428: Achievement!

The champion of the Swordsmanship Competition was officially announced after the evening's singing and dancing— "The champion of the ninth 'South Los Swordsmanship Competition', Arthur Kredos!" As the Female Swordmaster made her announcement, Elta Square erupted with cheers. The people of South Los vigorously waved the hats and colorful flags in their hands. But Arthur was slightly taken aback. Because, before his eyes appeared text that surprised him. [Achievement Unlocked!] [Achievement: Swordsmanship Competition Champion; XP+200] ... These brief two lines of text set Arthur's mind racing. [Achievements] were not something Arthur had anticipated before. However, after the [Achievements] appeared, Arthur had even more thoughts. 'The unlocking of [Achievements] must require the recognition by a large number of people, just like how I've now won this Swordsmanship Competition. What about 'Spirit Medium' then? Compared to being the champion of the Swordsmanship Competition, my title as a 'Spirit Medium' should be known and acknowledged by even more people!' So... It needs something else: the recognition from peers and those in the same field.' Arthur thought to himself, his brows furrowing slightly. 'My 'Spirit Medium' [Achievement] hasn't been unlocked because my peers in the same field don't recognize me? Tch, peers do indeed hold others lightly! Treating me, a young, upright, simple, and kind person in this way will bring misfortune upon you. When you go out, you must watch the road, or else you'll be hit by a carriage and die from painful fractures. When you're drinking water, you need to be very careful; otherwise, if you choke, there's a high chance you'll suffocate to death.' Thinking this to himself, a smile appeared on Arthur's face as he thanked the Female Swordmaster. "Arthur, you truly deserve it," The Female Swordmaster congratulated Arthur. After Arthur had intentionally closed the distance with the Countess just before, the Female Swordmaster's gaze towards Arthur became all the more friendly. Arthur clearly felt this kindness. He knew it was the reward for his 'performance' just now. Arthur was all too aware of what the Lord Count wanted. The man desired the stability of the common people, as well as the tranquility of those from the Mystic Side. Only then would South Los prosper. And if he, as part of the latter, mobilized the former and contributed to the prosperity of South Los but failed to receive goodwill, the South Los House surely would have perished long ago. Similarly, his actions were bound to receive some 'positive feedback'. For example... An invitation to join the Staff Group of the Earl of South Los! After the Old Earl's death, the Earl of South Los had expanded the original 'Staff Group', splitting it into the '16th

Staff Group', '66th Staff Group', and the ordinary 'Staff Group'. The core '16th Staff Group' was specifically prepared for the Mystic Side Person. The Earl of South Los was emulating the Old Lion of Inner Bay. By securing these Mystic Side Persons, he could not only enhance his own power but also bring stability to South Los. And the price the Countess would have to pay? It was nothing more than some promises. Promises to provide those Mystic Side Persons with the opportunity for advancement and the privilege of borrowing Mystical Knowledge. These were all readily available. It was beneficial without any cost. And that was exactly what Arthur needed, Especially the latter. Arthur had long coveted the Mystical Knowledge collection of the South Los family. Perhaps he could not see the very core, but as long as he could expand his reserve of Mystical Knowledge, Arthur would not mind. If it had been before, joining the '16th Staff Group' would have been extremely difficult. But now things were different. Arthur's status had long since changed. More importantly, with the some unexpected incidents that had occurred previously, the 'Staff Group' had essentially become a vacant position, providing Arthur with the perfect opportunity to step in. In fact, by this time, the Female Swordmaster was already somewhat tempted. After Arthur had shown a series of inclinations, she had begun considering recommending Arthur to join the '16th Staff Team'. Even better, to act as the team leader. Because, in the Female Swordmaster's eyes, instead of letting those who still kept their true thoughts hidden after layers of tests become the team leaders and cause trouble again and again, it would be better to have someone like Arthur who was already leaning towards the Lord Count take the position. Arthur, who had been quietly observing the Female Swordmaster, saw his abilities [Eagle Eye] and [Insight] flashing rapidly. When he noticed the thoughtfulness and hesitation in the Female Swordmaster's eyes, Arthur immediately spoke up— "Thank you, Lord Count, for providing me with this stage!" Without a doubt, Arthur's response pleased the Female Swordmaster greatly. Immediately, the Swordsmanship Chief made a decision. She recommended Arthur to join the '16th Staff Group,' and to assume the role of its leader. As the Female Swordmaster thought this, she gave Arthur's shoulder a hearty clap. Then, she presented the Champion's prize— A Sword, Sharp Weapon Level. The prize money, 100 Suo. For the average person, this was naturally a decent reward. But for a Mystic Side Person, it wasn't much at all. 100 Suo was only 10 gold notes, after all. And a Sharp Weapon Level Sword? That would also fetch about 10 gold notes. However, Arthur didn't show any disdain. Even, deep down, Arthur bore no grudge against the parsimony of the Lord Count, because the true reward was soon to be conferred. "The strength of Lord Arthur Kredos has been witnessed by all. And his noble character has left me in awe. Thus, Lord Count has ennobled Arthur Kredos as a 'Knight'!" Swordsmanship Chief Julie declared loudly. Instantly, the surrounding crowd fell silent. Envy and blessings were evident on the faces of the people. The 'additional prize' for the Champion of the Swordsmanship Competition was known to all but those truly out of the loop. But this did not stop people from envying the 'Knight' title when it was awarded as a prize. It was a true elevation across class lines, becoming a Noble. If it were the Silver Age, commoners seeing Arthur now would have to bow and address him respectfully as 'Knight Sir,' or else expect a whipping. The entire knighting ceremony was simplified due to the reclusive nature of the Lord Count. There was no 'Lionheart Ceremony' like the common folk might imagine. There was also no such elaborate and ornate ritual. What took place was merely a simple exchange between the stand-in Female Swordmaster and Arthur— "I look forward to your contributions to South Los, Arthur Kredos!" "Serving South Los is my honor." With only these two sentences, the entire knighting ceremony concluded. Arthur did not kneel on one knee; he simply took the Sword with both hands. At that moment, Arthur once again felt grateful for the Countess's preference for privacy. There was no need for ornate ritual or kneeling for knighthood, which truly was a

relief. Arthur had always held a sense of reverence for 'rules.' Because Arthur was keenly aware that to truly integrate into this world, one must obey the 'rules' that already existed. Even if they felt uncomfortable, they had to be followed. Unless you could be so powerful as to ignore everything. And of course, Arthur knew he was far from that level. So the young Spirit Medium had mentally prepared himself early on. And now, there was no need! It couldn't be better! And there was an unexpected surprise— [Achievement Unlocked!] [Achievement: Knight Status; XP+500] ... An obviously higher 'Knight' status than the 'Champion of the South Los Swordsmanship Competition' brought Arthur even more XP. Looking at the XP count reaching 1100 again, the joyful smile that spread across Arthur's face was sincerely heartwarming. And under the glow of multi-colored fireworks, that sincerity shone brilliantly. Cheers rose and fell in waves. The people celebrated unrestrainedly. Elta Square sank into an ocean of joy. Everyone was involved. Everyone's attention was on this place. Even Arthur, who did not fancy drinking, held up a wine glass and joined the ranks of the Champion's parade. As a result, no one noticed that beneath the sands of a certain beach in the Docklands, an unknown adventure was quietly unfolding. Just... It was not going smoothly.

Chapter 429: Door of Concealment!

Emerging from the circles of smoke, "Storm Sword" Deljo and his companions had already appeared in the underground area of Docklands' beach. Torches and braziers lit up this subterranean region brightly. Marinda's other trusted subordinate, Urs, looked at the emerging Marinda and immediately bowed in salute— "My Lord!" While speaking, Urs glanced towards "Storm Sword" Deljo. In his eyes was a mix of unwillingness and a lack of acceptance. But more than that, there was a helplessness. Urs had been here for three months already. To clear out the Undead and constructed monsters, he had lost seven of his men. But when they reached the innermost area, they found no 'path' left—only a spacious hall. Although there were some things there, they were not what his lord needed. As Urs sized up "Storm Sword" Deljo and his group, "Storm Sword" Deljo was also sizing up this subordinate of Miss Caesar: short hair, deep-set eyes, a scar at the corner of the mouth, a slender figure, bare arms showing distinct muscle lines, calluses at the base of both palms, and also calluses between the right hand's index, middle, and thumb—two swords hanging on the left side of the waist, one longer, one shorter, and two rows of darts on the right. 'Dual-wielding, darts, also proficient with the bow... A Hunter?' Deljo judged the identity of the person before him. At the same time, he became even more certain of his lord's 'affection' for this lady. Clearly, this lady's people were all between novices and beginners, such individuals simply could not discover this relic. It must have been that their lord intentionally guided this lady to find this place after learning of her interest in relics and quietly observed her progress. When it became apparent her progress had 'stalled,' they were called to the scene discreetly to help resolve the issues without a trace. Even the reason they were able to survive so securely was due to this reasoning. As for why not use the Black Cat Faction? Just look at the gaze of the person opposite. Obviously, the lord does not wish for the Black Cat Faction to have any sort of misunderstanding with her.' Thus, they employed 'strangers' like them! Even if something went wrong, it wouldn't affect their relationship. Understanding his lord's intention in an instant, Deljo immediately signaled to his teammates with his eyes. Adi and the others were not fools; they quickly grasped what their captain meant and each restrained their temper while wearing amiable smiles. Witnessing this scene, Marinda sighed in her heart— 'As expected! I discovered this place by accident because Arthur deliberately set it up for me to find! That damned man, to actually use me as a pathfinder's stone! No, that's not right... That man doesn't want me to act as a pathfinder's stone; he wants to trap me here completely, knowing full well

the attractiveness of that item to me. Damn it!' Marinda cursed inwardly while feeling fortunate at the same time. If it weren't for her habit of generosity when facing talent and the fluke of signing a cooperation contract with Arthur, it's highly likely she would have been trapped to die in this relic. And her assets in South Los? They would obviously be taken over by the Kledos Family. Or rather, this was probably Kledos's plan all along. 'Terrifying Kledos Family!' Marinda thought silently, the pipe in her mouth flickered rapidly once before she turned to look at "Storm Sword" Deljo and the rest with an even more polite smile, speaking earnestly— "We've encountered some troubles here. Excavating to the final part of the relic, there was no longer a way to continue, and while there were some objects there, they were nothing compared to the dangers we faced previously. Moreover, they do not match the information I have gathered." Marinda inquired Deljo. "It's the 'Door of Concealment'! In the 'Holy Era,' due to the persecution by The Holy Court, many Alchemists and Potion Masters would set up similar mechanisms in their laboratories to mislead the Religious Tribunal. At first, it was just simple secret rooms. But over time, it gradually formed into a complete system. Relic Explorers refer to it collectively as 'Concealment Doors'!" Facing Marinda's inquiry, Deljo did not dare to neglect and immediately explained in detail. "But, we searched there, and there were no secret rooms—The wall bricks are all solid!" Urs looked puzzled. Although this Hunter from Marinda had a straightforward and irritable temperament, he wasn't foolish. Upon seeing the respectful demeanor of his superior, he immediately restrained his temper and asked in a milder tone. "Because the secret chamber might not be at the end!" The 'Storm Sword' said. Marinda narrowed her eyes. The lady instantly caught on. And after Urs blinked, he too understood. There was no secret chamber at the end of their exploration, but what about the extensive and intricately winding corridors? Who could guarantee there was no secret chamber somewhere there? "Mr. Deljo, I entrust this to you." Marinda did not hesitate. Professional tasks should be left to professionals. She had understood this principle since she was eight years old. But the 'Storm Sword' loosely waved his hands in dismay. "Miss Caesar, please just call me Deljo," he said. After speaking, he began to signal the squad to get moving. And he himself, after bowing reverently once more to Marinda, joined the now active team—Arthur was his lord whom he served loyally, and Marinda was Arthur's beloved, very possibly his future mistress. He planned to work under his lord for a long time and in exchange obtain the 'Entry-level Atlas.' How could he dare to accept an honorific at such a time? Then remember to accept the consolation of 'next time for sure' with equanimity later. He was 'Storm Sword,' not 'Iron-Head Sword.' He understood the ways of the world. And watching this scene, Urs grew even more bewildered. This Hunter of Marinda originally thought the 'Storm Sword' was a team hired by his lord for a hefty price or a new partner. But the respect shown told him this was not the case. Facing the confusion of her subordinate, Marinda sighed lightly and said— "They are Arthur's men." Immediately, Urs had a realization. Although he had spent three months underground, he was still aware of what was happening above, especially when he learned of the spark of love between his lord and a certain Your Excellency, his curiosity became uncontrollable. If not for knowing his lord's temper, he would have gone to gossip already. Seeing the realization on her subordinate's face, the glow of Marinda's pipe in her mouth flickered rapidly. At first, she merely wanted to take slight advantage of Arthur. But as time went by, she felt like she couldn't get off the horse she had ridden. Everyone began to think that she, Marinda, was Arthur's lover, but both she and Arthur knew that was impossible. What was worse, with their increasingly close cooperation, her influence and properties had become deeply tied to Arthur's, and an 'accident' would be like cutting off her own arm. The thought that years of hard work might go down the drain due to the end of their 'romance'... 'No! Absolutely not! This is intolerable!' Marinda thought to herself. But then, when she thought of Arthur, the lady

began to feel agitated again. 'Is there a magic potion that can turn Arthur into a woman?' Almost subconsciously, the lady began to ponder. And just then— "Miss Caesar, we've found the entrance!" Storm Sword Deljo shouted. The expert Deljo team, demonstrating their professional capability, had found a hidden door next to one of the corridors that had already been cleared of its machinery. Marinda walked down the staircase. Urs followed closely behind with eight subordinates and Deljo's team. When they reached the end, Marinda was taken aback. Urs and the others, aided by the torches, were equally stunned. Even Deljo's team couldn't help but exclaim aloud— "Gate of Life and Death 3000?!"

Chapter 430 Pull off a coup, Kangsion!

Looking at the dense array of wooden and metal doors on the walls and ceiling, round or square, long or flat, varying in size, "Storm Sword" Deljo and his companions only felt a tingling sensation in their scalps. The Gate of Life and Death, as the name suggests, featured two doors: one for life and one for death. The Gate of Life, survival. The Gate of Death, demise. It was initially created to evade pursuit by The Holy Court, a branch system of the "Door of Concealment." When Deljo discovered this relic had a "Door of Concealment," he suspected there might be a Gate of Life and Death. However, what Deljo never expected was to encounter the Gate of Life and Death 3000. You should know that most of the time, the Gate of Life and Death is based on multiples of 3, 6, or 9. That is, among 3 doors, 6 doors, or 9 doors, there would be one Gate of Life mingled within. Some might have 18 or even 27. But 3000... that was unheard of. Deljo had only heard about it. Seen? It was his first time. Even before he saw it with his own eyes, Deljo didn't believe in the so-called Gate of Life and Death 3000. Because— The cost! With the time, effort, and money it took to create a Gate of Life and Death 3000, one could opt for more suitable machinery; there was no need for such a brute force approach. Deljo approached Marinda and whispered to her about the details of the Gate of Life and Death 3000. "So you mean to say that among these 3000 doors, there's only one Gate of Life?" Marinda inquired. "Yes!" Deljo nodded gravely. "But that shouldn't be too hard, right? If we're careful and test each one slowly, retreating immediately if something isn't right, won't that do?" Urs scratched his head and asked. "That could work in other relics. But this relic in front of us... probably not!" What relic is this? A relic associated with the "Tower of Mist." Although it's unclear which of the four it was, with the power and capability of those four, if they ever set up a Gate of Life and Death 3000, they would never allow anyone to cheat so easily. Marinda's gaze secretly swept over "Storm Sword" Deljo. She once again confirmed Arthur's familiarity with the place. Arthur's subordinate, Deljo, had considerable knowledge about this place. What about Arthur? He probably understood it like the back of his hand, right? This lady thought to herself as she took a heavy drag on her pipe. The light of the flame flickered brightly, followed by billowing smoke. This smoke didn't vanish completely; it drifted towards the nearest door. But as soon as it got close, the smoke dispersed entirely. No! To be precise, it was scattered. Furrowing her brows, Marinda took another puff of smoke. This smoke was even thicker than before. It seemed as though a fog had descended in the morning. The next moment, two Undead emerged from the mist and walked towards two adjacent doors, but, just like the previous smoke, they dispersed as soon as they got close. "Neither secret techniques nor Undead can get close to the doors. Unless it's..." "Human!" "Storm Sword" Deljo muttered to himself, also hoping to validate his words, as he slowly approached a door beside him. Different from the smoke and Undead, which were dispersed by an invisible force, Deljo truly stood in front of the door and even reached out to touch the doorframe. However, he didn't push the door open. He merely touched it then swiftly retreated. "Hiss! Are we supposed to use human lives to scout out the

pathway? 3000 doors, 3000 lives? The master of this relic is really..." This Hunter, Marinda, wanted to say "ruthlessly efficient," but considering that they were excavating someone else's relic, why wouldn't the owner employ a bit of cruelty? It's only normal. Upon reconsideration, if someone were to dig up one's grave, Urs would fight with everything he had. ``plaintext Then, feed it back. Scratching his head, Urs, who knew he wasn't very smart, shifted his gaze to Marinda. The "Storm Sword" Deljo and his team also looked at Marinda. Marinda, in turn, let out a slight sigh. Fill it with 3,000 lives? Impossible. Her land-based caravans, ocean-going fleets, Guards, and the subordinates on the four offshore islands far exceed 3,000 people, but she would never let her people act as pathfinding pawns. As for others? If they were enemies, she wouldn't mind. If they were innocents, she couldn't do it. Her pride wouldn't allow her to stoop to such means. So— "I'll go find Arthur." Having said that, Marinda vanished into the Smoke. To seek Arthur was clearly not beyond this lady's acceptable range. If in the beginning, this lady was also proud and did not want to do this. But when did she completely let go of that pointless pride? Perhaps... The first time Arthur spat on her? Or when he gave her the middle finger? The lady herself could hardly remember. In any case, the two of them ended up like this unconsciously. Is it good? The lady doesn't know. Is it bad? Definitely not. Because, the lady was very clear that Arthur was trustworthy when it really mattered. Awoooo! Arthur gobbled down a roasted knuckle, not even spitting out the bones, just chewing away with big bites. Watching by the side, "Whale Slaying Sword" Kangsion felt his scalp tingle. Knuckles, he also ate. Not spitting out bones, he could do that as well. But to eat ten knuckles in a row, he really couldn't do that. Especially when ten roasted knuckles had gone down, Arthur seemed nowhere near full, picking up a sausage that wasn't even cut into pieces and stuffing it into his mouth. One after another, as if slurping noodles, so smooth. Then came the white bread, the salad. Last was the big pot of soup. Gulp, gulp. Watching Arthur finish the soup in one go, then clean his mouth after just a couple of gulps, Kangsion began to doubt life. Am I not strong enough because I can't eat enough? The "Whale Slaying Sword" asked himself. However, Kangsion didn't forget the matter at hand. "My lord, about 'Bloody John'!" "Speak." Having eaten his fill, Arthur glanced at the now-empty dinner and temporarily halted his eating, picking up a hot towel on the side to wipe his hands and the corners of his mouth. At the same time, he listened intently to Kangsion's report— "After narrowing down to the final eight, 'Bloody John' gathered a bunch of pirates outside Xisis Port. However, they didn't come close before being wiped out by the Earl of South Los. And 'Bloody John' himself, sensing the tides turning, fled. Unlike before, 'Bloody John' didn't escape to the high seas but instead returned to Coconut Island. 'Bloody John's' men are resting up on Coconut Island. At the same time, 'Bloody John's' confidants have appeared on the three previously uninhabited islands." After listening to Kangsion's report, Arthur couldn't help but raise his hand to touch his chin. 'Could it be that the legacy of that 'Pirate King' is truly hidden on those three deserted islands? Such a coincidence? Or is there something else there?' Arthur speculated in his heart. On the side, Kangsion asked in a low voice— "My lord, shall we take him out? Coconut Island is 50 nautical miles from Xisis Port, we blitz for 50 miles, launching a surprise attack, and we could finish the battle in two hours!" ``