

Great Master 491

Chapter 491 Madam Susan!

Julie's face rarely showed such solemnity.

Seeing such gravity from the Countess of South Los's guards prompted them to hold their breath and patrol their posts with even more focused attitudes.

Because they all knew the strength of the Female Swordmaster wasn't just from her Giant Bloodline. Her own swordsmanship was also exceptionally remarkable. Coupled with the Giant Mystique, Supernatural Defense, and a long lifespan, these guards were aware that their Female Swordmaster would become increasingly powerful as time passed.

She might even become an existence like the Countess herself.

But for such a formidable Swordsmanship Chief to look so grave, what had happened?

Could it be that South Los was facing some sort of crisis?

Unconsciously, a sense of anxiety appeared in the hearts of the guards.

Madam Susan stepped out of the room and immediately sensed the change in atmosphere.

"Julie," she said, "a bet is a bet. Go clean the Lord Count's stables before you leave."

"Ah?"

Yes, yes!"

The Female Swordmaster was startled at first, but quickly realized she had affected the others at the Count's Mansion.

"Thank goodness! Thank goodness!"

The Female Swordmaster looked at Madam Susan with gratitude.

Madam Susan waved her hand, and the Female Swordmaster turned and headed for the stables.

Witnessing this scene, all the surrounding guards let out a sigh of relief.

So, it was just about cleaning the stables!

They had thought it was some kind of invasion by a formidable enemy!

Seeing the guards' reactions, Madam Susan couldn't help but sigh internally.

"The South Los House still isn't ready!"

Compared with the Inner Bay, which was battling in secret.

The South Los House, which had been at ease for too long, almost forgot what blood smelled like.

How could such a family resist the three "Ascend Steppers"!

That's right!

Three "Ascend Steppers"!

And three unfamiliar "Ascend Steppers," at that. Madam Susan would never have believed such news if it hadn't come from the Lord Count himself.

But since the Lord Count had spoken, there was no room for doubt.

"Three 'Ascend Steppers'... How terrifying!"

Mulling over these thoughts, Madam Susan turned and went back to her room.

"Lord Count."

Madam Susan looked at the Countess, who was seated with a frown, and bowed respectfully.

"The pirate disturbance at Xisis Port has already infringed upon the dignity of the South Los House. I believe we should dispatch troops to eliminate these pirates come spring."

The Countess of South Los became startled for a moment as her legs swung involuntarily while she sat in her chair.

Sending troops to eradicate pirates was something they had already agreed on. Why was Madam Susan mentioning it again?

In the next moment, the Countess guessed what Madam Susan wanted to say.

It was not only about eradicating pirates but also about training troops!

Beyond that...

It was about finding another way out!

Even if South Los were to be destroyed, the South Los House needed an alternative escape route!

This idea coincided with her own.

After confirming the appearance of three unfamiliar "Ascend Steppers," she had a similar notion.

Moreover, she had found an appropriate executor.

Not a member of the South Los House, nor one of her retainers.

The former were too few in number.

The latter, too conspicuous.

She needed secrecy.

Fortunately, in South Los, there was indeed such a person.

"Is he suitable?"

The Countess of South Los, already having a plan in mind, still humbly sought advice from Madam Susan.

"There is no one more suitable than him.

His grandfather was like a cockroach, capable of cheating the Devil out of his underwear in hell. If he went to the Abyss, he could certainly stir up a bloody war once again.

And him?

Merely stirring up some pirates should be absolutely no problem."

Madam Susan had great confidence in a member of her old lover's family.

Because...

This lady had personally experienced what it meant to be deceived without consequences.

"Hmm."

The Countess of South Los nodded her head.

However, her curiosity was piqued shortly afterward.

"You mentioned him going to hell and the abyss, but why didn't you mention him going to the Divine Realm?"

Faced with such a question, Madam Susan paused, then smiled wryly.

"Because—"

"I always feel like he is the 'God of Deception'.

I can hardly believe that someone like me was willing to exchange the hope of 'Ascend Step' to keep someone here and do not regret it to this day."

A hint of bitterness tinged the lady's smile.

"Hmm, a god of deception among humans?"

If that's really the case, then his descendants would definitely be able to accomplish my task with flying colors—I really want to meet this Arthur Kredos now.

But Julie won't allow it."

At this, the Countess puffed her cheeks, clearly annoyed, while her short legs began to swing faster between the chair and the carpet.

"Please trust Julie's intuition.

That guy was harmless when he first appeared before me, too.

His grandson will certainly be the same."

Madam Susan explained.

The Countess, however, heard something else in the lady's words.

It seemed not to be about Arthur's swordsmanship or secret techniques.

But instead...

Something like 'charm'?

"Do you mean to say that Arthur, like Old Charlie, will unconsciously attract ladies around him?

Impossible, I've seen his files.

Apart from Marinda, Arthur gave no regard to other ladies—I am only curious now, does Arthur Kredos really possess the monstrous talent rumored?"

The Countess of South Los laughed and waved her hand, clearly not believing any of Madam Susan's words.

Watching the Countess's laughter, Madam Susan's face showed helplessness once again.

The Countess noticed this helplessness but still did not care.

In her eyes, she, the mistress of South Los, could never be attracted to such a trivial 'Spirit Medium'.

Impossible!

Absolute impossibility!

"Please be careful.

And please be sincere.

The Kledos Family is willing to make connections with those who are sincere, and for that, they might adhere to an honor that originally did not exist."

Madam Susan reminded her.

"Yes, I know.

'Spirit Mediums' who believe in fairness are indeed surprising, but such a surprise is pleasantly unexpected."

After saying so, the Countess of South Los hopped off the chair and walked to the bookshelf, pulled out a scroll, returned, and handed it to Madam Susan.

"This is the 'Cat Faction. Orange' Entry-level Atlas!

Even though Arthur has already achieved Entry, hasn't he always been collecting the Cat Hole and Cat Faction's secret techniques?

This should suffice as a reward."

Madam Susan looked at the Countess of South Los calculating yet generous gesture and couldn't help but smile bitterly again.

What about sincerity?

This approach of giving without cost does not suit your status!

The Countess immediately saw what Madam Susan was thinking and quickly ran over to hold the lady's palm, shaking it left and right like a spoiled child.

"I know you can certainly convince him, Madam. Your status is extraordinary, and if you try to persuade him, he will surely agree."

As she spoke, the Countess of South Los raised her head, using her pitiful eyes to look at Madam Susan.

The Countess knew that by doing so, Madam Susan would surely agree.

And indeed, she did.

"Alright, I'll try."

Madam Susan took the scroll, but her gaze became complicated.

It seemed she was contemplating how to face Arthur.

Even as she walked out of the study, the lady's eyes were still fraught with thought, and it wasn't until she left the Count's Mansion and boarded her own carriage that a hint of joy flickered in her eyes, a joy for securing a reliable path, support, and resources for the younger generation—

'Arthur, I can't help you much, but I hope this Entry-level Atlas can still be of use to you.'

Chapter 492: Clichés!

Before Swordsmanship Master Julie pushed the door open, Arthur and Marinda simultaneously frowned.

It wasn't anything out of the ordinary.

It was an odd smell.

The strong scent of horse dung and horse urine.

As soon as the door opened, Arthur and Marinda each took a step back, and the Female Swordmaster immediately scratched her head, looking towards Marinda—

"Marinda, could I use the bath?"

I think I need to take a bath and change my clothes."

The Female Swordmaster flashed an embarrassed smile that didn't lack etiquette.

"Sure, follow me.

As for clothes...

Mary, prepare a set of fitted clothes for Julie."

Marinda certainly wouldn't refuse the Female Swordmaster's request.

The cook and part-time housekeeper, Lady Mary, then displayed her professionalism at this moment by pulling out a measuring tape from her pocket, quickly measuring the Female Swordmaster's height, shoulder width, sleeve length, leg length, and hip circumference before getting to work.

Given the Female Swordmaster's tall and sturdy stature,

It was impossible to find suitable clothes off the rack; they had to be made to order.

Obviously, the Female Swordmaster knew this too and immediately gave Lady Mary an apologetic smile.

Afterward, led by Marinda, the Female Swordmaster headed to the manor's independent suite on one side—this place should be where the family's eldest son lived, almost identical in layout except not as large as the main suite.

Arthur watched Marinda's figure disappear behind a distant door before returning to his room with Pendragon.

"Pan, did you see that?"

You need to learn from Marinda's ubiquity."

Arthur teased Pendragon while holding a small fish treat.

Arthur obviously knew why Marinda was being so 'attentive.'

The lady wanted to find out from the Female Swordmaster's mouth exactly 'what had happened,' and given their relationship, it was highly probable that she would be able to glean some tidbits.

Never underestimate 'girlfriend diplomacy.'

Just as one should never underestimate the power of pillow talk.

Both have their unique ways of working.

Sometimes, the former is even more effective.

However, Arthur didn't care about these things.

What Arthur cared about was why the Female Swordmaster had returned to Caesar Manor with the smell of horse dung and urine.

After all, Julie was the Swordsmanship Chief, not some menial or servant.

And the number of people who could command Julie to do such a thing within the entirety of South Los was very slim.

The Earl of South Los certainly counted as one.

Madam Susan, the acting steward, counted as another.

Who else?

Arthur wasn't too clear.

But Arthur knew that such a strong smell of horse dung and urine meant that the stables had been cleaned, and if Swordsmanship Chief Julie was cleaning the stables...

'Did she make a mistake?

It doesn't seem like it!

Even if Swordsmanship Master Julie is very open-minded, making a mistake would not result in that kind of slightly relaxed expression, so—was it a form of 'punishment' to cover up something?

For example, perhaps she had heard some shocking news that made the Swordsmanship Chief unable to contain her emotions, thereby affecting the entire Count's Mansion.

As a result, someone used this kind of 'punishment' as a diversion, making people think that the Female Swordmaster's unusual mood stemmed from cleaning the stables.'

Arthur gently stroked Pendragon while piecing together the clues.

Then, the answer began to emerge gradually.

After all, the things that could trouble the Female Swordmaster in South Los were not numerous.

'If that's really the case, then there's genuinely trouble brewing.'

Arthur thought to himself and put down Pendragon.

As the male head of the household, even at breakfast time, it was necessary to make an appearance.

It certainly wasn't because he was enticed by the smell of food.

How could South Los' 'Spirit Medium' be gluttonous?

When Arthur had nearly finished all the strawberry cake, chocolate cake, chiffon cake, doughnuts, crescent rolls, extra-large stuffed croissants, sweet potato cakes, mustard-flavored stone cakes with grilled sausages, grilled bacon, grilled chicken legs, grilled duck legs, and two buckets of 5-liter hot milk he had brought back, Marinda walked in with the Female Swordmaster, now dressed in casual attire.

Seeing the mess on the table, Marinda immediately rolled her eyes—

Marinda: Glutton.

Arthur: None of your business.

Marinda: Go ahead and eat, you'll get fat sooner or later.

Arthur, confronted with such remarks, picked up the remaining bucket of milk and started to chug it with gusto.

This magnanimous gesture piqued the Female Swordmaster's interest.

Because she usually did the same.

"Arthur, you really have a good appetite!

I normally eat enough for ten people in one meal!

How much did you eat just now?"

"Five or six people's worth, maybe?"

Arthur wasn't sure, and then he looked towards Marinda.

"Darling, could you bring me 10 pounds of roast meat, please?"

Hearing Arthur's words, Marinda almost wished she could kick him.

The lady knew Arthur was doing it on purpose.

The bastard was deliberately taking advantage of the Female Swordmaster's presence, knowing she wouldn't make a scene, to boss her around.

However, the lady wasn't angry.

Instead, she looked at Arthur with a hint of pride.

Because just from the Female Swordmaster's words, she not only confirmed the news she had gotten from Arthur—that something big had indeed happened in South Los—but also indirectly pinpointed the vicinity of the beach, and although she hadn't locked down the exact person, she had a rough area and was confident in finding the target to figure out the ins and outs of the situation.

She didn't need to exchange information with Arthur at a high price anymore.

Thinking of this, the lady's mood softened considerably.

"Of course, dear."

The good mood was evident, as the sweetness in her voice jumped dramatically.

"If it's no trouble, could you bring an extra portion for me too?"

The Female Swordmaster asked, somewhat bashfully.

"Certainly."

Marinda smiled and nodded, then turned around and made her way downstairs. Arthur, however, watched Marinda's retreating figure. Even when Marinda was in the hall fetching food, he had stepped out of the room, silently watching Marinda with a look of concern and a smile on his lips.

This was, of course, put on for the Female Swordmaster's benefit.

In fact, the Female Swordmaster took the bait immediately.

"Arthur, you truly do love Marinda, huh."

The Female Swordmaster mused.

"Hmm, she is the love of my life.

So...

I have a presumptuous request."

Arthur nodded, then turned to look at the Female Swordmaster.

Seeing Arthur's serious face, the Female Swordmaster also became solemn.

"Marinda was just asking me what had happened, and I didn't tell her because, the matter really exceeded expectations!

So, I would like you to relay a message to the Lord Count, asking to remove my title as Champion of South Los swordsmanship; during such times, I must stay by Marinda's side."

Arthur looked serious, though his words were not entirely clear.

To this, the Female Swordmaster did not have any doubt.

Because it concerned 'Ascend Steppers,' and one could never be too cautious.

As for Arthur discovering those three 'Ascend Steppers'?

While the Lord Count had said that only fellow 'Ascend Steppers' could sense such auras, Arthur was different; who knew if the Kledos Family had any special methods.

Or whether, the 'Spirit Medium' had any unique perception.

Therefore, the Female Swordmaster had no intention of blaming Arthur.

Instead, she sighed softly—

"Indeed, when it comes to three unfamiliar 'Ascend Steppers,' one cannot be too careful.

Arthur, rest easy, I will pass your message to the Lord Count.

I believe His Lordship will understand."

The Female Swordmaster said so.

Meanwhile, a shiver ran through Arthur's heart.

This matter was somewhat beyond his expectation.

Chapter 493: Assistance from the Female Swordmaster!

Ascend Step!

Arthur had guessed it before.

Given the strength that the Earl of South Los possessed and his influence in South Los, apart from needing the "Ascend Steper" to be valued by the other party, Arthur couldn't think of anything else.

However, what Arthur hadn't anticipated was...

The 'Ascend Steper' turned out to be three.

'Three 'Ascend Steper'!

What a surprise!

Arthur couldn't help but sigh again in his heart.

Sighing at the emergence of three 'Ascend Steper'.

Even more so, he was amazed at the composure of the Earl of South Los when facing the three 'Ascend Steper'.

Knowing there were three 'Ascend Steper' present, the Earl could still remain so 'relaxed', and the current Swordsmanship Chief, though filled with surprise in tone, did not show a trace of panic in her expression, what did this indicate?

It indicated that, in the eyes of this Female Swordmaster, Lord Count at least was confident in facing these three 'Ascend Steper'.

'My Lord Count!

What level is your strength, after all?

'God Ascension Ten Stages', which stage have you stepped onto?

Or did the South Los House leave you with any fallback?

Alas!

Such a millennia-old family really does feel troublesome.'

Arthur sighed inwardly while his facial expression did not change.

The accumulation of the millennia-old family cannot be ignored.

But this oversight was advantageous for him.

At least, in the South Los he needn't worry about three 'Ascend Steper' coming his way.

Besides, he's just a young, upright, naïve, and kind-hearted 'Spirit Medium', why would the three 'Ascend Steper' come for him?

If the sky falls, the Earl of South Los will be there to hold it up.

The other party is tall.

And him?

Grow!

He survived the growth!

Knowing this, Arthur quickly calmed down after the initial surprise.

Arthur looked at Marinda, who was taking food in the hall, his eyes filled with tender love as he lowered his voice —

"Please make sure to keep this a secret, Marinda must absolutely not find out."

With this, Arthur also pointed at the position of his abdomen.

That represented the child.

"Of course!"

The Female Swordmaster nodded guiltily.

She was involved in the plan to 'deceive' Arthur with Marinda.

Even though such deception held no malice, what if?

What if Arthur became angry?

Arthur held feelings for Marinda, so he might not react too harshly.

But not toward her!

He would certainly lash out at her then!

He might even vent his anger on Lord Count!

'Damn, I was reckless again!

What should I do?

What to do?'

Suddenly, this Female Swordmaster felt a bit of panic inside.

She absolutely did not want to see such a thing happen.

Almost instinctively, she touched the potion inside her bosom.

This was no longer a "Guaranteed Hit Potion."

It was an enhanced version of the "Guaranteed Hit Potion," the "Guaranteed Hit. Child Safely Born Potion"!

It was a potion concocted by Potion Master Quin, who had become her father's drinking buddy, for the better continuance of the Giant Tribe.

It not only had the original 'guaranteed' function but also greatly protected the 'fetus', allowing the child to be born smoothly and prematurely under the condition of abundant nutrition.

This was not premature birth but was tailored for the long pregnancy period typical of the Giant Tribe.

It could reduce a ten-year pregnancy period to about five years.

'If Marinda takes such a potion, the child could probably be born in about five months and be extremely healthy— Master Quin has said, the "Guaranteed Hit. Child Safely Born Potion" also works on normal people, and is even more effective, reducing the pregnancy period proportionally, and can also enhance the child's Talent!'

With this, my resentment towards Arthur should be dispelled!

But this must require Arthur's cooperation, and he must not notice anything strange!

"In that case..."

The Female Swordmaster touched the other two potions.

[Sleep Potion]!

[Confusion Potion]!

These were also masterpieces of Master Quin.

Originally, she had planned to find a suitable target to use them herself.

But at this moment, she could no longer care about that.

"That's right!"

"Arthur is too familiar with Marinda!"

"So, I cannot inform Marinda either!"

"Everything must proceed in silence!"

The Female Swordmaster suddenly thought of this.

Immediately, she gave herself a mental thumbs up.

A slight sense of pleasure surged in her heart.

The feeling was as if to say, 'Don't look at me as reckless usually, but at the crucial moment, I am still incredibly clever!'

Under this cleverness buff, the Female Swordmaster thought of more.

"Time!

Now I just need to calculate the perfect timing, then, host a dinner for Marinda and Arthur, and everything will succeed—and with Marinda's physique and strength, if it's not obvious in the early stages, it can still be plausible."

"Five months?

"That's enough!"

The Female Swordmaster clenched her fist fiercely.

Arthur noticed the suddenly invigorated and excited Female Swordmaster.

"Is it because of the thrill to fight a real 'Ascend Steper'?

Worthy of the Giant Tribe!

A natural-born warrior race!"

Arthur praised inwardly while his gaze shifted back to Marinda.

'Hehe, you think you know enough?

But the truly valuable core is with me!

Just keep building more ships for me!

The news of three 'Ascend Steppers' worth twenty ships, isn't that fair?'

Arthur thought to himself, his eyes shining with a joyful smile.

"Huh?"

Marinda, who was grabbing some roast meat, suddenly felt a chill on her back, and her instinct as a 'woman' told her something bad was happening, but when she looked around, she met Arthur's eyes brimming with laughter.

Immediately, her thoughts went astray.

'What mischief is this bastard thinking about now?'

She thought to herself, barely suppressing the urge to roll her eyes, and carried the twenty kilograms of roast meat up the stairs.

Marinda was already the absolute star of Caesar Manor.

At that moment, carrying twenty kilograms of roast meat.

Naturally, everyone's gaze followed Marinda, but upon seeing the Female Swordmaster standing upstairs, everyone's faces showed relief.

That towering height nearly reaching the ceiling and a body as wide as a wall, eating that much is truly not excessive!

Later in a room unseen by others, the Female Swordmaster unexpectedly saw Arthur's unpretentious way of eating— he went straight for it with his hands.

This manner reminded the Female Swordmaster of her hometown, Garden Island.

Moreover, Arthur's uninhibited eating habits made her feel that he was a friend she could acknowledge, one she shouldn't lose due to misunderstandings.

"So..."

"I must drug him!"

"I must ensure my friend Arthur's life happiness!"

Thinking of the thanks she'd receive from her friend Arthur later, the Female Swordmaster ate even more heartily.

Because of this, Marinda had to go downstairs to fetch roast meat twice.

The guests, even when leaving, were marveling at the Female Swordmaster's huge appetite.

There was even speculation whether one had to be a big eater to be that strong.

In response, the Female Swordmaster, facing the strange gazes, didn't care at all; she was used to it, and her identity made her fearless.

"Arthur, Marinda, I need to return to South Los.

More important matters are still waiting for me."

The Female Swordmaster bade farewell to Arthur and Marinda.

Without much small talk, the Female Swordmaster turned and left.

And just as the Female Swordmaster vanished, Arthur unexpectedly saw Kuke, accompanied by Scott, Wiggins, Haywood, and Fengter, walking towards him.

"What happened?"

Chapter 494: The Desire to Become Stronger!

Arthur was always gentle and well-intentioned towards his own people.

This time, his inquiry was no exception.

With the enhancement of "Bluff," it was like a breeze in spring.

Yet, this feeling only intensified the sense of indebtedness in Scott, Wiggins, Kuke, Haywood, and Fengter.

"Previously, I wasn't able to help, and I want to take on more for my Lord,"

Wiggins, who came from the streets, said it straightforwardly and was the first to speak up.

"I want to see more of the Mystic Side, but currently, I am not qualified enough; therefore, I need to become stronger,"

Scott said it without any circumlocution.

Among those present, he had the best relationship with Arthur.

Scott didn't need to disguise himself.

"I feel the same way."

Haywood followed Scott's statement.

Scott had spoken well enough, and Haywood felt there was no need to alter his statement.

"For Lady Anna!"

This was Fengter.

Initially hesitant after hearing from Kuke about the impending pain, the noble heir, upon seeing Lady Anna speak, erupted with unprecedented passion.

Pain? Suffering?

I, Fengter, fear nothing for Lady Anna.

Let the pain and suffering intensify.

Just to be closer to Lady Anna.

Arthur glanced at the four men full of fighting spirit, his gaze finally resting on Kuke, who was clearly the leader of this initiative.

"Are you sure?"

Arthur asked this way.

About what the five of them wanted to do,

Arthur, of course, knew.

Wiretapping?

No, no, no.

How could a young, kind, upright, and innocent Spirit Medium engage in such a thing?

He was merely concerned about his subordinates.

As a competent leader, what's wrong with caring for his subordinates?

And as for Arthur knowing what they wanted, Kuke wasn't surprised. In the eyes of the new Police Chief of Dort District, his master was all-capable.

"Yes!

My father is a man of his word!

The words he spoke would certainly be true!"

Kuke nodded affirmatively.

Kuke, of course, wouldn't doubt his own father.

But soon, the new Police Chief of Dort District's face showed a hint of bitterness.

"But it will definitely be painful!"

Because he did not doubt, the new Police Chief of Dort District knew that when his father said it would be painful, it would truly be painful.

Even far beyond imagination.

Probably enough to make one doubt whether one was alive.

The new Police Chief of Dort District had a slight hesitation.

"What's there to fear about pain? Standing by, unable to assist, that causes me even more pain!"

Wiggins put his arm around Kuke.

This street-born Golden Finger felt like he was dreaming. How could he have imagined fraternizing like this with a district's Police Chief before?

But now, he had done it.

And very casually at that.

It wasn't a forced relationship, but one recognized by both parties.

For this, he was sincerely grateful to Arthur.

For this, he vowed to become stronger.

He absolutely wouldn't allow himself to fall behind under his Lord's command.

"I feel the same way,"

Haywood added from the side.

For the ruthless landlord, the opportunity to work under Arthur also brought him to a broader stage; he knew he couldn't go back.

Back to the time when he had to calculate for every Zero,

He was now in control of unimaginable sums of money.

He now saw a world beyond imagination.

Let him go back?

It would be better to kill him.

Thus, the eldest Haywood, vowed to seize this opportunity.

Because—

This might be his only chance in this lifetime.

If he missed it, he would suffer a fate worse than death.

Watching Wiggins, Haywood, and the already eager Fengter, Cook turned his head to look at Scott, who maintained a smile.

"Cook, you wouldn't want to face the unexpected and be helpless, would you?"

Scott asked softly.

Cook was startled, then his gaze firmed up.

Arthur scanned the five men, not sure if it was an illusion.

The young 'Spirit Medium' always felt that the five men in front of him seemed to start burning.

Involuntarily, the young 'Spirit Medium' harbored greater anticipation.

Although in his original plan, the five were more of puzzle pieces for his 'force operation', he wouldn't mind if they became stronger.

"Can I go with you?"

"I'm really curious about your training,"

Arthur said.

Arthur was truly curious about the training of Cook's group.

But more importantly, he wanted to meet Cook's father.

Their relationship strengthened steadily.

Arthur wanted to use this opportunity to ask Cook's father about the "Demon-Repelling Holy Salt" and "Evil-Repelling Brick Powder" that could be used without the 'Hunter's Ritual.'

Of course, he would inquire tactfully.

"Of course!

My father will definitely welcome your visit,"

Cook nodded joyfully.

His father had always wanted to meet Arthur, but there was never a right opportunity.

And this time was just perfect.

"Can we participate too?"

Goodrian Ernest, Erwin Dibwa, and Zhukov Bas, three young nobles, came forward.

Cook did not refuse.

The 'Lionheart Ceremony' for the three had already decided everything.

Thus, the training for five became training for eight.

Moreover, after packing their gear, the eight of them set out immediately.

Malz, Bob, and Little Lisop gave their heartfelt blessings to the eight, hoping they would undergo profound transformations.

Desa from Barny did the same, also sending his blessings to the eight.

However, when Desa heard that Cook's father was named Rick, the man from Barny's expression slightly shifted.

"What's wrong?"

Arthur didn't hesitate and directly asked.

"Young Master Arthur, if this guy really is the Rick I know, then this training will be a rare opportunity for growth—of course, they must survive it,"

Desa looked towards the distant eight with a playfully sympathetic gaze.

Sympathy?

Arthur confirmed this emotion.

Immediately, the young 'Spirit Medium' grew even more curious.

"Darling, I still need to stay here to handle some things. How about we meet later at No. 2 Cork Street?"

Marinda came over, speaking while winking from an angle where others couldn't see.

The meaning was clear.

You go to Rick's farm, but I'll investigate that 'extremely valuable' event—you worried or not?

If it had been before, Arthur might have been worried.

But now?

Arthur responded with a smile.

"Alright, darling."

Then, the group embarked on their journey, leaving Marinda to 'stay' at Caesar Manor.

After walking some distance, Arthur didn't forget to lean out of the car window to wave at a slightly dazed Marinda, then he retracted his body before she could react, his eyes looking at the text that emerged before him.

The next moment, the corners of Arthur's mouth curled up.

Chapter 495 'Conservative' Lady Abel!

The text before Arthur was an XP gain prompt.

However, one of the prompts exceeded Arthur's expectations—

[During Marinda's title inheritance ceremony, your presence was sensible and reasonable, which led more people to speculate about your change in status: XP+100]

[Rumors of Marinda's 'pregnancy' were well-received and began to spread faster than imagined: XP+250]

[More people heard of your reputation: XP+130]

...

Arthur: Emmm

How should I put it?

For the second one, Arthur was truly surprised.

Both by the XP value and the 'degree' of it being well-received.

"Indeed, everyone loves a good piece of gossip in the melon field."

Arthur muttered to himself softly while stroking Pendragon.

Compared to those insignificant fights and conflicts, these colorful rumors and gossips are what people truly love, and Arthur could even imagine how outrageous the rumors would eventually become.

In this, certain specific tabloids were absolutely indispensable.

'Just don't write me in there.'

Arthur muttered to himself internally, his gaze then turned to the XP value.

Combined with the previous leftover 100 XP, the XP value had now recovered to around 580.

The XP gain from the daily 'more people hearing your reputation,' continued to increase steadily, and it was clear that for a considerable time in the future, this daily would become an XP source Arthur could not ignore.

As for this time's XP?

Arthur looked towards the [Wand Combat Technique].

To level up to Lv4 required 160 XP.

To level up to Lv5 required 320 XP.

A total of 480 XP, which was just right for the current XP value.

As for a significant increase in XP value when reaching Lv5?

Some other secret techniques might be possible.

But [Wand Combat Technique] most likely would not.

Because its creator 'Lady Abel' was a 'conservative' person.

Previously, because of [Wand Combat Technique], and later the perfected [Glory Potion], Arthur had been quite curious about this lady.

Being able to create secret techniques and perfect magic potions, such a person was worth learning from.

Thus, Arthur had learned about this lady's life story.

This lady was not of Noble birth, nor was she from a merchant family, and certainly not from a farming household either; this lady's mother was a 'Tomb Guardian'.

Arthur was quite surprised when he learned this information.

After all, starting from the Imperial Age, 'Tomb Guardians', for the most part, ended their lives in solitude.

Not just because of the taboo surrounding death.

But also because 'Tomb Guardians' themselves often had certain deficiencies.

Or perhaps, it was precisely because of such deficiencies that one became a 'Tomb Guardian', even during the Pioneer Era, and of course, there could be restless individuals like the 'Tomb Guardian' Anthony from South Los, but for the most part, 'Tomb Guardians' conformed to the stereotype.

Especially when a 'Tomb Guardian' was female, it was really surprising.

Especially if this female was not difficult to look at and had no deficiencies, it was even more surprising.

In the books Arthur browsed, there were sketches of Lady Abel and her mother.

While her features were not delicate, they were symmetrical, and she possessed a subtle charm. Her attire was also quite appropriate; it was hard to tell from these that her mother's occupation was a 'Tomb Guardian'.

Lady Abel's upbringing was even more unremarkable.

At all times, she maintained an 'intermediate' status!

Even after she touched upon the 'Mystic Side,' she remained 'intermediate'.

Even after becoming a Master Alchemist, she still remained 'intermediate'.

It was only after she chose the field of Potion-making and perfected the [Glory Potion], marking it 'perfect', that people genuinely understood what had always been deemed 'intermediate'.

It wasn't 'intermediate'.

It was keeping a low profile.

Arthur deeply understood this, so he was very certain that Lv5 of [Wand Combat Technique] would not show any major changes.

[Wand Combat Technique Lv4: In the mid Silver Age, a Master Alchemist 'Lady Abel' created this secret technique. The initial purpose was just to compensate for her lack of physical strength, making it safer to go out and gather materials. As time went on, she continuously refined this technique, eventually reaching its current state: Effect: Consumes some physical strength, using the Glyphic Language 'Ga', the art is applied, endowing the magic wand with power, turning it into a wand with combat capabilities, exceptionally tough and fast, for 3 minutes]

(Note 1: The caster has and only has one 'Magic Wand')

(Note 2: Only when a "Magic Wand" is completely broken can a new "Magic Wand" be selected.)

(Note 3: A "Magic Wand" cannot leave the caster within a radius of 7 meters.)

(Note 4: The combat ability of a level 4 "Magic Wand" is equivalent to that of a combat master.)

(Note 5: The "toughness" of a magic wand is equivalent to having a layer of explosive-level force field protection.)

(Note 6: The "speed" of a magic wand is equivalent to an extra +1 speed of a combat master.)

...

All this posed no problem.

Although the combat level of the "Magic Wand" hadn't increased, the appearance of the "toughness" and "speed" effects was enough to compensate for everything.

Arthur already felt satisfied with this.

But what truly surprised Arthur was the XP value required to upgrade the "Wand Combat Technique" to Lv5.

50,000!

Arthur's eyes widened as he counted it over and over again.

It really was 50,000!

Suddenly, the once confident Arthur felt as if slaps were ringing beside his ears.

His face was swelling up from the slaps!

"No, Lady, you're making me feel like a muggle here, aren't you?"

You're such a conservative person, why are you playing it so big?"

What are you learning from someone like Hercules..."

Wait a minute!"

While Arthur was furiously ranting inside, suddenly, something occurred to him.

He rubbed his forehead and quickly thought of something —

"At the end of the 'Silver Age', Master Alchemist 'Lady Abel' turned to 'Potion-making' to pay tribute to her idol 'Master Hercules'... "

This was something Marinda had told him.

At the time, Arthur, who was completely attracted by the perfect version of the "Glory Potion," had heard this but hadn't really taken it to heart.

But now, with the appearance of 50,000 XP, Arthur finally understood what it meant to pay tribute to an 'idol'.

"Okay, okay, so this is how you want to play?"

You just wait!

When I can create my own secret techniques, I'll play it big like this too!"

Arthur thought fiercely inside.

Then, Arthur became curious.

What would the "Wand Combat Technique" with 50,000 XP be like?

It can't possibly be that all wands within a certain range attack on my command, can it?

That would be —

'Wands to the Leader'?

But I can't play the erhu!

Arthur roared inside his heart.

Yet, he grew even more curious about the Level 5 "Wand Combat Technique."

At the same time, Arthur was also becoming more certain that Hercules and Lady Abel must have anticipated this scene, that they must have laughed heartily the moment they saw their successors struggling at the critical moment of learning their secret techniques.

"Tsk, such bad taste.

But it seems really fun."

Arthur began stroking his chin.

If creating secret techniques was joking before, this time, Arthur was seriously intrigued.

But then, Arthur gently fanned himself.

"Where has this gone, getting all carried away?

You're thinking about creating secret techniques now?

Focus on staying safe first!"

Arthur warned himself inwardly, his eyes gazing towards the nearby farm.

As Arthur got a clear view of the arrangements inside the farm, his eyes narrowed in surprise —

"This?!"

Chapter 496: In a Daze, the Voice is Loud!

Rick's farm was located just outside South Los, where the terrain was flat and the land fertile.

Apart from some cash crops, it also had a good number of cattle, sheep, chickens, and ducks.

From the angle of the carriage, Arthur could see at least fifty cows and over two hundred sheep, but that was not all.

They were merely managed by Kuke's two "uncles" with seven sheepdogs.

The two men rode horses, swinging whips and lassos in their hands, with longswords on one side of the saddle and crossbow arrows on the other, and daggers tucked into their belts. What caught the most attention was that, in the cold winter of South Los, amidst the chilly sea breeze, the men wore only woolen vests, revealing their muscular arms.

With each shout, as they swung their whips and lassos, the muscles in their burly arms would bulge.

What Arthur was most concerned about was the aura they inadvertently exuded.

It was not incredibly strong.

But it was extremely fierce.

Simply put, the scent of blood was very strong.

'Is this the 'scent' of a bounty hunter?'

Arthur assessed in his mind.

The two men tending to the cattle and sheep clearly noticed the approaching carriage.

When they saw Kuke jump down from the carriage, they immediately smiled.

One of them whistled.

Immediately, a falcon took off from a nearby fence and plunged into the farm.

About ten minutes later, Arthur finally met Kuke's father.

A tall man, whose arms were thicker than a typical person's waist.

The man was shirtless, wearing only a pair of pants, and when he ran out from the farm, white steam was emanating all over his body.

'Exaggerated intensity of training!'

Watching the sweat still flowing from Kuke's father's body, Arthur already pictured the man's exercise regimen in his mind.

Arthur could even be sure that his intensity of training was comparable to some secret techniques of body training.

Pushing open the carriage door, Arthur stepped down.

Kuke's father, Rick, immediately wanted to give Arthur a hug.

However, thinking of his sweaty body, the father ultimately opted for a handshake—

"Lord Kledos, thank you for everything you've done for Kuke.

Do you know?

Letting him follow you might be the best decision I've made in my life!

You wouldn't believe it, he used to fear hardship and fatigue, I never thought he would take on my training willingly!"

Rick spoke excitedly, grasping Arthur's palm and shaking it vigorously, the strength of which allowed Arthur to quickly evaluate.

[Physique]At least 5.

Of course, that was just in normal state.

If he were to burst into combat mode, his power could easily crush an 'Arcana Level' strongman.

"It's what I should do.

I don't want Kuke and the others to encounter any misfortunes because of accidents that could have been avoided.

So please, train them relentlessly—I want them to stand on their own in the shortest possible time."

Arthur was surprised by the father's strength, yet his expression remained serious.

Upon hearing Arthur's request, the father burst out laughing.

"Don't worry!

I will give Kuke no opportunity for regret—he asked for it himself, so as a father, I will certainly use 200 percent of pain to make him gain even greater strength.

Of course, the same applies to all of you!"

Rick then looked toward Scott and the other seven young men behind Kuke.

Then, without giving the eight young people any chance to speak up, the father gestured to one of his old friends.

"Allen, come train them!

Don't hold back!"

Immediately, a middle-aged man, who was two meters and twenty centimeters tall, wearing only shorts in the dead of winter, and whose muscles subtly radiated a rocky texture, walked out.

He was carrying a whip.

Crack!

After snapping the whip in the air, he directly roared at Kuke, Scott, Wiggins, Haywood, Fengter, Goodrian Ernest, Erwin Dibwa, Zhukov Bas in front—

"Now, a light-gearred 20 kilometers run!

The last one gets whipped!

The first one gets a drumstick for lunch!"

"Whoever doesn't finish the run, 500 push-ups this afternoon!"

"If you can't complete 500 push-ups, then run another 20 kilometers!"

As his shout ended, Allen cracked his whip again.

This time, it wasn't just a crack in the air.

It genuinely struck someone's body.

It struck Kuke's body.

Kuke's expensive coat, along with the vest and shirt underneath, were torn apart, leaving a trail of blood on his body.

"Mr. Rick..."

Seeing this, Arthur's eyes twitched as he immediately spoke out.

But he was cut off by Rick before he could finish.

"Please don't worry, Allen knows his limits. He only injures the flesh, not the bones, and during lunch, a medicinal bath will be prepared. They won't have any long-term effects."

Rick explained.

Hearing this, Arthur let out a slight sigh of relief.

He had finally found a few capable subordinates; he didn't want them ruined by training.

'A medicinal bath?

Kuke's father's legacy is richer than I thought!

Arthur thought to himself, his gaze covertly sweeping over the other's robust arms.

Clearly, ordinary people couldn't possibly have such robust arms; it had to be the effect of the medicinal bath.

Thinking about how much legacy this father had, Arthur then said,

"No, you misunderstood.

I meant to say, for cleanliness and hygiene, please dip the whip in alcohol when you strike them.

I once promoted this method at the Shire District Police Station.

The effect was very good."

Arthur said in all seriousness.

Rick: ...

As Kuke's father, the farmer, stared at Arthur with a look of amazement, he soon cracked a smile, turned around, and shouted to his old buddy,

"Allen, dip the whip in alcohol when you strike them.

Just like Lord Kledos said, clean and hygienic!"

Saying this, the farmer didn't even pay attention to the cries of the young men, including his own son, gesturing for Arthur to follow him.

The farmer led Arthur into a nearby barn.

As Arthur entered the barn, the young 'Spirit Medium' twitched at the corner of his eyes.

He saw hanging sandbags of various sizes, iron wire nets fixed with wooden stakes parallel in the ground, uneven wooden walls, and single bars, then...

Bricks and boards!

Piled up beside.

The farmer casually picked up a blue brick and slapped it on his own head.

Bang!

The brick shattered, yet the farmer's head was completely fine.

Brushing off the debris, the farmer then smiled at Arthur.

His face, covered in dust, showcased his gleaming white teeth.

There was a sense of honesty.

And a sense of integrity.

But the ground covered in brick debris told Arthur that wasn't the case here.

Being hit on the forehead with a brick could knock out even a Mystic Side Person.

Yet the farmer's display was not over.

As Arthur watched the farmer glide through the iron wire like a skating motion, jump over walls with the agility of a monkey, and smash a sandbag with a single punch,

Then start spinning on the uneven bars, Arthur even felt a sense of déjà vu.

In his haze, it was very familiar.

He seemed to hear those uniform footsteps.

He also heard that thunderous roar.

In front of him, an illusion even appeared—

Red epaulets, green uniforms, half-squat, rifle held at an angle...

Chapter 497: The Method That Once Came Closest to 'Knight' Training!

Arthur quickly shook his head.

Impossible.

Such an army couldn't possibly appear here.

Yet it appeared.

He would have been the first to run to them.

Because...

It truly could bring light to this world.

Meanwhile, Rick, who was training, clearly misunderstood when he saw Arthur shaking his head.

"Dier!"

The father called out to someone not far away.

Immediately, a lean middle-aged man with every muscle taut like threads walked over, picked up a wooden stick wrapped at one end with cotton, and started beating Rick all over his body.

Head, chest, back, limbs, groin.

He spared no part.

"Pain!"

If it hurts, hit it until you don't feel the pain!

Pain!

If it pains you, get used to the pain!

Then, you can break through the existing limits of your Physique!"

Rick, being beaten, said with a full voice.

Subsequently, the tool used for beating shifted from the wooden stick to an iron rod.

And when the iron rod turned into a spear, the beating included stabbing and piercing.

Stabbing the throat.

Piercing the groin.

Facing the attack of two spears, Rick took a deep breath abruptly.

Buzz!

His already sturdy body, at this moment, became even more robust.

The next moment, the spear stabbed at his throat and pierced his groin.

But it could neither penetrate nor pierce.

On the contrary, after Rick forcefully took two steps forward—

Crack, crack!

Following two crisp sounds, the two spears broke in half.

No description with words is as real and effective as actual training.

That's what Rick thought.

Arthur immediately understood Rick's thoughts.

At the same time, Arthur also understood what he needed to do.

Clap, clap, clap!

The young 'Spirit Medium' was not stingy with his applause.

He not only clapped but also had a perfectly timed smile on his face. And upon hearing Arthur's applause and seeing the smile on Arthur's face, a smile appeared on Rick's father's face too.

Then, the father stopped the training, grabbed a towel from the side, raised his hand to stop Dier who had already picked up a firearm and started to wipe off the sweat on his body as he spoke.

"Don't worry, this is what they need to train in the next stage. For now, we are merely letting them practice their physical abilities, letting their Physique grow to a limit, until they can casually kill a normal Mystic Side Person, only then can they advance to this stage."

Arthur glanced at the firearm that was put back and nodded unconsciously.

"The limit of this stage is desirable."

"No!

This stage is merely the beginning of the next one.

The final stage is what's truly desirable."

Rick said, his face breaking into a smile

Is there a final stage?

Is this about tearing 'Entrants' apart by hand?

Arthur sighed inwardly.

The First Order is already the limit of ordinary men.

The Second Order is already touching the supernatural.

The Third Order, unknown for now.

The Fourth Order, the so-called final stage, also unknown, but Rick's smile allowed Arthur to imagine.

Moreover, at this time, the father lowered his voice and said—

"This is the training method closest to a real 'Knight'!"

Knight?!

A training method close to a real 'Knight'?

Arthur gasped internally.

Previously, Arthur had speculated about the hasty and premature retirement of Kuke's father, Rick.

Now, Arthur had confirmed it.

It wasn't just that he had discovered a relic of The Holy Court.

He had also unearthed a relatively intact legacy of the Paladin from this relic of The Holy Court.

At least the early training methods and medicinal baths were all there.

Rick's demonstration was both a show of sincerity and a test.

He was testing Arthur's potential and the direction of their future cooperation.

If his potential was vast, then deep cooperation was essential.

If his potential was not as great as imagined, then it would be superficial cooperation—maintaining the existing cooperation and then offering him certain benefits.

But the core?

He would never touch it.

How should one say it?

A 'Smooth Handling of Affairs' method formed by combining a retired 'Bounty Hunter' and 'Farmer'.

It had a bit of cunning, and a bit of worldly wisdom.

Thinking of this, Arthur said with a smile,

"As long as one does not step beyond that boundary!

A Knight, is still a Knight!

Not a puppet!"

Arthur did not know about the Paladin's training methods, but previously, he had obtained from him the Demon-Repelling Holy Salt and Evil-Repelling Brick Powder that could be made without the 'Hunter's Ritual', suggesting that the early Paladin training methods did not require a ritual.

Adding to that what Rick had just mentioned about 'training methods closest to a true 'Knight'>.

Clearly, the early part was indeed the 'Knight' training methods.

And later?

The key part, the 'Knight' training methods, were replaced by the Paladin's training methods.

This key part should be—

The Entry-level Atlas!

Besides this, Arthur could think of nothing else.

After all, it was rumored that the Paladins of The Holy Court were a group of warriors who were tirelessly painful, fearless, and devoted to fervent belief.

It did somewhat resemble the Death Soldier Potion...

'Hmm?

The Death Soldier Potion was not originally related to the 'Paladins', right?

A simplified version?

Or an easy-to-enter version?'

Suddenly, Arthur's mind raced with the thought.

Could he combine the Paladin's training methods with the Death Soldier Potion to create a more 'user-friendly' version?

As for the true 'Knight' training method?

That training method had disappeared at the beginning of the Empire.

The 'Shadow War' had swallowed it up, not just the 'Knight' training methods, but also the original 'Wizard' training methods had vanished.

Even the glorious era of the Empire couldn't truly restore the 'Knight' training methods completely.

Arthur wouldn't be so arrogant as to think he could fix it.

But if it was truly derivative, combining them was within Arthur's grasp.

And achieving this was not difficult.

Rick's probing had made some things clear.

This father had a relatively complete Paladin's training method, and for the sake of his own son and his own future path, the father was quite willing to share the relatively complete Paladin training method.

As long as he passed the test.

And just now, he had done quite well.

"The inheritance of the Kledos Family is truly remarkable, you even know the Paladin's training methods," Rick exclaimed.

However, Arthur shook his head.

"It's not about knowing."

"Hmm?"

Rick's face showed confusion.

How was it not about knowing?

He'd spoken everything correctly just now, all the key points too.

Seeing the puzzled Rick, Arthur's face showed a faint smile as he softly said —

"The Paladin's training method was originally created by the Kledos Family."

Chapter 498: Raise the Status!

Rick was stunned.

The former bounty hunter, now a farmer, widened his eyes as he looked at Arthur, his gaze filled with profound disbelief.

"This, this..."

Rick tried to verbally express his emotions at the moment, but no words could capture the other's feelings.

Meanwhile, Arthur spoke calmly and steadily.

"My earliest ancestor had traveled across the entire continent before the establishment of the Empire. He faithfully recorded everything he saw, which eventually became the most precious treasure of the Kledos Family.

Among them, the Knight training methods were just one aspect.

In the records of my ancestor, the Kledos Family even discovered a complete body of an Ancient Titan and witnessed the Twilight of the Gods...

Just like how the mighty Ancient Titans could not escape death.

From that time onward, the Kledos Family had some thoughts.

So, we chose to live in secrecy more often.

But this did not prevent our family members from choosing to get involved in certain events at the right times, to prove some conjectures."

Arthur began to elevate the status of his family.

Compared to the first time he faced Marinda with 'tied hands and feet'.

This time, Arthur, supplemented with quite a lot of knowledge and rumors from the Mystic Side, was indeed letting loose.

Starting from the empire's era?

No, no.

Millennial families, South County, North County, the entire East Coast have several families.

Putting it together, the Kledos Family would only be demeaned.

So, go further back!

Push the history of the Kledos Family back to the 'Golden Age' before the establishment of the Empire!

Even touching upon the 'Age of the Gods'!

Only then can it be truly unique!

As for being doubted?

Arthur was absolutely not afraid of being doubted at this moment.

As long as he had his big pants on, he could shatter everyone's doubts—he possessed the "Serpentine Body," and had never revealed any part related to 'snake' from it for what?

Wasn't it for this moment?

He would only show his greatness!

A height of 5 meters was enough to prove that the ancestors of the Kledos Family had seen the body of an 'Ancient Titan' and discovered something from it!

Especially since the "Serpentine Body" could grow as he ate and slept!

When he appeared at heights of 10 meters, 20 meters, 30 meters, no one would doubt him anymore.

After all, in the history of the giants on Little Garden Island, the tallest one recorded was only 15 meters.

And Titans, as whispered, are 100 meters.

Ancient Titans?

No detailed records.

Some say a kilometer, others say ten kilometers.

Some even say, larger than the stars.

As for the Twilight of the Gods?

Arthur slightly toned it down here.

Although the Kledos Family's 'Eternal Monster, inheritor of the Rebellious Bloodline, creator of the Twilight of the Gods, revered by the Northern Gods, master of the Blade of Chaos, possessor of Leviathan's Axe, Kledos...' this title had already gone out with his words.

Among them, 'creator of the Twilight of the Gods,' although Arthur felt he fell short, it didn't stop him from bragging.

Since he had begun bragging,

why not brag bigger?

Thus, he had previously laid the groundwork for the Kledos Family's 'Secrecy'.

Still due to the 'death of the Ancient Titan,' also 'Secrecy'.

So...

His 'Death's Favor,' to some extent, also became reasonable.

And his Talent "Breath of Death" further proved all of this.

With evidence, and yet reasonable.

Then why couldn't 'creator of the Twilight of the Gods' be real?

You say it's fake?

Then you let the gods come out and confront me, right?

Can't do it?

Then, what I said is true!

Even if I say I'm God-born, it's true!

Because, you can't prove I'm fake!

Arthur completely took shamelessness to new heights, and this completely stunned Rick and Dier—In the hearts of two retired bounty hunters, Arthur, who already had such a great reputation, simply did not need to deceive them, so the two never doubted at all.

Moreover—

Arthur was not all talk and no action.

"Rick, may I borrow this?"

Arthur pointed at the tarp.

It was specifically prepared to prevent the barn from leaking.

"Of course."

Rick immediately nodded.

Although the farmer didn't understand what Arthur was planning to do, it was just a tarp after all—what was it really going to matter?

And beside him, Dier didn't care either.

This slim but extremely fit bounty hunter was still pondering over what Arthur had said recently,

Dier always felt something was off, but couldn't put his finger on it.

However, the next moment, this retired bounty hunter stopped pondering the issue.

Because—

he saw a giant!

A giant beyond imagination!

Under the shelter of the tarp, Arthur, who had stripped off his clothes and equipment, completely freed himself from the constraints of his body.

Instantly, Arthur's body began to expand at a rate visible to the naked eye.

The overwhelming sense of power made Arthur stretch comfortably.

Creak, creak.

Amid the sounds of stretching joints, like ropes snapping, Arthur reached out and touched the top of the barn, then the giant Spirit Medium wrapped the tarp around his waist with a look of resignation on his face.

"I thought I could have a good stretch."

Arthur said this with a touch of resignation on his face, then he sat down cross-legged and, looking at the still dumbfounded Rick and Dier, smiled and said,

"Sorry, I'm not yet fully grown; my body is developing rapidly. I remember when I was eight, I had to jump to touch the top of this kind of barn."

You could reach the top of the barn at eight years old?

Were you over three meters tall at eight?

After silently making their estimations, Rick and Dier's minds were already starting to crash.

For the two of them, the enlarged Arthur had completely proven his own words.

It was all true!

Everything was true!

The Kledos Family really existed before the 'Golden Age'!

The Kledos Family truly possessed the corpses of 'Ancient Titans'!

The ancestors of the Kledos Family had truly witnessed the 'Twilight of the Gods'!

A member of the Kledos Family, living in seclusion, was able to create a secret technique like that of a 'Paladin'!

Faced with these ironclad facts, Rick had no hesitations.

This retired bounty hunter immediately took out the treasured 'Paladin' training technique from his collection and handed it over to Arthur—

"Lord Kledos, I meant no offense.

You are a follower of Kuke, and you will always be the most honored guest at Rick Farm.

Since the 'Paladin' training technique was created by the Kledos family, then...

I'm returning it to its original owner!"

Rick said, bowing slightly.

Although retired, Rick had not forgotten his days as a bounty hunter.

Especially 'human relations,' which had become quite delicate.

At least, Arthur was almost applauding this retired bounty hunter.

"Hmm.

I will review the family archives.

I'll find the errors in them.

If possible, I hope to complete it!"

Arthur nodded, giving a promise that was hardly a promise.

Who doesn't want to advance further in strength?

Arthur gave hope to the other person.

As for the end?

Please remember the previous 'if'.

Feeling the slight weight of the notebook in his palm, Arthur began to shrink his body and, using the tarp as a cover, made sure he was dressed properly before stepping out.

"Thank you, Rick.

I haven't relaxed like this in a long time."

Arthur said this.

"If possible, Rick Farm welcomes you to visit often, of course, I promise you next time, there will be a larger barn."

Rick promised.

A delighted smile immediately appeared on Arthur's face.

"That would be wonderful... Hm?"

Before he could finish his sentence, something seemed to catch Arthur's attention, and he suddenly furrowed his brow.

Chapter 499: 'Information' and 'News' Are Different!

Arthur furrowed his brows, then his gaze dropped low as if he was in deep thought.

About five seconds later, Arthur let out a soft sigh—

"So that's what it was!"

Saying this, the young 'Spirit Medium' looked towards Rick and Dier.

"Do you know about what happened last night?"

Rick and Dier looked at each other.

What had happened last night?

Both appeared clueless.

Arthur saw their confusion.

Ah, they don't know?

That makes things easier!

I can take some liberties here.

As he thought this, Arthur slightly relaxed.

Arthur never underestimated Rick, a bounty hunter who had luckily 'dug up' a relic of The Holy Court, even though he had handed over the Paladin training methods to him.

After all, Arthur couldn't be sure how much Rick had obtained from that relic.

Therefore, Arthur needed to probe a bit.

And what better way than using the information of an 'Ascend Steper' obtained from the Female Swordsmanship Chief?

Arthur secretly watched their expressions closely and lowered his voice—

"Rick, do you have a Barrier against Peeping here?"

"Yes!"

Rick immediately nodded and walked to a corner of the barn, picked up a waterskin, then removed the stopper and poured the pale red liquid around the doors and windows.

Afterward, he poured a circle around the three of them.

During this, Dier also brought a chair for Arthur.

"Thank you, Dier."

Arthur courteously responded.

"It's what I should do."

Dier, already fully convinced and respectful, flashed a smile at Arthur, then turned and also walked to the corner to pick up another waterskin.

This waterskin also contained the same type of pale red liquid.

Arthur's mild expression didn't change, but as his gaze swept over the pale red liquid, he thought to himself —

'Indeed, aside from [Demon-Repelling Holy Salt] and [Evil-Repelling Brick Powder], Rick has also gotten his hands on the [Barrier Oil] used by the Hunters!'

Could the relic Rick uncovered be a training base of The Holy Court?'

Arthur speculated.

Having the Paladin training method, along with [Demon-Repelling Holy Salt], [Evil-Repelling Brick Powder], and [Barrier Oil], it was too similar.

You see, in the era when the Hunters were incorporated into The Holy Court, apart from the mandatory Holy Water, these three items were essential for most court personnel, just like the silver longsword at their waist— this made it difficult for people to distinguish between members of The Holy Court and the Hunters for a long time, and led the Hunters to be unjustly criticized over a lengthy period.

People couldn't tell who exactly was responsible for 'big cases,' whether it was court personnel or the Hunters.

In that era called the 'Holy Era,' the Hunters couldn't truly resist and had to change their Legacy modes.

Gone were the days of the 'Hunter's Castle'.

Only a family or master-disciple mode of inheritance was left.

And towards the end of the Holy Era, after the Hunters broke away from The Holy Court and became independent, this mode did not change and has been preserved to this day.

Furthermore, [Barrier Oil] is also truly one of the 'Salt Brick Oil Sword'.

Salt, [Demon-Repelling Holy Salt]!

Brick, [Evil-Repelling Brick Powder]!

Oil, [Barrier Oil]!

Sword, [Hunter's Sword]!

These four items are the standard equipment of a Hunter.

And the lower-grade version 'coarse salt, brick powder, kerosene, iron sword' is used on a larger scale.

For some Lost Souls, the lower-grade version is also effective.

Rick and Dier lit the circle around themselves.

"Barrier Oil" only existed to prevent most forms of peeping through secret techniques and effectively isolate randomly teleporting evil spirits. Any malicious approach would be scorched.

Especially some malicious lost souls, they would be burned to ashes upon contact.

And this was a passive defense mode.

Once the "Barrier Oil" was ignited, it would switch to an active attack mode, drawing attacks three times stronger than the defense mode towards any peepers or those approaching.

But it consumed a lot of oil!

The normal defensive mode of the "Barrier Oil" was enough to last two weeks.

But the attack mode lasted only for a few minutes.

Arthur, who had learned these details from books, didn't need Rick and Dier to explain and directly said—

"Last night, three 'Ascend Steppers' appeared in South Los."

'Ascend Steppers'!

Upon hearing such a title, Rick and Dier's pupils involuntarily dilated.

Shock!

Genuine shock!

Clearly, Rick and Dier truly didn't know.

After reconfirming that the two really didn't know, Arthur's heart completely relaxed.

And Rick and Dier?

Without hesitation, they turned and started adding oil to the still-burning "Barrier Oil."

Suddenly, the "Barrier Oil," which lightly burned with flames only 1-2 centimeters high, began to burn fiercely.

The blazing "Barrier Oil" brought brightness and warmth, and also considerable security to the two retired bounty hunters.

'Ascend Steppers', eh!

And three of them!

How could they not be extremely cautious?

The young Spirit Medium watched Rick and Dier's actions and had no intention of stopping them.

'Ascend Steppers' deserved such 'respect'.

When the two turned around again, Arthur then continued speaking.

"Just now, I sensed another 'Ascend Stepper' appear in South Los, though it vanished in a flash, but it was indeed an 'Ascend Stepper'!"

Arthur's words made Rick and Dier's breathing hasten.

Another 'Ascend Stepper'?

Since when had 'Ascend Steppers' become common as cabbages?

Why did they appear one after another?

Was South Los about to suffer some misfortune?

Without hesitation, Rick and Dier poured out all of their precious "Barrier Oil," which had initially soared to half a meter of flames, this time directly enveloping the trio.

This time, however, Arthur waved his hand and said.

"Don't be nervous!

This time's 'Ascend Stepper' happens to be an acquaintance of the Kledos family, and he must have come for those three strangers 'Ascend Steppers'.

Well, how to put it...

He is a fairly decent person, just a bit eccentric in character.

If you encounter him, you only need to make it clear that you are subordinates of the Kledos family, and he definitely won't attack you.

Of course, the necessary respect is obligatory."

Flames danced, casting a gentle warmth in Arthur's eyes, which also became dazzling in such firelight.

Rick and Dier were profoundly moved.

Neither objected to Arthur's ultimate reference to them as the Kledos family's 'subordinates'.

That was an 'Ascend Stepper'!

Just the title of 'subordinate' could grant them the ability to protect themselves in front of an 'Ascend Stepper', which was too good a deal.

Simultaneously, it made Rick and Dier particularly cherish this title of 'subordinate'.

When the flames had somewhat diminished, Rick stepped forward and ran out of the barn.

When he returned, Rick had a notebook and a waterskin in his hands.

The retired bounty hunter respectfully handed both items to Arthur.

Chapter 500: In the Tattered World of Adults, Here Comes the Little Kitty to Patch Things Up!

"Thank you for your protection!"

As he handed over the items, Rick said this.

His tone was increasingly respectful.

He bowed deeply as he paid his respects.

Dier did the same at his side.

As a 'subordinate' of the Kledos Family, a subservient attitude was naturally required.

In response, Arthur smiled and nodded.

Then, he took the notebook and the water bladder.

The notebook contained the entire process of completing the Barrier Oil without the need for a Hunter's Ritual.

The water bladder, naturally, was filled with Barrier Oil.

At this moment, Arthur had no intention of refusing.

He had performed so much, wasn't it all for the sake of gaining some additional benefits?

He put the notes and the Barrier Oil into the Bracelet of Carmen.

Compared to Atos's Box, the Bracelet of Carmen not only had a larger interior space but was also more convenient.

As for Arthur having spatial equipment, neither Rick nor Dier was surprised.

It would have been strange for someone with the Kledos Family's legacy not to have spatial equipment.

After securing the benefits he was entitled to, Arthur's face became serious.

"Be careful in the coming period, and everyone on the farm should remain vigilant until I figure out their true intentions!"

Arthur reminded them.

"Understood."

Rick and Dier nodded firmly.

Arthur's face broke into a smile once more

"Of course, if everyone gets bored, feel free to train Kuke and the other seven to your heart's content.

I look forward to the realization of their talents!"

Arthur said, as if in anticipation.

Realization of talents!

Rick and Dier exchanged glances.

They knew of Kuke's talents.

Aside from lacking spirituality, he was otherwise quite ordinary.

But Arthur's statement, "I look forward to the realization of their talents," what did that suggest?

It suggested that Kuke had talent as well!

They just hadn't discovered it yet!

Compared to their own assessments, they trusted the words of the family heir who had existed since the Golden Age even more.

"Don't worry, Lord Kledos, I will make them experience pain worse than death, as well as the advancement of their strength," Rick assured.

"Hmm, I believe you can do that," Arthur said.

At this point, Arthur suddenly took a deep breath.

This unexpected action left Rick and Dier slightly puzzled.

They confirmed that Arthur had indeed taken a sudden deep breath.

But sitting here, there was no need for it, right?

Was he trying to give them a hint?

But what hint could 'breathing' be?

Puzzled, the two escorted Arthur to the carriage outside the farm.

Arthur turned to look back at the group who were being whipped by a retired bounty hunter named Allen and wailing in pain. He couldn't help but whisper,

"Training is still training.

But if one could simulate the battlefield, could it not be twice as effective with half the effort?"

Having said that, Arthur boarded the carriage and slowly departed from Rick Farm.

Yet the eyes of Rick and Dier lit up.

"Simulate the battlefield?"

"The battlefield is sudden; it requires surprise arrows."

"Right, the battlefield is unpredictable; it also needs explosions and blazes."

The two exchanged words, quickly agreeing on the 'realism of the battlefield.'

Of course, they would need to remove the arrow tips.

The explosions and blazes also needed to be controlled.

They aimed to achieve a degree of 'bluff without injuring people.'

However, the occurrence of minor bumps and bruises was inevitable. Indeed, such 'minor bleeding' could help them get used to pain and not panic at the sight of fresh blood.

Rick and Dier's words were overheard by Arthur.

Talent!

Arthur gave a considerable assessment.

These two really suited training others.

No!

Rather, the Rick Farm was actually a large training ground.

In the future, some of his subordinates could come here for training.

Not seeking to be very powerful,

but aiming to be able to protect themselves.

Arthur knew all too well that as his 'plate' grew larger, the risks grew greater. Any carelessness could lead to catastrophe, and Arthur definitely did not want his downfall to start with the assassination of one of his men.

As for someone following the Way of the Knight?

Well, some did follow it.

Those who had died had abided by the Way of the Knight.

Those who were alive were all heavily promoting the Way of the Knight.

Is it funny?

Not at all. This is reality.

It is also human nature.

"Sigh!

Pan, remember, aside from what Daddy says, don't trust anyone else's words—they all have ulterior motives, even those who seem to be doing you a favor and offering you great benefits are no exception.

Because pies don't fall from the sky.

Apart from Daddy, nobody will be kind to you without reason!"

While stroking Pendragon, Arthur was instructing his little kitty.

Meow!

Pendragon meowed softly in response, completely ignoring Arthur.

As Arthur's little kitty, Pendragon knew all too well that Arthur's words were the least trustworthy.

Others being kind to you for no reason might be because they covet your talent, beauty, or even your kidneys, but Arthur was different.

Not only did he have designs on you, he also wanted you to be grateful for it.

Such a villain!

Pendragon gazed at Arthur with a look that saw right through everything.

Arthur saw it.

Immediately, the young 'Spirit Medium' burst into laughter.

"You truly are a cat raised by me!"

The young 'Spirit Medium' praised in this manner.

Pendragon immediately lifted its cat head in pride.

Watching this scene, the young 'Spirit Medium' laughed even more joyfully.

"But Pan, have you forgotten that you are in my hands right now?"

Suddenly, Pendragon's cat face froze.

Instinctively, Pendragon tried to run, but was firmly held in Arthur's embrace.

"Pan, feel the fatherly love as heavy as a mountain!"

As Arthur said this, Pendragon immediately clenched its cat eyes shut.

Based on Pendragon's past experiences, at this moment Arthur would start to rub it vigorously with his hands, sometimes adding water, and occasionally with lemon in it.

However, this time was different.

With its cat eyes tightly shut, Pendragon felt the scruff of its neck tighten.

Subconsciously, Pendragon opened its eyes.

And then...

Pendragon found itself being held in Arthur's mouth, with the wet sensation, muddy words were resounding by its ears.

"Pan, do you feel the fatherly love?"

Pan: ...

Such fatherly love could well be spared!

An inexplicable sense of shame filled the little kitty's heart, making its cat brain overheat.

But how could a little kitty caught by the scruff of the neck resist?

For the next dozen seconds or so, Pendragon dangled limply in Arthur's mouth, swinging back and forth.

Pendragon felt its cat life had become utterly bleak.

Pendragon wanted to die.

Arthur, triumphant, released his mouth grip and set the despondent kitty aside. He then took out the 'Paladin' Cultivation Method provided by Rick and began to browse it carefully.

After a moment, Arthur looked up and said softly—

"Just as I thought!"