

Great Master 521

Chapter 521: Taking the Stage

Over the manor, snowflakes fluttered down gently.

On the ground below, the old man waved his hand.

At once, the blizzard reversed its course.

Not to mention the scattering snowflakes.

The temperature also started to climb rapidly.

The next moment, the drifting snowflakes turned into raindrops and fell.

Baron Harold lifted his head to feel the cold sensation of the raindrops falling on his face, while Titon beside him was dumbfounded.

Was this his lordship?

Was this his dud lordship?

Was this the dud lordship who was nearing his wooden stage?

Impossible!

Absolutely impossible!

Of course, the butler had heard about the 'Blood Descendants.'

From the sudden appearance of the other party, displaying extraordinary strength, to rumors that he had 'already inherited the legacy of the Bloodline Clan,' to rumors of being 'cautious and cunning in his dealings, never fighting with his full strength, always leading others to underestimate him,' and even being 'South Los's Spirit Medium's collaborator,' the butler knew them all.

He had even made inquiries specifically.

Not just out of curiosity, but also...

Envy!

He envied that the Bloodline Clan had such contingency plans.

With such arrangements, it was only a matter of time before the Bloodline Clan would rise again.

More than once had the butler fantasized that if only the Harold family had such an arrangement.

Of course, fantasies are just fantasies, and the butler knew such things were impossible.

His lordship was nearing his end.

How could the Harold family possibly have any contingency plans?

But the scene just now had completely overturned the butler's understanding.

'The snowflakes just now were at least of Arcana level!

To dissipate such snowflakes with a single strike, one must also be of at least Arcana level!

His lordship is of Arcana level?!

Since his lordship is of Arcana level, why hide it?'

Filled with speculation and bewilderment, Titon subconsciously looked again at his lordship.

In the drizzling rain, Baron Harold's hands rested on his cane, his head lifted as he continued to speak to the 'Blood Descendant' —

"I know why you have come!

But I can assure you that the extermination of the Bloodline Clan had nothing to do with the Harold Family!

We had no part in it from beginning to end, and afterward, we were also powerless to partake in any division of the Bloodline Clan's assets.

If you want to know the truth about what happened back then, you should go to the Golden Lion Family; they know everything."

Baron Harold spoke earnestly.

However, faced with the earnest Baron Harold, the 'Blood Descendant' just sneered coldly.

"Everyone tells me that the 'Golden Lion Family' knows everything, but if they weren't the strongest, would they still know everything?"

Standing on the 'Blood Bat,' the eyes of the 'Blood Descendant' glowed even redder, and his right hand, now raised, unleashed a fierce frost power.

Hum!

Instantly, the fine rain turned into a howling blizzard.

The entire transformation was completed in a mere instant, without a hint of hesitation.

A look of helplessness crossed Baron Harold's face.

The old baron waved his hand once more.

This time, unlike his previous casual gesture, the old baron used a lot of force.

And with it, there was the sound of the wind —

Whoosh!

The wind blew, the ice and snow melted into rain, and the temperature rose again.

The wind was like that of early summer, with heat emerging.

The rain became a downpour, pattering down.

Titon, within a few breaths, was soaked through, and through the hazy rain mist, the old butler seemed to see his lordship's hair turning black.

From dry and white to black.

And that blackness quickly became glossy.

This change startled the butler.

Power could not come from nowhere.

And to rashly engage with the 'Mystery' was to invite endless troubles.

It was just like...

The heir of the Bloodline Clan!

'What kind of power is this?!'

Titon's heart was filled with worry, his eyes brimming with concern, but he was utterly unable to intervene in the battle before him, for he couldn't even move—

An Ice Spear appeared in the hand of the 'Blood Descendant.'

Suddenly, it was cold enough to freeze everything.

The torrential rain from the sky turned into fine hail.

The accumulated water on the ground instantly formed into a crystalline icy surface.

When the cold wind blew, everything within the manor was covered with a layer of frost.

Even the hard and sharp metal became incredibly 'fragile' at this time!

And humans?

Ordinary people would quickly die in such cold temperatures.

Titon, who was stronger than ordinary people, felt his body giving warning signals and was horrified at the power of the 'Blood Descendants', thinking...

'Indeed, they have always hidden their true selves!

Is this the foundation of the 'Bloodline Clan'?'

Titon couldn't help but think.

Baron Harold's gaze, meanwhile, was more complex.

There was admiration, envy, and even a tinge of jealousy.

But in the end, it all turned into a wave of his hand.

He put more effort into it than before.

Woo!

The sound of a fierce wind seemed to arise from this gesture.

In an instant, the chilling freeze turned into the blazing sun of midsummer.

That heatwave gave a suffocating sensation.

And the frost that filled the view vanished without a trace.

Titon's limbs could now move freely, but the butler didn't feel the slightest bit happy.

Because—

Spurt!

Baron Harold spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

The aged face, following this ejection of blood, began to lose its wrinkles rapidly, not to mention it gained a lustrous, elastic quality.

In just two breaths, the withered Baron Harold turned into a middle-aged man.

But his life force became even weaker.

It was even feeble compared to just before when he was on the brink of death.

Titon stepped forward and caught Baron Harold's body as it swayed, about to fall to the ground.

"Your Lordship?"

The butler called out worriedly.

Baron Harold, however, waved his hand and lifted his head to look at the 'Blood Descendants' in the sky.

"The Theofact Psychic Cultivation Association?"

The 'Blood Descendant' frowned.

"You truly are a scion of a great family, and even if that family is no more, the precious knowledge left behind is enough for you to transcend the ordinary—I am so envious of you.

To attain the power I have now, I once turned against the servants and private soldiers who were loyal to our house.

They were meant to be the force that would eventually rise to power, but they all became this power that I can only utilize once."

A deeper envy welled in Baron Harold's eyes.

There was even a trace of bitter resentment.

"Your Lordship?!"

Titon couldn't help but exclaim in disbelief.

This exclamation brought Harold swiftly back to his senses.

The baron glanced at his last servant, reminiscing how, after he was bedridden, this servant was devoted and loyal, never deserting him, encouraging him even when he had given up hope. Instantly, the 'Distortion' in his heart swiftly faded.

The hand that had been poised over the other's heart slowly dropped, and the sharp nails retracted.

"Titon, don't be too trusting of others in the future."

The baron said this and slowly steadied himself.

It had already come to this point.

Even if he were to consume Titon, he would not live much longer.

It was better to let Titon continue living.

And himself?

He would fight an ultimate battle for the honor of the Harold Family.

The 'Distortion' in his heart reemerged, pushing the baron from one extreme to another.

The hatred completely dissipated.

Only one thing remained...

For honor!

"Honor is my life!"

The baron shouted, his face becoming youthful once again.

An Ice Spear appeared again in the hands of the 'Blood Descendant'.

The final confrontation between the two was imminent.

But at that moment, a voice rang out—

"I can assure you that the Harold Family had no part in it and knew little about the events of that year."

Glast, who had been waiting quietly, stepped out.

Chapter 522 Glory, Destiny, and Rebirth!

When Lady Glast emerged from the shadows, cloaked in her cape, she immediately captured the attention of everyone present.

The loyal butler Titon even stood between Glast and Baron Harold—Titon, of course, knew he could not stop her.

But he had to give it his all regardless.

Titon watched Glast with caution as she stepped out, his grip on his longsword tight.

"Ha, you finally show yourself!"

The Blood Descendants' ice spear grew even more solidified while the glow in his crimson eyes intensified.

At this moment, Baron Harold's countenance appeared increasingly youthful; the noble was now the very image of a young man.

Understood!

He had understood!

He had wondered why the Blood Descendants had come knocking on his door!

It was because of Glast!

But Baron Harold bore no grudge against Glast.

At this moment, the 'Honor Above All' Baron Harold remembered the contract between them was this: Glast would give him one chance.

Though he had paid with something, he truly received this opportunity—to wield a power as enviable as his ancestors had.

And in some ways, he even had to thank Glast.

Thank Glast for 'creating' such a battlefield for him.

"Perhaps this is ill-timed,

but, Lady Glast, please wait a moment.

Titon, after I die, take Lady Glast to the family's secret chamber. There, you will find my child, and I want you to advise them just as you have advised me.

And Lady Glast, in accordance with our contract, you will be that child's mentor."

The young-looking Harold took a deep breath and spoke slowly.

"Your Lordship!"

Titon exclaimed in shock.

But the youthful Harold merely smiled serenely.

"Titon, I am a hopeless case!

I'm filled with inferiority, yet I'm terribly arrogant and have an insatiable hunger for honor, longing to be the center of everyone's attention—so I've done many things I can't even forgive myself for.

I do not deserve to live.

I am willing to take responsibility for all my sins.

And I am willing to go anywhere to atone for them.

Even if it means my soul burning for a hundred, a thousand years, it doesn't matter.

I am now simply Shaw Harold."

With that, the young Harold turned around, his head held high as he smiled brightly at the Blood Descendants standing atop the Blood Bat in midair.

It was the unique smile of youth.

It was the kind of smile that appeared only when one was brash and full of fervor.

Even in death, young men would wear that smile.

Because, at that time, it never crossed the minds of the young that they could die.

The youth simply pressed on towards their goals.

Shaw Harold was different.

The Baron had contemplated his own death.

Yet, he still chose to face it.

"Honor is my life!"

With a resolute cry, the frost in the heavens turned into a torrential downpour.

In that downpour, Shaw charged skyward.

He faced his death, his heart 'distorted' to the utmost, leaving only his desire for 'honor' intact.

He would cleanse his sins through his death.

He would secure a glimmer of hope for the Harold Family through his death.

He would ensure his servant Titon lived well, through his death.

He glanced back one last time at his servant.

He spoke softly—

"The child's name is Cosette!

Cosette Harold!

She is in your care!"

Having said that, Shaw's body exploded, and his flesh merged into the downpour.

In an instant, the rain transformed into a mighty river.

The river fell from the sky with a thunderous roar.

There was a bridge over the river, a stone bridge.

Standing on that bridge was...

Shaw!

The Shaw who had just burst apart stood on the bridge in the form of his soul.

He looked down at the turbulent water without hesitation and leapt.

Boom!

The earth-shaking boom made everything disappear.

The downpour, the river, the stone bridge, and Shaw.

All vanished into nothingness.

Only the Blood Descendants, who had avoided the lethal blow with the speed of the 'Blood Bat,' remained.

"Did you foresee all of this as well?"

The Blood Descendants asked Lady Glast breathlessly.

"No."

"Shaw's last-moment realization has nothing to do with me—don't treat me like your partner. His 'Peering into the Future' comes from his Bloodline and Talent.

And I simply chose to follow Destiny."

Lady Glast said this, then stepped in front of Titon, directly confronting the 'Blood Descendant'.

"Now, you're wounded.

And I'm wounded, too.

We can fight fairly now!"

Lady Glast looked at the 'Blood Descendant' and said.

"Fair? There's no such thing as fairness in this world!

Not for me, not for you, and not for the guy who just died."

The 'Blood Descendant' scoffed.

However, in the next moment, the 'Blood Descendant' had the 'Blood Bat' elevate its form.

"I don't believe in fairness!

But my upbringing doesn't allow me to strike a wounded woman!

I'll wait until you've healed your injuries!

Then, I will get the answers I want and kill you!

Before that?

You peeping bastards really deserve to die!"

The 'Blood Descendant' said, looking back, his crimson gaze freezing the hiding Peeping Toms in terror, especially when the 'Blood Bat's ultrasonic breath directly covered an area, causing dozens of 'Peeping Toms' to bleed from seven orifices and fall down breathless; the remaining 'Peeping Toms' immediately scattered like birds and beasts.

Eli, who had retreated early, gave his boss a big thumbs up.

"Boss, how did you know the 'Blood Descendant' would strike the 'Peeping Toms' around us?"

"Heh, it's just the ridiculous Noble Honor.

As a 'Descendant of the Bloodline Clan', that guy's pride is unmatched. Facing the honor Baron Harold defended with his life, he would certainly try to 'preserve' it.

Just noble tricks."

Walsh couldn't help but snort before the 'Bandage Swordsman' could speak.

"It seems that His Excellency the 'Blood Descendant' is a good man."

Lindster said this as they ran.

"Good man? Nobles are all the same; they don't care about the death of others, even if you witness their dying moments, don't think they are noble.

It's all an act!"

As the newcomer to 'Pale Hand', Walsh clearly didn't trust the Nobles.

Lindster stayed sensible and didn't say more but instead looked at Eli.

It was Eli who said this place was safe, a temporary haven where they could recuperate from their injuries, but now it was obviously not realistic with the terrifying Lady Glast known to them.

Eli, closely watched by the arena Doctor, felt a bit awkward.

This part-time Intelligence Trafficker had not anticipated such events unfolding.

Previously, Harold Manor had been very safe.

He had left quite a few things inside to serve as a temporary stronghold.

Therefore, he had come here quickly, choosing this place as a sanctuary for recuperation.

The embarrassed Eli looked at the 'Bandage Swordsman'.

"Let's find a place up ahead to construct a temporary Shelter."

The 'Bandage Swordsman' said this and quickened his pace.

Eli immediately sped up to follow.

Walsh, in turn, grabbed Lindster and started to hasten as well.

The four of them ran.

But the remaining 'Peeping Toms' were miserable.

Especially those with malice; not a single one could escape the 'Blood Descendant's' pursuit.

The commotion moved into the distance.

Harold Manor became quiet once again.

Lady Glast silently walked towards the main building of the manor, with Titon following like a walking corpse.

His Lordship was dead.

The butler seemed like his life had also entirely lost its color.

If not for His Lordship's command, the butler would have chosen to commit suicide right then, to follow his His Lordship in death.

Command?

The children of His Lordship!

The young His Lordship!

As if in a trance, the butler thought of Baron Harold's command, and his eyes suddenly brightened; his whole being seemed to come to life, and without thinking, he prepared to rush into the secret chamber.

But just at that moment, he heard the lady's soft words—

"Don't be impulsive, close the door."

Titon hesitated for a moment but still chose to trust Lady Glast's words.

And as the butler closed the door and turned around, he suddenly realized that Lady Glast had already collapsed on the floor.

"You..."

"Keep your voice down, don't let anyone notice."

Lady Glast stopped Titon's startled cry, took off her helmet to reveal a pale face as if a corpse's, and then spoke in a low voice—

"So, this is the 'Spirit Medium' of South Los? The fearsome Arthur Kredos!"

Chapter 523: No Youthful Days!

Terrible "Distortion"!

"Is this The Theofact Psychic Cult?"

Arthur's expression was grave.

Using the identity of Glast to take over the additional spoils of war that belonged to him at the Glast outpost was a decision Arthur made after conducting "Bone Divination" and "Soul Tailoring" on Glast and confirming the approximate location.

Of course, given Arthur's character, he wouldn't recklessly barge into Harold Manor.

Even after confirming that the mill depicted in the "Bone Divination" was inside Harold Manor, and that the hill was next to Harold Manor.

Even if he could prove right away that Harold Manor was indeed the destination for "Carmen's Leap," Arthur would not act immediately.

Because the information obtained from Glast's tailored soul was incomplete.

Arthur could only know the outline.

But could not know the attitude of the estate owner, Baron Harold.

Or more precisely, the relationship between Glast and the other party.

Was it a superior-subordinate relationship?

Or partners?

Or some other unknown relationship?

Arthur couldn't be sure.

Therefore, Arthur set up a stage to act out a scene for the other party, to test the true nature of their relationship.

What Arthur hadn't anticipated was witnessing such a scene—

With the clear vision from wearing the "Blood Descendants" vest, the transformation of Baron Harold was fully within Arthur's view!

The change from being aged to youthful, although surprising, wasn't unexpected because it was the result of burning life as the price.

But the "Distortion" in personality was extremely unexpected for Arthur.

Aside from during childhood, a person's personality is generally set by the time they reach Baron Harold's age.

Under such circumstances, the capability to still "Distort" was utterly chilling for Arthur.

It had been said, "When your memories change, you are no longer yourself."

But in Arthur's view, when your personality changes, that's when you truly are no longer yourself.

After all...

Memories can deceive you.

But personality does not.

Thinking about his own personality being "Distorted" into someone reckless and impulsive made Arthur, who customarily stayed hidden until absolutely sure of the situation, extremely restless.

Once, a rare friend of Arthur's, that chubby fellow, commented on Arthur's personality—

"Life is too short, so short that you can't cover all bases.

It's like when we were children, playing games on the computer, it would lag, but by the time you finally got a good computer that wouldn't lag, we ourselves began to falter.

You think you're prepared, but actually, you lose the final joy.

So...

You're really not likable this way!

But, I don't mind!"

As that chubby fellow spoke these attention-grabbing words, he plucked a Changbai Mountain cigarette from his pocket, hurriedly sat down in the gaming chair before him, and deftly turned on his expensive custom-built computer to log onto 4399.

That afternoon turned into a competition over small games between the two.

After the games were over, the cigarette smoked, and the midnight snack eaten, the chubby fellow patted his mouth as he stood up to go home, then he remembered that he originally wanted to play Old Man's Ring.

And inviting that fat man over was purely to show off his skills—his severely inflamed tendons in his right hand ensured that Arthur was confident in completely defeating him.

But why had it turned out like this?

Arthur still didn't understand.

But one thing Arthur knew for certain, he absolutely did not want to be "Distorted."

Since he didn't want that, it must be controlled!

Arthur's eyes narrowed slightly, a deep glow flickering within his pupils.

Perhaps the process of "Distortion" might be long and complex, filled with many opportunities for defense and resistance, but what if?

Arthur would never bet on that uncertainty.

Especially after witnessing the end of Baron Harold, he would bet even less.

Because, even if it was doomed to fail, in the final moment, he would face death as his true self, not in the false brilliance imposed by others.

Controlled by others?

What a joke.

Lives cannot be determined.

"Death, is it still uncertain?"

Between life and death, this period had already offered countless opportunities to determine how one should die.

Arthur claimed that what he needed was to seize the opportunity.

Just like now—

"Pan, listen to Dad, never give up at any time, even if the next moment seems like your death, never give up, because if you do, the next moment you really would die.

Of course, death isn't always terrible.

What's terrible is living in a state worse than death.

But, you don't have to worry, because..."

Arthur pulled Pendragon into his embrace, prolonged his tone, and as confusion danced across Pendragon's feline face, he continued, "because you have nine lives!

Discarding one or two of those lives is also permissible.

You are very much like your dad in this regard.

After all..."

Speaking thus, Arthur's speech halted, but he revealed a smile that Pendragon couldn't quite understand.

Some secrets are never told.

Whew!

Arthur exhaled, discarding thoughts such as 'I myself lost a life, but I came back to life, proving that I have a bond with cats, and that might be why I became 'the contemporary Black Cat', maybe I'm a reincarnated cat' from his mind.

Then, as Arthur stuffed a baked cookie into his mouth and took a sip from a cup of sugary hot cocoa, his vision switched back to Harold Manor—

"Are you all right?"

Titon asked anxiously.

He didn't know the origins of the lady in front of him, but since His Lordship trusted her, then he felt he could trust her too.

Moreover, she was going to be the young lord's teacher.

Glast shook her head, her pale face marked with an indescribable solemnity.

Then, the lady slowly stood up.

"Let's go, let's see what Harold left behind.

If possible...

I really don't want to leave this place,"

Glast said.

Titon immediately puzzled.

Seeing the bewildered Titon, Glast smiled.

"You don't think we're safe now, do you?"

Although that person cleared out a bunch of people, the real trouble hasn't shown up yet!

They are greedier than jackals and more venomous than snakes!"

Titon fell silent.

The butler knew that what Glast spoke was the truth.

Those coveting the Harold Family were definitely not just the Peeping Toms.

Or rather, those Peeping Toms couldn't even be considered Scouts.

Then who were the real coveters?

The nobles of South Los!

Especially Baron Korol and Baron Hausman, whose families were in their prime and certainly would not mind adding another baron to their ranks.

Lord Ernest, Lord Dibwa, and Lord Bass also definitely wouldn't mind elevating their own titles.

Even if it was just a title.

Because with that title, some affairs would become easier, would become justified.

They had not acted previously because His Lordship was still alive, and there had been no excuse.

Now that His Lordship was dead, they surely couldn't hold back.

They would even harm the young master!

Thinking of this, the butler could only become all the more solemn.

'Earl of South Los...'

The butler thought of the master of South Los but hesitated; Baron Korol, Baron Hausman, and Lords Ernest, Dibwa, and Bass harbored ill intentions, but would the Earl of South Los truly sincerely help the Harold Family?

Hearing certain hidden matters made Titon sigh.

At the same time, he silently prayed—

'His Lordship, you must have left some trump cards behind!'

Chapter 524 Cosette.Harold!

The secret room of Harold Manor was also inside the master's study of the main building.

In fact, most nobles were quite happy to place secret rooms in places like studies.

Because of privacy!

Compared to bedrooms frequented by many ladies, the master's study was the most private place in a noble's estate, where even the personal butler needed explicit permission to enter, aside from the estate owner.

As for security?

The very existence of the study's secret room, open and aboveboard, was enough to prove its security.

Newer noble families like the Lisop Family might still use mechanical machinery, but for a truly flourishing family like the Harold Family, secret techniques in machinery were standard.

Moreover, some places would use unique secret techniques.

Thus, even though many thieves knew where the most valuable things in the entire estate were, they dared not try their luck lightly.

After all, one only had one life.

Of course, the most important thing was that everyone was waiting for others to take the lead.

No one wanted their own death to benefit someone else.

Arthur understood this deeply.

The very reason his earth tutor friends had changed the rule from "father down to the grave, son on top" to "son down to the grave, father on top" was because a father and son had found an Old Seed Buddha Statue in a grave; the son buried his own father and monopolized the two-foot-tall statue.

Even fathers and sons were like this.

Let alone strangers.

As for the son who got the Old Seed Buddha Statue?

He was shot dead with random gunfire beyond the border.

Did he really think that without his father's contacts, sentiments, and experience, he could still have a smooth sailing?

The people who reaped the benefits were those who killed without blinking an eye.

Every time he saw the Old Seed Buddha Statue in the living room, Arthur reminded himself to be cautious.

But at the moment, there was no need for caution.

Right now, it was the master's butler leading the way—

The mechanism that opened it was located on the bookshelf.

But the subsequent Glyphic Language was the key point.

Lady Glast did not avoid it.

Titon also pretended not to notice.

The Harold Family had reached such a state that it was not the time to fret over such matters.

Right now, the most important thing was the young master!

Thinking this, Titon hastened his speech.

About four or five seconds later, a passage big enough for one person opened on the bookshelf of the study.

It was still Titon in front, Lady Glast following.

There were candlesticks at the entrance corridor, and Titon picked up a candlestick to light the candles on it.

The candlelight illuminated the path ahead.

First, it went straight about 5 meters, then there was a spiral staircase descending.

After a depth of about 30 meters, there was another door.

A wooden door wrapped with metal, thick and solid.

Creak!

Titon pushed forcefully, and the wooden door slowly opened.

In his mouth, Titon silently counted—

"1, 2, 3!"

When he reached 3, Titon stopped pushing the door and instead squeezed through the door crack, turning off the three crossbow arrow mechanisms located behind the door.

"Originally, there was a gargoyle guarding this place, but the Harold Family's finances could not sustain its operation, and it was sold to Baron Kemir 20 years ago."

The embarrassment that appeared on Titon's face as he saw Lady Glast looking at the three crossbow arrow mechanisms.

In the eyes of this butler, being seen by outsiders as the Harold Family being in such a dire situation was still a matter of great shame.

Lady Glast, however, did not mind.

"At least, the Harold Family is still here."

Before, the two gargoyles of Kemir Manor had left an impressive mark, but Kemir Manor had already become Caesar Manor.

What good were two gargoyles?

It wasn't theirs anymore.

The words of Lady Glast greatly increased Titon's favorable impression.

This old butler, with a strong sense of self-esteem and family honor, bowed slightly to Lady Glast before continuing downward—below a spot on the floor, there was another secret passage.

After descending another 10 meters, the two finally reached their true destination.

A secret chamber as large as three basketball courts.

At that moment, the chamber contained nothing but a huge glass vessel in the center and books and various materials scattered everywhere.

The books were haphazardly placed on desks and shelves.

Some were simply thrown on the floor.

One could see the impatience of Baron Harold when he was flipping through the books.

The materials were much better organized, still sorted into categories.

Clearly, even in his impatience, Baron Harold had not lost his sanity and left dangerous materials exposed.

To Lady Glast's surprise—

Inside the material cabinet, there was a 'Fire Lizard's Pouch.'

This was the necessary base ingredient for studying "Abdel's Pyrokinesis."

Arthur had not learned the technique after receiving the secret from Marinda because the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch' was difficult to find.

He hadn't expected to find it here.

Lady Glast noted this in her mind, but her gaze swept past it and finally rested on the cylindrical glass vessel that extended from the floor to the ceiling.

This glass vessel required five adults to embrace it.

Inside, it was filled with a faint blue-green liquid.

A baby floated within it.

The baby had already grown eyelashes, and upon sensing someone watching it, it shyly turned away, but after a while, turned back and put its hand in its mouth, appearing curious.

"Miss Cosette!"

Titon knelt on one knee before the incubator, his eyes shimmering with tears.

This was the only descendant of His Lordship!

This was the hope of the Harold family!

This was the future of the Harold family!

"I swear by my life and soul that I will guard the lady before me for life, never betray, never forsake, my life hereafter shall be lived for you!"

Titon whispered his oath.

A flash of light, such an oath, was certified by a contract.

Sensing this touch of "spirituality," Cosette Harold inside the incubator reached out her palm, placing it upon the incubator.

As if she were touching Titon.

"Miss!"

A smile flickered across Titon's lips.

Lady Glast then spoke directly.

"Don't be too happy too soon!"

Cosette is only about seven months along, and to be truly born, she still needs more time—during this time, we must ensure the absolute safety of Harold Manor."

Titon's smile stiffened.

Indeed, the miss had yet to be born successfully; they must remain alert.

And the thing before him seemed absolutely immovable.

In fact, even if it were possible to move it, Titon would not do so.

Seven months pregnant was the most dangerous time.

Miss before him was also of seven months' size.

If anything were to go wrong, even death would not be acceptable to him.

But how could they ensure that the miss stayed safe here, undisturbed?

Subconsciously, Titon looked toward Lady Glast.

"Lady Glast, do you have any suggestions?"

"Yes!"

Lady Glast nodded firmly, then spoke word for word—

"You go immediately to No. 2 Cork Street in South Los, pledge allegiance to Arthur Kredos in the name of the Harold Family, and have Cosette Harold recognize Arthur Kredos as her godfather."

Chapter 525: When you lack something, that's when it appears before you!

Glast's words naturally stemmed from Arthur.

Baron Harold had died.

Harold Manor was now masterless.

Just so happened, Arthur thought he needed a manor—since Marinda already had Caesar Manor, why couldn't he have a Kledos Manor?

And he wasn't seizing it by force!

Think of it as Miss Cosette Harold's protection money to him.

The worst-case scenario, he could return it to her when Miss Cosette Harold came of age.

I, Arthur, do not borrow Jingzhou.

Besides, it was manpower!

Harold Manor, empty and desolate, required a large number of hands, and it just so happened that Arthur would soon have a large number of people—aside from those from 'Miss Qiu's Security Company', 'Mr. Wu's Exchange', and the fleet.

Moreover, as time flowed, his manpower would inevitably grow more and more numerous.

At that time, it would be exceedingly conspicuous.

Therefore, relocating them to Harold Manor would be for the best.

With such a vast manor, placing three to five hundred people was no problem at all.

You say nurturing Death Warriors?

Who can prove that everyone in this manor is a Death Warrior?

They are just the Kledos Family's loyal and devoted servants.

As for weapon manufacture?

Who said that a weapons factory would be set up right here?

Pure slander!

It's just that Kledos Manor, in defense against rampant thieves, has established a couple of small weapon workshops.

Only capable of making things like bullets, firearms, and the like.

Large cannons?

Those were purchased through 'Mr. Wu's Exchange', we have the transaction certificates.

'Mr. Wu's Exchange' is a legal merchant association that pays taxes on time.

Arthur kept refining his 'Shadow Earl' plan.

As for Titon's refusal?

Out of the question.

This steward was certainly a smart man.

Indeed, it was so.

Upon hearing Glast's initial words, the steward's instinct was to decline, but before he could utter a word, he thought of Baron Korol, Baron Hausman, Lord Ernest, Lord Dibwa, and Lord Bass.

Then, the steward thought of the Earl of South Los.

His heart sunk uncontrollably.

Only at that moment, the steward had a sudden realization.

Compared to these wolfish fellows, Arthur Kredos actually seemed like a decent choice.

He was powerful, with a good reputation.

Most importantly, he had noble status.

Even as a knight, he was still a noble.

But this loyal steward still had doubts—

"Are you sure you won't be inviting the wolf into the house?"

As he spoke, the old steward looked at Glast, his eyes unblinking and intent.

"You worry that Kredos might covet something from the Harold Family?"

Is it this dilapidated manor?

Or perhaps the Harold Family's title?"

Glast showed a scornful smile.

"The Kledos Family is far richer than you can imagine.

And his lover, the Lady of the Long Night, her wealth is even relied upon by the Countess of South Los.

As for the title?

The Old Lion of Inner Bay has already announced that this edition's 'South County Swordsmanship Competition' Champion will be awarded a title and lands. Do you suppose, with Kledos' 'entry-level' skill, he could become the Champion?"

Titon was silent.

As the steward of the Harold Family, even though it had already declined by the time of his birth, the Harold Family had once been glorious.

Such glory was recorded!

Those books let Titon understand what an 'Entrant' signified.

It was just that Arthur Kredos was born more than thirty years too late.

If he had been around during the 'Seven Years' War', with Arthur Kredos' strength as an 'Entrant', he could have immediately taken control of a large army, and with the Kledos Family's foundation, he would have been a local lord, and maybe even South Los would have changed hands. With a bit of luck, Inner Bay wasn't out of the question either.

Would such a person covet the declining Harold Family?

No.

Impossible.

However, this butler still had the slightest doubt—

"Madam, your relationship with Lord Kledos?"

Although the butler did not understand the whole story, he knew there was a rift between the lady standing before him and that Arthur Kredos, Lord Kledos.

If the Harold Family sided with the Kledos Family, what would become of this lady?

"Why do you think I am still alive?"

Glast retorted, a bitter expression surfacing on her pale face.

Seeing this bitterness, the butler immediately understood.

Did she choose to side with them, just to survive?!

To raise her status in the eyes of Lord Kledos, she tied herself and the Harold Family together!

So that was it!

The butler let out a long sigh of relief.

That sliver of doubt completely dissipated.

"I'm on my way now!"

Please look after Miss Cosette!"

"I, Glast, swear by my name that I will take good care of Miss Cosette!"

With such assurance, the butler turned and walked away.

Glast then approached the incubator.

"Cosette, huh?"

What a nice name.

Your luck isn't too bad, much like mine.

However, luck can't accompany us for a lifetime, so Cosette, you must seek shelter under the wings of Arthur Kredos.

You must treat him as you would your own father.

Only by doing so can you find protection, learn knowledge.

Only then can you grow up safely.

Your destiny, only with Arthur Kredos's intervention, might there be a chance for a reversal."

Having said this, Glast also left the secret room.

This secret room was not the one she was searching for.

Meanwhile, inside the incubator, Cosette had a scrunched up little face.

Still growing, still developing, not even resembling a true infant yet, Cosette faced Glast's words with full confusion and a lack of understanding.

The unique upbringing allowed Cosette to perceive beyond the ordinary.

This little miss could sense Glast meant no harm.

But a reversal of destiny?

Was my original destiny not good enough?

Cosette stared at Glast's departing figure.

The little lady fell into deep contemplation.

And such contemplation soon brought overwhelming fatigue to Cosette, who had not yet truly become an infant.

Before long, the little miss succumbed to sleep.

And when Glast returned to the study, Arthur, who was sitting in the Spirit Medium Parlor, corner of his mouth curled up, revealing a smile.

If you're going to act, act out the full play.

Otherwise, it's not worth acting at all.

This is the motto of the Kledos Family!

As for deceiving a child?

Cosette Harold is no child!

Besides, Cosette Harold appears exceptional, and such a useful pawn must be nurtured from a young age—who knows what great surprises may await him?

Arthur thought to himself as he began instructing Glast to search for the mill where the Bone Divination took place.

It wasn't in the master study's secret room.

Then, it's highly likely to be at that mill, Glast's former stronghold.

Indeed, it was so.

Glast discovered a secret passage beneath the millstone.

Carefully entering, and sloping downwards, a secret chamber no less substantial than the one in the Harold study appeared before her eyes.

But when Arthur saw the arrangement inside, he was startled—

"What is this?!"

Chapter 526: He Lacks Respect, then Give Him Respect. Up

Beneath the mill, in a secret chamber, was an extraordinarily large ritual site. From Glast's perspective, even the shortest side of the ceremonial track was 30 meters.

This type of ceremonial track filled the secret chamber under the mill, connecting various materials to form a ceremonial site that would shock anyone.

Including Arthur.

What the ritual was, Arthur did not yet know.

But those materials on the ritual site, glowing with unique spirituality, told Arthur it was anything but simple—the young 'Spirit Medium' held a hot cocoa with milk and sugar, his eyes slightly narrowed.

Arthur had speculated more than once about what might be found at Glast's temporary stronghold.

However, the scene before him was still a surprise.

'I must see it for myself.'

Arthur thought to himself.

Although he could make use of Glast's vision, some things still required seeing with his own eyes.

When Glast entered the secret chamber beneath the mill, Arthur had already made such preparations out of caution.

So Arthur waited quietly.

Waiting for the visit from Steward Titon.

Of course, the necessary preparations were also essential.

"Ms. Anna, please."

Arthur turned towards Ms. Anna.

"Okay."

In her gentle voice, Ms. Anna floated up and flew straight out.

Titon, riding the only old horse in manor, traveled through the night to South Los.

On the journey, the steward considered many explanations.

In the end, he chose to be straightforward and honest.

Because the Harold Manor had long run out of any bargaining chips.

Instead of flattering and potentially causing annoyance, it was better to be frank.

As for deceiving the 'Spirit Medium' with flattery?

The steward was not so naive.

Seeing South Los approaching, Titon dismounted from his horse.

It wasn't that he didn't want to continue riding, but the old horse beneath him had reached its limit—in fact, if this old horse hadn't consumed some of the Harold Family's secret medicine at birth, it would have already collapsed, given that Harold Manor and South Los were not close.

But even with secret medicine taken at birth, the old horse was nearly at the end of its strength under the strain of the long trek, something Titon, who took care of the horse daily, was well aware of.

"We're almost there."

Titon gently stroked the old horse's mane, and the extremely intelligent animal nuzzled Titon's cheek in response, man and horse walking side by side.

As they were about to reach South Los, Titon and the old horse immediately stopped in their tracks.

Because—

A troop of 25 cavalry stood silently by the side of the road.

The leader was a white-templed man whose face appeared old, but whose body was extremely robust, so much so that even his leather armor seemed tightly stretched.

Behind the man, 24 solemn cavalymen stood in two rows, silent and staring straight ahead.

'Elite!'

Upon seeing this cavalry, Titon made his judgment instantly.

During the Harold Family's heyday, there was a similar cavalry serving as His Lordship's guard, but they were exhausted during the Seven Years' War.

Afterward?

There were attempts to train another such troop.

Unfortunately...

There was no money!

Warhorses, armor, weapons, manpower.

Each one required piles of gold coins.

And the current state of Harold Manor did not allow for such expenditures.

Envy flickered in Titon's eyes.

Then, the steward led the old horse aside.

This old steward planned to bypass this cavalry to enter South Los—he was certain that this cavalry was there to welcome some important personage.

The red tassels hanging on the long spears had already indicated that this was an escort-like troop.

As the old steward speculated about which notable person it might be, the leading cavalryman suddenly spoke up—

"Is this Steward Titon?"

Titon was taken aback and almost subconsciously nodded in response.

"It's me, everyone..."

"The Kledos Family, welcome the arrival of Miss Cosette's guardian."

Without waiting for the steward to finish, leader Edwin spoke directly.

And when his words fell, the cavalry behind him sprang into action, 24 cavalymen appeared in unison behind Titon—

Smack! Smack, smack!

They rhythmically raised their hands to tap on their breastplates.

This was a ceremonial gesture.

A ritual exclusive to the nobility.

Meant to welcome honored guests.

Titon looked back in astonishment, then at Edwin who had come to his side, and the entire being of the old butler was stunned.

He had heard the words just now.

He certainly knew that these were the people of the Kledos Family.

Only...

Such a grand reception, he was not deserving of it.

He was just a butler.

And what was happening before him was a reception ceremony otherwise reserved for true nobles.

"You are Miss Cosette's guardian.

You are also a loyal retainer of the Harold Family.

Your loyalty, your belief in honor, you deserve such reception," Edwin said with a solemn face.

Then, this coachman dismounted, led his horse over to Titon, and said with a stern look—

"Please get on the horse."

At this moment, Titon nearly cried.

The butler had dreamed of this scene countless times.

He dreamed of charging into battle for the Harold Family, and after a triumphant return, receiving a hero's welcome.

But the decline of the Harold Family meant such a scene could only happen in dreams.

And as time passed, the butler dared not even dream it anymore.

All he thought about was how to sustain the Harold Manor.

But now...

His dream had actually come true.

The butler forcibly restrained his excitement, but tears began to glisten at the corners of his eyes.

"Thank you.

The Harold Family has its own battle horse."

With a voice slightly choked, Titon turned to look at his old horse.

The intelligent old horse let out a neigh.

Titon then swung himself onto the horse.

The old horse stepped forward with pride, walking with a unique cadence.

In this moment, no one could tell that the horse was already of the age to retire from service.

Edwin, puzzled, gave the horse a quick look.

As Marinda's coachman, he quickly noticed something different about this old horse.

At this age, normal horses could not tread so lightly bearing a person, let alone stand up, unless they had exceptional talent.

'Secret Medicine?'

Edwin thought to himself, while his eyes turned to one side.

In the shadows stood Ms. Anna, with her hands hanging by her sides.

When she caught Edwin's gaze, she nodded slightly.

Arthur had entrusted everything to her.

And she certainly needed to handle it well.

Seeing Ms. Anna's nod, Edwin sighed in relief— he was still shaken from the thought of this lady suddenly appearing at his bedside, initially fearing he had been cursed or encountered something 'bizarre'.

Fortunately, it was only a simple task of reception.

Moreover, it had won Ms. Anna's approval.

Edwin then concentrated fully on escorting Titon to No. 2 Cork Street.

And Titon, who walked at the front of the group, finally had the chance to secretly wipe the tears from his eyes.

Chapter 527 He Lacks Respect, Give Him Respect. Next

Edwin escorted Titon to the corner of Cork Street, then, gesturing with a bow to Titon once again—

"Butler Titon, it has been my honour to greet and escort you.

From here on, Ms. Anna will lead you forward.

I hope we meet again."

With that, Edwin tapped his chest once again.

A simple knight's salute.

The twenty-four cavalymen behind him did the same.

Snap!

The crisp sound echoed at the street corner, and Titon, with a solemn expression, responded with a knight's salute as well.

"To have made the acquaintance of you and your men is my honour.

If possible, I invite you to visit Harold Manor in your spare time.

I will make every effort to host you all."

Titon answered earnestly.

He held a considerable regard for these cavalrymen.

Not just because they enabled him to live out a sort of triumphant dream, but also because he saw hope in these cavalrymen.

The hope for the continuation and prosperity of Harold Manor.

Otherwise, he wouldn't dare to invite these cavalrymen to the manor as guests.

With the manor's economic situation, they couldn't even afford to host these cavalrymen.

Just the cost of feed for these war horses would require selling all the furniture in the remaining two guest rooms upstairs, and that furniture was intended to cover the manor's expenses for the next year and the year after.

"Of course!"

Edwin nodded, flashing a smile.

He then turned and left with his troop of cavalry.

Titon watched Edwin and his cavalry gradually disappear into the distance, waiting until their figures were completely out of sight before turning to walk toward Cork Street, leading his horse by the reins.

And then—

The butler's left hand gripping the reins clenched tight, while his right hand firmly grasped the sword hilt.

He had seen Ms. Anna.

In the night before dawn, a terrifying puppet hovered between shadows and darkness.

As the gloomy light interweaved, the already chilling visage was enough to make anyone scream in terror.

In fact, that's what happened.

If Titon hadn't confirmed the location of No. 2 Cork Street earlier, the butler would have cried out right then and there.

"Ms. Anna?"

Titon inquired tentatively.

Regrettably, the butler wasn't entirely certain of Ms. Anna's identity, even though Ms. Anna had 'long hair' and was wearing a 'dress'.

"It is I, Butler Titon."

Ms. Anna nodded, and her gentle voice effectively soothed the butler's tense emotions.

But he was soon overwhelmed with surprise.

'An arcane puppet butler?

Arcane Puppet?'

Titon had heard of something similar from his father.

At the dawn of the Silver Age, some of the great nobles had arcane puppets to serve as family butlers.

Not only to highlight their family's uniqueness but also because of the reliability of the arcane puppets.

However, the expensive maintenance costs of the arcane puppets eventually led those great nobles to place them into their family vaults under various pretenses.

'So this is an arcane puppet?

No!

The arcane puppets my father spoke of were never as lifelike as the one before me now.

It's just like a real person!

Surely, it must be a masterpiece among arcane puppets!

Perhaps only the Old Lion of Inner Bay and the Earl of South Los have such puppets in their treasuries!

The Kledos Family is not an ordinary noble family!

They are the venerable nobility of a century!

Titon thought to himself.

Ms. Anna's words continued.

"Apologies for the humble abode, your horse can only wait in the courtyard."

Ms. Anna ignored the offense in Titon's eyes, and she, floating mid-air, simply raised her hand slightly.

Immediately, the Death Serpent Banyan extended a root from the ground to serve as a hitching post.

Titon and the old horse were startled.

Both retreated repeatedly.

Titon was particularly shocked by the scene before him.

The appearance of the Death Serpent Banyan's root had truly exceeded his expectations.

Almost subconsciously, the butler looked up at the banyan tree, 15 or 16 meters tall, whose crown completely covered the entire courtyard and the courtyards on both sides.

The butler had not anticipated that this was a tree of secret techniques.

Legend has it that, in the courtyards of the great nobles during the Imperial Age, there would always be such a tree.

It was both a symbol of the family's power and the family's last line of defense.

But as time passed, these trees, named 'war,' disappeared and were only mentioned in certain books and by special groups of people.

As for where they went?

Nobody knew.

Titon had not expected to see a 'War Tree' in the courtyard of the Kledos Family.

Without hesitation, entirely subconsciously, Titon pushed the history of the Kledos Family back even further—

'Millennial nobility!

To think they are millennial nobility!'

He exclaimed uncontrollably in his heart.

Almost immediately, Titon, who was already respectful, became even more humble.

Even the butler himself did not realize that at this moment, he was bending over without being aware of it.

And this?

This was exactly what Arthur wanted.

Using Fujin's perspective, Arthur watched all of this from beginning to end.

He knew what he wanted.

But he knew even more what Titon wanted.

Therefore, before obtaining what he was entitled to, he would provide Titon with what he desired.

Because only then could he get what he wanted himself.

And to make the plan go a bit smoother,

he once again reluctantly showcased the depth that befits the Kledos Family's status as a millennial family.

Of course, the so-called millennial family was only a current stage.

Once he learned more about the 'Golden Age,' the Kledos Family would easily rise to be a 'Golden Family.'

For now, he still had to endure.

And Arthur's patience had already reached the limit in Titon's understanding.

When they passed through the corridor and came to the Spirit Medium Parlor, the butler kneeled on one knee without hesitation—

"Titon of the Harold Family pays respects to Lord Arthur Kledos."

After speaking, the butler bowed his head again.

It was one of the most solemn etiquettes among the nobles.

It was generally a ritual only performed by vassals paying homage to their lords.

Under normal circumstances, Titon would never do this.

But as his assessment of the Kledos Family skyrocketed, and the phrase 'guardian of Miss Cosette' made it clear to the butler what he needed to do.

A millennium of family history was enough to demonstrate their depth.

The ability to foresee was one proof of that depth.

Faced with such an entity, the Harold Family could be called vassals as a form of honor.

Even, if it weren't for Edwin addressing 'Cosette' as 'Miss Cosette,' the butler wouldn't dare to do so.

Clearly, Lord Arthur Kledos, who knew everything, was genuinely interested in becoming Miss Cosette's godfather.

At this thought, the butler was tremendously excited.

The butler could already foresee the Harold Family's resurgence.

With this in mind, the butler did not hesitate and went straight to the point—

"Lord Arthur Kledos, please accept the Harold Family's loyalty. The Harold Family is willing to present the Harold Manor as a testament."

Chapter 528: The Time of the New King!

Nobles of the East Coast not only emphasized prosperity and meticulousness but also pursued decency.

To obtain something out of mere words was a merchant's behavior, despised by all nobles.

Just like Titon.

Having been treated courteously by the Kledos Family and upon learning that it was a 'Millennial Family,' Titon's heart had already undergone tremendous change.

Especially the latter, which even made the butler harbour thoughts of reaching beyond his station.

In the face of such aspirations, the Harold Family naturally had to make a gesture.

According to the rules among the nobility of South County, seeking such patronage required at least a third of one's estate or more to establish a corresponding cooperation.

But a third of the Harold Family's estate...

That must be a joke.

Titon didn't want Lord Kledos before him to mistakenly think that the Harold Family was insulting the Kledos Family.

The Harold Family was simply too poor.

So poor that even offering the Harold Manor to the current lord was far from enough.

Indeed, the Harold Family had only the Harold Manor left.

Thus, when he spoke these words, the kneeling butler of the Harold Family did so with a trepidatious heart.

Seeing Lord Kledos frown as he sat there, the butler inwardly exclaimed—

Done for!

Lord Kledos must think this is an insult!

Immediately, the butler wanted to explain.

Perhaps this would strip the Harold Family of their last shred of dignity, but at this point, he could no longer care about so much.

But before the butler could speak,

Arthur merely raised a hand, and a huge cotton bag made of hemp and linen appeared in his hand.

The sack contained 500 gold coins, the tightened mouth of the bag causing constant friction between the coins.

And that unique friction sound of the gold coins caught the attention of the Harold Family's butler.

"Let's say I'm renting it.

20 years!

When 20 years are over, when Miss Cosette comes of age, that will be when the rental period expires!"

As Arthur said this and raised his hand, the bag of gold coins floated to the floor in front of Titon.

At that moment, the butler was dumbfounded.

The butler didn't understand Arthur's intention.

He had clearly said he would give the manor to the Kledos Family already.

So why did the lord before him say rent,

and indeed, give such a huge amount of money—while this money might be nothing for the Harold Family in its heyday, for the present Harold Family, it truly was a substantial amount.

"My lord, this is what the Harold Family should rightfully give you, you..."

The butler asked, but before he could finish, Arthur interrupted him.

"As my goddaughter, Cosette needs a competent nanny, a personal maid, a reliable guard, and in the near future, a home tutor—and all these require financial support.

We do not value money, we value honor.

But we also need money to maintain the lifestyle we deserve.

Consider this some sentiments from me, as Cosette's godfather,"

Arthur said gently.

Looking at Arthur's gentle face and sincere eyes, Titon could no longer hold back, and tears truly began to flow.

This butler had never seen someone with such a noble demeanor,

and in his heart, following the end of the Seven Years' War, nobles had long lost their former honor and decency, becoming like the rude pirates of the West Coast.

But unexpectedly, in Lord Kledos, the butler once again saw the brilliance of nobility.

'Truly a Millennial Nobility!'

Musing to himself internally, the butler bowed his head once more.

Not out of the fear as before.

But now, out of sheer, heartfelt respect and submission.

"Your compassion and mercy, I and the Harold Family will surely never forget throughout our lives."

The butler said so, kneeling down on both knees, his forehead touching the carpet.

Watching the current state of the Harold Family's butler, the corners of Arthur's mouth slightly curved upward.

Done!

He, Arthur, a gentleman.

How could he possibly seize by clever tactics?

Everything was forcefully given to him by the other party.

Moreover, he had even paid for it.

Rising to his feet, he supported the butler of the Harold Family, Arthur said with a gentle smile—

"May I see my goddaughter Cosette?

You know, when I suddenly felt a trace of Destiny's bond, I was quite curious.

Cosette must be endearing, well-provided for, intelligent, and understanding, and she must possess exceptional Talent."

Faced with such praise, a smile appeared on the butler of the Harold Family's face.

"Of course!

We can leave right now!

If we are fast enough, we can just have breakfast at Harold Manor."

The butler did not refuse Arthur's request.

Although the Harold Family had already pledged loyalty to the Kledos Family, outsiders did not know this.

Therefore, it was necessary to let everyone know this matter.

Only in this way would Harold Manor be safe.

Only in this way would Miss Cosette be safe.

"Your horse?"

Leading an old horse out from No. 2 Cork Street, this butler looked at Arthur, who was walking slowly with a cane, in surprise.

"The Kledos Family, most of the time, do not need a horse for travel."

Arthur said this.

The butler of the Harold Family was full of doubts, but he did not inquire further and instead mounted his horse—he was eager to return to Harold Manor.

On the butler's saddle, however, was a bag containing 500 gold coins.

This bag of money was enough for Cosette to reach adulthood.

And to be quite wealthy at that.

Thinking about his young lady, the butler was momentarily distracted.

When he came to his senses, the butler cursed silently.

He had actually forgotten about Lord Kledos.

The lord did not have a horse for transportation... huh?!

As he thought this, the butler turned to look back.

Then, he immediately widened his eyes.

Because—

Arthur was walking in the air.

The combination of "Hand of Void" and "Silent Successive Steps," which Arthur had been secretly practicing, had become proficient, and now it appeared as effortless as true air walking.

'Lord Kledos can fly!'

The butler of the Harold Family inwardly exclaimed.

Flying, at any time, for anyone, was a kind of soul-stirring excitement.

Especially in South County, flying held an unimaginable status—wasn't the Pirate King capable of becoming the Pirate King because, aside from his strength, he also had the 'White Crow'?

The Pirate King utilized the 'White Crow' to escape from predicaments repeatedly.

Flying put the opponent in an invincible position.

'If Lord Kledos can fly, does it not mean that Lord Kledos is also in an invincible position?'

Thinking this, the butler became excited.

He became even more convinced that leading the Harold Family to pledge allegiance to the Kledos Family was the right thing to do.

And Arthur, walking in the air, naturally attracted the attention of some individuals.

Watching Arthur walk through the air, they all widened their eyes.

Especially a particular stalker of special identity, who could not help but mutter to himself—

"When a lion grows wings, it is the time for the New King to ascend the throne!"

Chapter 529: The Sound of the Monster!

The scout with a special identity murmured to himself and immediately looked around alertly.

After confirming there was no one nearby, and it was impossible for anyone to hear his murmurs, the scout exhaled in relief, and without paying attention to anything else, he turned and slipped into the shadows.

Taking advantage of the cover of shadows, the scout left swiftly.

For this scout, what came next, no matter how important, was not as critical as the information he'd just received!

Murmurs before dawn were meant to go unheard.

But sometimes, it's not just humans that can understand human speech.

There are also...

Crows and dogs!

Kiri crouched in the shadows at one side, watching and listening to everything from beginning to end, standing still with a hint of sagacity shining in his wise eyes.

Wuni glanced at Erha, spread her wings, and flew off into the night, tracking the target.

Meanwhile, Kiri stuck close to the walls, tailing another worthy mark.

With such a significant incident at the Harold Manor, although the "Blood Descendants" had cleared a round, Arthur knew that these stalkers, coveters, and scouts were like locusts, utterly impossible to wipe out.

Moreover, compared to killing, Arthur preferred to extract some information from their mouths.

Just like the scene that had just unfolded—

'When the lion grows wings, it will be the time for the New King to ascend to the throne!

This must be some kind of prophecy!

Extremely important to the Golden Lion Family, otherwise, that scout wouldn't have lost composure like that!

Arthur walked under the night sky, naturally followed by two ravens and two dogs.

In fact, before leaving Cork Street, the two ravens and two dogs had already 'patrolled' the surroundings.

Therefore, Arthur was able to get this message first-hand because the scout was a marked target for the two ravens and two dogs.

How were priority targets determined?

It naturally came down to strength!

Fujin and Wuni, touched by the Death Talent, along with Kuliqi and Kiri, who in a sense embodied death, had an extremely accurate assessment of strength.

Thus, they had targeted two individuals right from the start.

One was the murmurer.

The other was an unknown stalker lurking to the side.

The former, through his murmurs just now, Arthur deduced to be from the Golden Lion Family.

The latter?

Most likely someone from the South Los Family.

After all, besides the entourage of that Earl, Arthur couldn't think of anyone who would lavish an Arcana Level Mystic Side Person as a scout.

Of course, it also reflected how much that Earl valued him.

'A declining Harold Family shouldn't be crossing the line with that Earl.

Moreover, after the three mysterious 'Ascend Steppers' made a brief appearance in South Los, that Earl would definitely not allow any internal strife within South Los.

So, if I accept the Harold Family smoothly, cutting off the ideas of Baron Korol, Baron Hausman, and the Lords Ernest, Dibwa, and Bass, that Earl would most likely breathe a sigh of relief.

Especially with Grandma Susan around, that Earl might even reward me with something.'

As he glided through the air, these thoughts crossed Arthur's mind, and his expression became even more tranquil.

And this tranquility made it even harder for the scouts around to figure out what Arthur intended to do, leaving them no choice but to follow from a distance.

Titon, the butler, paid no attention to these scouts at all.

On his way here, the butler had also noticed these scouts, but he had been in a hurry to see Lord Kledos and didn't have time to bother with them.

And now?

As the butler glanced back at Arthur, who was floating through the air, a deeper sense of security filled his heart.

'With Lord Kledos at our side, we should be absolutely safe in South Los, right?'

The butler thought to himself and patted the old horse again.

The butler wanted to return to Harold Manor quickly.

Although His Lordship trusted that lady, the butler always felt he should stay by Miss's side.

The next moment, the old horse quickened its pace once more.

Arthur cast an imperceptible gaze over the horse.

'Similar to a "Griffin Physique Potion"?'

Arthur never underestimated any noble.

Even if a noble family had fallen into decline, one must understand that they're referred to as such because they once had their days of glory.

In their prime, who knows how much they had... no, collected.

Just like the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch' found in the cabinet at the bottom of the hidden chamber before.

And the old horse before us.

These are all proof of a family's accumulated history.

Not to mention, those books.

In Arthur's view, those books were the most valuable of all.

Of course, there was also the secret chamber beneath the mill.

Arthur had a premonition that he was going to make a great discovery.

However, Arthur was not in a hurry but followed Titon quietly and steadily, displaying the demeanor befitting of a higher-ranking family.

The sunrise was from the east, and the day grew bright.

A quarter hour after sunrise, Titon led Arthur back to Harold Manor.

Lady Glast was right behind the main building's door.

Upon seeing Arthur, the lady bowed deeply with utmost respect.

To this, Titon was not surprised.

With Lady Glast's 'guidance,' Titon had long guessed everything.

"My lord, please follow me."

As the steward of the Harold Family, Titon naturally led the way, while Lady Glast whispered.

"My lord, do those people following us need to be taken care of?"

After a slight pause, Arthur said.

"As long as they don't enter Harold Manor, don't bother with them."

"They really should be thankful for your benevolence."

Lady Glast remarked with a sigh.

Titon also sighed inwardly.

He had personally experienced Arthur's benevolence.

This steward was full of admiration for him.

Only someone like him becoming Miss Cosette's godfather would reassure him.

Arthur's gaze fleetingly swept over Titon.

Seeing the steward visibly relax, Arthur smiled inwardly as well.

Wasn't this exactly what he wanted?

Following Titon, they passed through the secret passage once again, arriving at the underground chamber.

When Arthur saw the vessel holding Cosette with his own eyes, he still felt astonished—if it weren't for the mystic side all around, he might have thought he landed in a world where the technological side was highly advanced.

The incubator before him sparked Arthur's imagination.

However, seeing Cosette, who huddled in the corner, afraid to come closer, Arthur wore a gentle smile, his eyes filled with compassion.

"Your arrival is destined to break some rules.

They, she, them, even It, none wish to see you come.

But I won't, the Kledos Family won't.

Because—

Our family is what these beings refer to as monsters!"

Arthur didn't know how Baron Harold had managed the scene before his eyes, how he cultivated Cosette, but her birth was definitely not via any normal means, and, in fact, by the standards of this world, it must have touched on some prohibitions—and if this had happened during the 'Holy Era' with The Holy Court in charge, Harold and Cosette would have long been burned at the stake.

With such a premise, Arthur certainly knew what to do.

In fact, as Arthur's words ended, Cosette, who shrank in the corner, turned around and quietly observed Arthur.

While Arthur continued to speak with a smile—

"Do you want to let them, her, them, It, experience the terror of a monster?"

Chapter 530: Father and Son, Father and Daughter

The room was still.

Then bubbles began to form in the liquid within the culture vessel.

Gurgling.

Fine bubbles rose up, and Cosette drifted over from the corner. She extended her little hand through the glass, and her eyes, which had been half-open, now fully opened.

Dark blue.

The color was like that of the Undead Fire.

Arthur's lips curled slightly upward. He raised his palm and extended a finger to touch Cosette's little hand through the glass vessel.

Gurgling.

More fine bubbles emerged.

It was only then that Titon, the butler, realized that Miss Cosette was probably laughing.

Viewing this scene, the butler was very consoled.

At least, the miss truly liked Lord Kledos.

As for a monster?

Ah, which truly talented person is not a monster?

That is just slander from those with ordinary talents toward those whose talents are unreachable.

There is no need to pay attention to such people.

As long as they do not provoke the Kledos and Harold Families.

And if they indeed dare to provoke them?

Just as Lord Kledos said, let them feel the terror of a monster!

Titon stood aside with his hands down, not interrupting the 'conversation between father and daughter'

—

"Cosette, if you want to grow up healthy, sleep is essential. From now on, this place will become very safe.

No one will threaten you.

And no strangers will break in here.

So, don't be afraid, just go to sleep."

Arthur comforted Cosette.

Was Cosette inside the culture vessel scared?

Arthur did not sense it.

He guessed it.

The state of Harold Manor, the state of Baron Harold, combining these two, it wasn't hard to guess — the former was dilapidated, the latter distorted.

If one thought about it, Cosette's situation would not be good.

Especially since Cosette exhibited exceptional talent.

Even through the barrier of the culture vessel, Arthur could feel the Spirituality emanating from Cosette, along with intelligence and sensitivity far surpassing 'peers'.

'With my own insufficient talent, I've completely created a 'Clone'.

This 'Clone' possesses everything I desire.

After raising it, I plan to use soul grafting to seize this body.'

The scheme of Baron Harold had completely unfolded in Arthur's mind.

However, there were two points that Baron Harold didn't anticipate.

Distortion!

Glast didn't just plant distortion within him, but also within Cosette.

Simply put, Cosette was originally a boy, but his gender had been distorted to that of a girl.

This explanation made sense to Arthur.

Otherwise...

That would mean Baron Harold had some unspeakable peculiar proclivity.

Gurgling.

Hearing Arthur's words, Cosette in the culture vessel laughed again.

Then, truly closed her eyes and fell asleep.

'She didn't feel my malice.

And could sense my presence.

So, she chose to trust, huh?

Good instinct.'

Arthur assessed, then a heartfelt sigh emerged from the bottom of his heart.

'If every child was as self-aware as Cosette, parents would surely be overjoyed, especially those fathers, who would probably be moved to tears.'

Often, the relationship between father and son is the most complex in the world.

They were masters and servants, enemies, friends, but only when either of them lay in bed would they be father and son.

For this, Arthur was grateful that Cosette was a girl.

After all, a daughter is a father's little padded jacket.

Although he was only a godfather, he too hoped for a cute little padded jacket, not the so-called leather jacket that is expensive yet not warm, and requires meticulous care to avoid cracking.

Arthur thought to himself, maintaining a smile as he turned to look at Titon.

"Titon, I need you to make a trip to South Town.

You should go directly to Little Lisop and borrow 10 guards from him.

Harold Manor needs these guards.

Before Harold Manor cultivates its own reliable guards, these 10 will save us a considerable amount of trouble.

Oh, and the maids, too.

Recruit them as well.

Harold Manor needs a good cleaning.

Even if it's for Cosette."

Arthur said this directly.

The Lisop Family also pledged loyalty to Lord Kledos?

Titon was initially shocked, then felt it was only natural.

After experiencing a series of shocks previously, the threshold for this butler began to rise steadily, and what should have been shocking now seemed only natural.

Of course, the butler, who still had his sense of shame, couldn't help but give a wry smile and nod at Arthur's kindly jest.

"The financial situation at Harold Manor was very tight before, but now you can rest assured, it won't be long before you see a completely renewed Harold Manor."

The butler said with full confidence.

With Lord Kledos as a backup and 500 gold coins as startup capital.

If he couldn't make Harold Manor look brand new, then Titon simply wasn't a qualified butler.

"I look forward to it."

Arthur said these words, waved goodbye to the sleeping Cosette, and then prepared to head to the study on the ground floor; but in the next moment, this young 'Spirit Medium' seemed to accidentally spot the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch' while passing the material cabinet.

"Oh?"

Arthur expressed his surprise aloud.

"What is it, Lord Kledos?"

Titon immediately looked at the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch'.

"It's nothing, just surprised to find a 'Fire Lizard's Pouch' here. When I was told that frying it would be delicious while using Flame Grass to stew Fire Lizard meat,"

Arthur said with a laugh, gesturing as he prepared to move on.

Without any hesitation, Titon took out the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch' and placed it in Arthur's hands.

"Please take it back with you to eat.

The entire manor has been leased by you.

It belongs to you."

Titon spoke earnestly.

In the butler's eyes, Arthur had really just discovered a delicious dish.

As for deception?

Lord Kledos was sincere, he would definitely not deceive anyone.

With a smile, Arthur put away the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch'.

For the 'Fire Lizard's Pouch,' Arthur genuinely needed it.

He needed 'fire' to enrich his arsenal of attacks.

In fact, in Arthur's heart, there was always a special sentiment for fire—not because it might come in handy for making a fire on a wilderness trek!

But rather, he reflected on the necessity of fire in human life.

Not just for light, but for making food edible.

Cooked food was undoubtedly one of the most important steps on the ladder of human progress.

And fire?

Undoubtedly great.

For Miss Cosette's safety and the resurrection of Harold Manor, after Arthur stated he would temporarily stay to help take care of Cosette, Butler Titon set off again, heading straight for South Town.

After Arthur watched the butler disappear,

ensuring no one was around, he headed straight for the mill's secret chamber.

When Arthur entered the secret chamber beneath the mill and saw the huge ritual scene, numerous texts began to appear before his eyes.

After closely examining these texts, Arthur realized—

"So that's it!"