

Circle of Inevitability

Chapter 1021: A Night Passes

[1,767 words]

Jenna had noticed that the jellyfish-like mushroom was already withered and dead, unable to treat An Xiaotian, which was why she asked Ludwig if the mushroom could be eaten.

Of course, she didn't mean for An Xiaotian to eat it. As a vegetative patient, An Xiaotian no longer had the ability to chew and swallow. And grinding the mushroom into powder or juice to provide to An Xiaotian via intravenous drip was an area she didn't understand and couldn't judge whether it would be effective—Demonesses had always only dealt with spreading diseases and plagues, lacking knowledge and abilities in medical treatment.

What Jenna really wanted to ask was whether Ludwig could eat this mushroom, and if after eating it, he could gain the ability to treat vegetative patients.

Ludwig stared at the dried mushroom in his palm, licked his lips and said, "It can be eaten."

He paused for a moment, hesitated for two seconds and added, "But I don't know what can be gained from it."

Even a professional food analyst can't tell the cooking method and effects—this mushroom is indeed very special... Jenna suddenly realized this and quickly said to Ludwig, "Put the mushroom away first.

"Give it to me, I'll put it in the Traveler's Bag."

Ludwig immediately clenched his fist.

He shook his head while stuffing the mushroom into his coat pocket, as if it were a little hamster, his pet.

Jenna didn't have any intention of forcibly taking away the jellyfish-like mushroom. She held Ludwig's hand and quickly walked towards the exit of Mushu Hospital.

Only now did she have the energy to think about what had just happened.

Li Keji's jellyfish-like mushroom actually fell into the hands of that person wrapped in white bandages, and that person even gave the mushroom to us...

Right, Lumian mentioned that after his colleagues Old Wang and Old Ding were struck by lightning, they now have this scary appearance. When he came to visit Mushu Hospital last time, Old Wang seemed to be asking him for help... This time at the entrance of the basement of Mushu Hospital, he encountered Old Ding again...

Was Old Ding hinting at him to pay attention to the 'no entry to unauthorized personnel' sign at that time?

Was it Old Wang or Old Ding who threw down the mushroom just now? If it was Old Ding, it would make sense, as he was there when Li Keji was sent to the basement for 'treatment'...

But if he could stay in the basement for so long, it means he's no longer an unauthorized personnel...

What exactly do the current Old Wang and Old Ding symbolize in the dream city?

Why are they helping us?

I wonder if this dried mushroom is Li Keji's final product...

Amid these thoughts, Jenna took Ludwig back to Room 2303 of Building 5 in Dechuang Garden by taxi. She told Franca about their encounter and asked Ludwig to take out the withered mushroom to show.

Franca gazed at the mushroom, pondered for a moment and said, "My spiritual intuition tells me that this should be the final version of the therapeutic mushroom created by Li Keji, but its specific effects are unknown. Even divination methods won't provide an answer."

This was not only because the treatment subject was An Xiaotian, but also because the mushroom itself was very special.

"Should I eat it now?" Ludwig asked eagerly.

He had an expression that suggested the finest ingredient should be cooked in the simplest way.

Eating it raw!

Franca and Jenna exchanged glances before saying, "Wait until your godfather returns before eating it."

It wasn't that they weren't worried about changes happening to the mushroom in the next dozen or so hours, but the current situation was indeed not suitable for such a stimulating "experiment".

At present, Lumina and Anthony were outside the dream, Lumina had been frightened and needed close monitoring, and Franca herself couldn't withstand major accidents and couldn't attempt anything too risky. So, if Ludwig ate the mushroom now and something unexpected happened, the entire situation might collapse.

"Okay." Ludwig reluctantly stuffed the withered mushroom back into his pocket with some reluctance.

Jenna glanced towards the bedroom direction and asked Franca in a lowered voice, "How is Lumina doing?"

"Being 'inexplicably' arrested by the police, she was definitely shocked, has been somewhat dazed, and a bit overreactive. She only truly fell asleep two minutes before you returned to the dream," Franca answered softly.

She then said to Jenna, "You should go visit An Ruide now and confirm his situation."

After Anthony was kicked out of the dream, Franca had actually been worried about his dream manifestation, An Ruide, but she was really too busy to observe and protect him—in the morning she had to take care of Ludwig and look after Luo Shan, in the afternoon she first went to Mushu Hospital to provide support, then was busy asking Queen Mystic to help bail out Lumina. She didn't even have time to care about Jenna's dream manifestation, let alone An Ruide.

"Alright." Jenna also had these concerns, but she had to prioritize finding the mushroom that Li Keji might have left behind.

Since returning to the dream city, she had been constantly on the move without rest.

...

At Xinhong District, in a rented apartment.

Jenna's figure emerged from a dark corner.

She looked towards the smallest bedroom closer to the kitchen and heard relatively long breaths.

Her spiritual intuition told her that the person sleeping inside was An Ruide.

Jenna relaxed a little and surveyed the situation in the room.

She saw a wine glass on the dining table, a plate with crumbs of salted crispy peanuts, a plate of unfinished cold sliced pork head meat, and a plate with only remnants of mashed potatoes.

This was consistent with An Ruide's cooking level.

Mashed potatoes were a delicacy both inside and outside the dream, while cold sliced pork head meat and salted crispy peanuts could be bought from street vendors outside.

A scene immediately appeared before Jenna's eyes: An Ruide was in a good mood, bought himself a bottle of wine, and had a couple of glasses with peanuts, pork head meat, and mashed potatoes. Afterwards, he was a bit tipsy and decided to clean up the dishes the next day.

He's quite leisurely; An Ruide knows how to enjoy life... Jenna silently marveled.

She then thought, Would An Ruide's character prototype—Anthony—also be like this in private, without the pressure of missions?

At this moment, Jenna felt that Anthony was no longer just the ever-calm Psychiatrist.

While marveling, she didn't let her guard down and quickly checked whether this situation was abnormal and whether the sleeping An Ruide in the room had any hidden issues.

After about seven or eight minutes, having sneaked into the corresponding bedroom twice, Jenna finally felt relieved and left.

...

The next morning.

After waking up, Jenna carefully got out of bed, afraid of disturbing Lumina beside her.

Unexpectedly, Lumina was a light sleeper. She immediately opened her eyes and turned her head.

Seeing it was Jenna, she visibly relaxed and revealed a still somewhat confused smile.

"I had a nightmare. I dreamed that I was arrested by the police. They said I committed murder and arson, spread cults, and did all kinds of evil..."

At this point, Lumina suddenly froze.

Soon, she propped herself up and muttered, "Nana, I was really arrested yesterday.

"I'm innocent! I just performed magic at the hot pot restaurant, and they said I killed someone!"

Seeing this, Jenna placed her knee on the edge of the bed, bent her back, and gave Lumina a warm hug.

"It's okay, you're out now.

"Later, there will be top lawyers to help you. The innocent will be cleared." f

Franca, who had slept on the carpet last night and only came in when she heard the commotion, almost couldn't help laughing at Jenna's words.

The innocent will be cleared?

There was nothing wrong with this sentence, but we really did kill Zaratulstra—we're as guilty as can be!

She held back her laughter and joined in comforting Lumina.

After a while, Lumina calmed down. She looked at Jian Na and Luo Fu, furtively glanced left and right, and said in a lowered voice, "I didn't mention any of you at the police station."

She had a "Aren't I great and clever?" expression on her face.

"Great job!" Franca and Jenna very cooperatively praised her.

Seeing that Lumina's mood had improved considerably, Franca took the opportunity to tell her, "Miss Huang will come to pick you up later. You'll stay at her place for the next couple of days."

To prevent Lumina from implicating Franca and Jenna, when Queen Mystic hired a lawyer to bail her out, she had actually provided a new residence. But because Queen Mystic had to prepare for the matter of banishing the mirrored Emperor Roselle last night and had no time to look after Lumina, Franca, worried that Lumina might wander off, still took the risk of bringing her back and holding out for one night.

Now, Queen Mystic finally had time.

And by the afternoon, Lumina would return to the dream city.

"Mm-hmm." Lumina nodded obediently.

After Lumina was picked up by Queen Mystic, Jenna left for work at Hall Film Company. Anthony, who had returned to the dream, took on the responsibility of looking after Ludwig, and Franca finally had some free time. She took a taxi to the Tech Building, preparing to go through the resignation process.

For her, the process wasn't important; what was important was getting the salary for the half month she had worked!

In the Human Resources Department.

Perhaps because Miss Huang had given a heads up, Franca didn't even have a chance to take out her materials like the family surgery notice with the official stamp from Zhenjinqiao. She quickly went through the process without anyone giving her a hard time.

Finally, she took the certificate given by the HR department and went to the Finance Department to settle her wages.

After various deductions, she received 3,500 yuan.

Not bad... The first salary from a formal job in my life, although it's in a dream... With self-mockery, Franca left the Finance Department.

She planned to say goodbye to Luo Shan in the Administration Department and then leave the Tech Building, completely hiding in the shadows.

Just as she passed the Tech Department, not yet near the Administration Department, Franca, still wearing those old-fashioned black-framed glasses, suddenly heard a voice.

"Luo Fu."

Franca instinctively turned around and saw Zhou Mingrui coming out of the Tech Department.

"What a coincidence, I heard you're resigning?" Zhou Mingrui asked with concern.

Franca noticed a hint of determination in Zhou Mingrui's eyes, as if he had made up his mind to do something.

He's not going to ask about what happened at Mushu Hospital the night before last, is he? He's not going to ask about my real purpose for coming to the company, is he? Franca suddenly shuddered.

Oh no, I don't dare say anything now!

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Chapter 1022: Preparations in Full Swing

[1,781 words]

"Yes, there's been an issue at home," Franca first answered Zhou Mingrui's question, then had a quick idea and hurriedly said, "I'm going to find Luo Shan. Once I've dealt with the family issue, I'll treat you all to a meal and we can have a good chat."

She emphasized the words "good chat."

Zhou Mingrui looked at Luo Fu for a few seconds, as if weighing his options.

Finally, he nodded and said, "Alright, we'll talk another day."

He could tell that Luo Fu didn't want to say much right now, and seemed to be afraid of something unknown.

Franca quietly let out a sigh of relief and waved sincerely. "See you again!"

After turning around, she muttered silently with relief, Thankfully Zhou Mingrui isn't one of those "stubborn" types people in Yangdu talk about. He can read others' expressions and listen to what they're saying!

...

Hall Film Company, Talent Department.

During a break in her physical training class, Jenna walked out of the classroom and turned towards the public restrooms.

On the way, she encountered Jiang Yue, who was responsible for her and the other new talents.

Seeing Jiang Yue busy there, she asked curiously, "What are you busy with?"

"The summer season is ending, 'The Great Pirate 3' is about to finish its run. We need to prepare for the celebration party, subsequent development, and a series of other things," Jiang Yue looked up and saw it was Jenna, her attitude fairly friendly.

The Great Pirate 3 is about to finish its run? Jenna was stunned for a moment.

Based on the common knowledge she had learned since entering the dream city, she thought this was a very normal thing, but it also felt ill-timed.

When Lumina returns to the dream, they were planning to try letting Ludwig eat that dried mushroom to see if he could gain special healing abilities to awaken the vegetative An Xiaotian. And An Xiaotian was related to the Gehrman Sparrow direction they were pursuing.

At this crucial stage, 'The Great Pirate 3', which further shaped Gehrman Sparrow's character and gave him widespread exposure, was about to completely end its run?

Did this hide some kind of symbolism?

Jenna chose her words carefully and asked casually, "Is the stage play for The Great Pirate 3 about to be officially scheduled?"

"Yes, you might be able to try your luck then. Who knows, you might get an important role," Jiang Yue hinted to Jenna.

...

In a spacious, bright, modern-styled apartment.

Bernadette had just entered when she saw Lumina reclining on the bay window, leaning against a pillow, basking in sunlight, leisurely reading a book in her hands.

"What are you reading?" Bernadette walked over and asked casually.

"A romance novel, one of those melodramatic ones." Lumina closed the book, looking a bit embarrassed.

She tried to explain, "I might be put in prison later. I've checked, most of the books there are for learning. I should read some leisure books while I still can!"

Bernadette looked out the window.

"You probably won't be sentenced. You really didn't do what they're accusing you of.

"Why don't you go out for some activity? It's windy today, not too hot."

"I went jogging in the community this morning," Lumina jumped down from the bay window, smiling as she flexed her arm, showing off her not-so-obvious biceps. "I love exercising."

At this point, she suddenly became a bit emotional.

"My mom has always been in poor health, and so was I when I was little. Maybe it's hereditary. So, they always didn't let me do intense exercise, didn't let me run around and play rough with my classmates..."

"Later, when I became an adult, I rebelled. I often went running, cycling, playing badminton, and so on without telling them. And nothing bad happened!"

"When you grow up, you can do what you want." Queen Mystic seemed to feel something too.

Lumina's gaze gradually became unfocused, her eyes reflecting the brilliant sunlight outside the window.

"But now, I want them to restrict me again..."

Bernadette fell silent as well.

By the afternoon, Lumian had returned to the dream city.

The first thing he did was not to look at Queen Mystic Bernadette sitting on the single sofa to the side, but to check his own condition.

Queen Mystic calmly said, "After being kicked out of the dream twice, there will be several major restrictions when you come back in:

"First, you can't display Beyonder powers or obvious hostility in front of other dream manifestations, especially the Celestial Worthy's subordinates. That will also lead to you being kicked out;

"Second, some hints that wouldn't have gotten you kicked out before will now attract the Celestial Worthy's attention;

"Third, you being kicked out will implicate the outsiders around you."

Lumian already knew about these restrictions from the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders. He chuckled. "Quite troublesome."

Queen Mystic nodded slightly. "I've transferred that 500,000 to your bank card. We'll take action this afternoon. We can't wait until dark."

"Alright," Lumian stood up, "I'll go rent an item first."

...

Star Dream Provisions Store.

Lumian, in his Demoness of Despair state, walked to the checkout counter and politely said to the shopkeeper.

"I'd like to rent an item."

"Which one?" the shopkeeper raised her head and asked as the sky suddenly darkened.

Lumian thought for two seconds, and instead of answering, he asked, "Do you have any recommendations?"

He wanted to test if the shopkeeper of Star Dream Provisions Store would give any hints.

"That depends on your own needs," the beautiful shopkeeper answered with a smile.

No hints possible? Lumian looked towards the shelves, his gaze slowly scanning over mystical items like the magic mirror Arrodes, the brass book, the quill pen, and others.

In less than a minute, he made up his mind.

"I'll rent that mirror again."

If it was purely for dealing with and constraining the mirrored Emperor Roselle, he would have chosen that brass book based on the brief description from the Major Arcana card holders. But tomorrow he still wanted to try weakening the Celestial Worthy and awakening Mr. Fool.

And that magic mirror's creation was related to the original God Almighty, having its own hidden aspects. Moreover, it was the only Sealed Artifact Mr. Fool carried with him, likely to play an important role in weakening the Celestial Worthy and awakening Mr. Fool!

Its history and the treatment it received were incomparable to other items!

The shopkeeper's smile remained the same as before. "Alright, how many days do you want to rent it for?"

"One day," Lumian answered without hesitation.

He had enough cash on hand to rent the magic mirror Arrodes for two days, but considering that his guesses, ideas, and action plans might not be necessarily correct, and the final result might not be as he expected, and after today, Queen Mystic would likely be completely kicked out of the dream, making it difficult for the team to encounter such a generous "patron" again, he deliberately left some money for Franca, Jenna, and Anthony.

This way, even if tomorrow's operation failed, causing him to be kicked out of the dream for the third time, the remaining people would still have money to continue making new attempts.

The shopkeeper didn't say anything, took out a POS machine, let Lumian swipe his card, and sign the contract.

After walking out of Star Dream Provisions Store with the magic mirror Arodes, Lumian's phone suddenly rang.

It was an unfamiliar number.

After using the Information Shredder to delete his contacts, all numbers were unfamiliar to him.

Lumian chose to answer and heard an annoyed voice from the other end.

"Why didn't you come for the night shift last night?"

"Don't you know to apply for leave in advance? This is called absenteeism!"

So it's a call from the Intis Group... Lumian quickly switched to a male voice.

"I quit!"

"Do whatever you want!"

The person on the other end was speechless for a moment, then after a few seconds said, "You don't want your last month's salary?"

"Donate it to those in need, thank you!" Lumian hung up the phone with a bang.

He then got into Miss Huang's car parked by the roadside.

Queen Mystic said while driving, "Later I'll be responsible for clinging on to her, getting kicked out of the dream together. You just need to hide in the shadows, guarding against her leaving the corresponding area in advance."

For this operation, except for Jenna who couldn't get away from Hall Film Company, Lumian, Franca, Anthony, and Ludwig would all participate.

Among them, Lumian would play the role that Queen Mystic had when dealing with Zaratulstra, not directly appearing but interfering and exerting influence from the shadows. Franca would decide whether to confront directly based on the specific situation, with Anthony assisting her.

If they could bring some despair to the mirrored Emperor Roselle, it would greatly help Franca digest the Despair potion.

"Do I need to ask the magic mirror some questions?" Lumian cautiously confirmed.

He felt that the core of Queen Mystic's plan was to use the rule that "the third kick-out will implicate surrounding outsiders".

"No need, I already know everything I need to know," Queen Mystic then told Lumian the relevant information.

She finally warned, "You can't hide behind mirrors later. She has much stronger control over the world in the mirror than you do."

"Understood," Lumian had confirmed this point when monitoring Zaratulstra.

In the time that followed, he didn't act humble or polite, but discussed the specific details of the plan with Queen Mystic and proposed some modifications.

...

In a palace-like villa.

After asking the butler, Bernadette took the elevator to the fourth floor and walked towards her father's study.

The CEO, Mr. Huang Tao, had gone to the company for a while in the morning and returned home at noon.

Arriving outside the study, Bernadette habitually raised her right hand and knocked on the door.

When she was young, she was spoiled at home and would open any door she wanted without ever asking if the person inside agreed to her entering. But after accidentally witnessing a few things she shouldn't have seen, she learned to knock.

"Come in." Huang Tao's voice came from inside the study.

Bernadette turned the handle and walked into the sunlit study, seeing her father standing by the window, gazing at something unknown.

This suddenly gave her a feeling of returning to the past.

Back then, she didn't understand why her father always gazed out of the west-facing floor-to-ceiling window, sometimes even holding her as a child while doing so.

"Dad..." Bernadette instinctively called out.

Huang Tao turned around, revealing a smile. "You came at just the right time."

"Why do you say that?" Bernadette immediately raised her guard.

Huang Tao smiled and said, "I'm going to leave this place."

"..." Bernadette frowned, "What do you mean?"

Huang Tao sighed with a smile. "How could I let my princess be in a difficult position?"

Wh— Bernadette understood her father's meaning and was a bit stunned.

Huang Tao looked at Bernadette for a couple of seconds, then smiled with both satisfaction and emotion.

"I'm very glad that you hesitated for several days."

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Chapter 1023: Three Sentences

[1,701 words]

When she heard Huang Tao's emotional and gratified remarks, Queen Mystic Bernadette's lips moved almost imperceptibly a few times, but in the end she didn't speak.

She pressed her lips tightly together.

Huang Tao's gaze looked out towards the open door and the corridor outside. He smiled slightly and said, "Before I leave, I'll give you all a gift."

As soon as he finished speaking, all the mirrors in the study lit up with a clear radiance.

Huang Tao's figure instantly disappeared from where he had been standing.

Trying to run? Franca, who was hidden in the shadows of the corridor in an Invisible state, instinctively rushed out.

She suspected that the mirrored Roselle had deliberately appealed to emotions just now, preventing Queen Mystic from reacting immediately, allowing Him to escape using the mirror world.

The next second, Franca, still in her Invisible state, saw Bernadette transform into ethereal and complex information, rushing like a torrent into the mirror in front of her.

Queen Mystic closely pursued the mirrored Emperor Roselle.

Franca didn't hesitate. She reached out her right palm and pressed towards that mirror from a distance.

Her body suddenly leaned forward, quickly becoming ethereal, and passed through the glass mirror surface.

Anthony, who had snuck in using Psychological Invisibility, quickly ran into the study. Then Lumian, who had directly teleported over while holding Ludwig's hand, grabbed his shoulder and brought him into the mirror world.

They followed the traces left behind by the mirrored Emperor Roselle, constantly moving forward through deep tunnels spread like spider webs in the ethereal darkness.

They pursued like this for several dozen seconds. The tunnels around them gradually became sparser, the darkness growing ever deeper.

Finally, the mirrored Emperor Roselle in Huang Tao's form stopped and turned around.

He was positioned at the edge of an area of void and deep darkness, but behind Him there were no more tunnels, only pure, profound darkness remaining.

In the depths of that darkness, faint gray fog could vaguely be seen spreading, with an endless city hidden in the mist, like a mirage, yet indistinct.

Thump, thump!

Bernadette, Lumian, Franca and the others heard the sound of heartbeats. It seemed to be both their own and also coming from the very bottom of that deep darkness.

"There are some things that can be said now," said the mirrored Emperor Roselle in Huang Tao's form, smiling again.

One more step back and He would retreat into that pure, deep darkness.

"What things?" Bernadette's voice was a bit lower and hoarser than before.

Huang Tao smiled and said, "The gift is three sentences.

"First, I have preliminarily achieved my purpose for entering this real dream, in every aspect."

As He said this, the mirrored Roselle was gazing at Queen Mystic Bernadette. The subtext seemed to be saying: my greatest purpose was to find an opportunity to truly spend a few days with my princess as father and daughter.

Bernadette fell silent.

But Lumian was thinking.

The purposes in every aspect have been achieved?

The task given by the one worshiped by the Aurora Order has been completed, and the one given by the Celestial Worthy has also been completed?

What could that be?

The mirrored Emperor Roselle seemed to guess what Lumian, Franca and Anthony were thinking, and laughed, saying, "It's the same as what you're thinking."

Before Lumian and the others could ask further, Huang Tao, with a somewhat complex expression, said to Queen Mystic Bernadette, "The second sentence: It is possible for people inside and outside the mirror to merge."

Hearing this, Lumian and Franca both suddenly remembered something Krismona had said to Jenna: Reconcile with your mirror self!

Is this a different expression of the same idea? It doesn't seem so—reconciliation isn't the same as merging... When Lumian looked towards Franca in front of him, he found she was also looking at him.

Bernadette remained silent, not responding to the mirrored Roselle's words.

Huang Tao sighed with a smile, "The last sentence: The apocalypse may come earlier than prophesied. Be prepared."

After saying this, He looked at Bernadette and said in a joking tone, "There are five Four Heavenly Kings, and four sentences in three sentences. It's very reasonable.

"There's one more sentence..."

The mirrored Emperor Roselle paused for a moment, then smiled tenderly at Queen Mystic.

"These past few days, dad has been very happy, truly.

"Remember, I will never put you in a difficult position..."

Bernadette opened her mouth, but still didn't speak.

As Huang Tao spoke, He retreated into the pure darkness outside the current area.

His body rapidly changed, transforming from a fashionable middle-aged man into an alluring woman with long chestnut hair, blue eyes, a high nose bridge, thin lips, a voluptuous figure, and a mature aura.

The dream's repulsive force suddenly descended upon Her, seemingly triggered by Her entry into the deep darkness of this part of the mirror world.

The mirrored Emperor Roselle maintained a gentle smile and continued speaking to Bernadette, "I hate him very much, dislike him, but my feelings in other aspects are the same as his, even more extreme, more irrational.

"I've already left a lawyer-witnessed letter saying I'm going to travel freely for a while, indulge for a while, and that you'll handle various matters of the Intis Group on my behalf."

Without waiting for Bernadette to respond, She specially reminded, "You should all retreat further; otherwise, you'll also be affected and rejected by the dream."

Saying this, the mirrored Emperor Roselle looked at Lumian and smiled, saying, "We'll meet again. I've also left a gift for you in the desk drawer."

A gift? Feeling the dream's repulsive force spreading over, Lumian, Franca and the others quickly retreated into one of the mirror tunnels.

The mirrored Emperor Roselle's figure gradually faded, seeming both to dissolve into that deep darkness and to be pushed out of the dream by some force.

She smiled at Bernadette, who was still standing in place. "Quickly leave this area."

Bernadette instinctively stepped back, her eyes already misty.

Suddenly, she hummed a melody, a melody very familiar to the mirrored Emperor Roselle.

The mirrored Roselle was stunned for a moment, becoming somewhat dazed.

Then, She began humming along, singing the lyrics corresponding to that melody.

"The stars in the sky don't speak, the babies on earth miss their mothers..."

Expressions of reminiscence, gratification, and emotion appeared on the mirrored Roselle's face. She persisted until Bernadette's figure disappeared into one of the mirror tunnels, only then giving up the resistance.

Her figure rapidly vanished, dissolving into the darkness.

The dream's repulsive force completely enveloped this area, only fully receding after several dozen seconds.

After a while, Bernadette, Lumian and the others returned here.

"She has indeed been permanently kicked out of the dream," said Queen Mystic in a low voice after looking around.

Smoother than I imagined... Lumian didn't say this out loud.

He felt it would upset Queen Mystic.

And for those in High-Sequence Beyonders, an emotional outburst had a potential hidden danger—the possibility of losing control.

Bernadette was silent for a moment, then took the initiative to say, "Any thoughts on those three sentences just now?"

Lumian had already analyzed. "The second sentence, about the possibility of merging between the original body and the Mirror Person, likely has exaggerated and false components.

"The third sentence aligns with some of my thoughts and guesses. It might not be false—the apocalypse may really come early.

"For the first sentence, I'm inclined to believe it's true."

"So She also completed the task given by the Celestial Worthy?" Franca asked with considerable worry.

She immediately guessed, "These past few days, when we weren't paying attention, did She do something to Zhou Mingrui, laying the groundwork?"

"No," Bernadette slowly shook her head, "These past few days, I've been watching her openly and secretly. She shouldn't have had the chance to directly contact Zhou Mingrui."

Lumian, looking at the pure darkness outside the area and the faintly visible gray fog and city in the depths of the darkness, said thoughtfully,

"Perhaps Her existence itself has some symbolism, enabling Her to complete the task given by the Celestial Worthy."

Before Franca and the others could ask, he pointed to the depths of the darkness and said,

"Doesn't that look like the sealed Fourth Epoch Trier?"

Franca vaguely grasped Lumian's idea and blurted out. "A special mirror world?"

Lumian nodded slightly and said to Queen Mystic,

"Mr. Fool's dream originally shouldn't have contained the sealed Fourth Epoch Trier and the special mirror world that's produced from attaching to the Fourth Epoch Trier."

This was deduced from Mr. Fool's experiences.

Lumian continued, "But after the mirrored Emperor Roselle entered, Her essence and special nature gave Her corresponding symbolic meaning. So, in the depths of the dream city's mirror world, that special mirror world and the sealed Fourth Epoch Trier gradually took shape.

"And we previously speculated that one of Zaratulstra's main goals was to have Zhou Mingrui drink the Witch potion, producing a stable, long-term, corresponding Mirror Person. Then, the Celestial Worthy could use that Mirror Person to accomplish some things, achieving a phased victory."

Queen Mystic nodded slightly. "Apart from consuming the 'Witch' potion, another way to make a person produce a stable, long-term Mirror Person is to come into contact with that special mirror world."

"Zaratulstra was both looking for opportunities to induce Zhou Mingrui's advancement himself and introducing the mirrored Emperor Roselle so as to bring the special mirror world? A two-pronged approach!" Franca drew in a sharp breath.

Queen Mystic said in a somewhat low voice, "Zhou Mingrui probably hasn't come into contact with the special mirror world yet, hasn't produced a corresponding Mirror Person, but afterwards, the Celestial Worthy's side will certainly have corresponding arrangements."

For example, achieving it through Zhou Sasa? Franca suddenly looked at Lumian.

Lumian nodded and continued, "So, we can't delay our actions.

"We are on the precipice; there's no backing down."

"Yes," Franca agreed.

Returning to Huang Tao's study, Bernadette walked around behind the desk and, guided by spirituality, pulled open a drawer.

There was a "gift" left for Lumian by the mirrored Emperor Roselle.

Lumian, coming around from the other side, suddenly saw a card.

The card lay quietly on top of a stack of documents, its surface depicting the image of the mirrored Emperor Roselle from earlier.

Voluptuous figure, wearing a black dress, adorned with a golden crown inlaid with jewels, alluring features, mature aura, outstanding charm.

In the upper left corner of this card, a line of text was condensed from brilliant starlight: "Sequence 0: Primordial Demoness"

At this moment, Bernadette's voice rang out, echoing in the ears of Lumian and the others, "A Card of Blasphemy, the Demoness card."

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Chapter 1024: A Blurry Ritual

[1,599 words]

A Card of Blasphemy?

A Card of Blasphemy representing a path to godhood, created by Emperor Roselle based on the second Blasphemy Slate and His personal experience? Lumian and Franca were both shocked.

They had learned about the Cards of Blasphemy from Emperor Roselle's diary and various mystical knowledge they had collected through different $\mu\alpha$ channels. But items of this level naturally possessed anti-prophecy and anti-divination properties, so they had only heard about them and never seen one with their own eyes.

Now, the Demoness card appeared before them.

This was a gift left for Lumian by the mirrored Emperor Roselle!

In a flash, Lumian instinctively had a thought.

Is She really being so kind?

At this moment, Queen Mystic spoke again, "It's real."

"A real Card of Blasphemy, a real Demoness card?" Franca curiously leaned in, examining this long-coveted item.

Lumian remained silent for a few seconds, then chuckled and reached out to take the Demoness card.

He had already accrued so many "debts" and had so many "creditors", what was one more!

Queen Mystic looked at the Card of Blasphemy in Lumian's hand and said after a moment of silence, "The activation incantation should be my name, inept ancient Feysac."

Name... Lumian chanted in a low voice, "Bernadette."

Instantly, the Demoness card generated an invisible vortex, frantically drawing in Lumian's spirit and spirituality.

Soon, the Demoness card became three-dimensional, transforming into a miniature book.

The book opened naturally, revealing a Roselle dressed as an Assassin's Creed character, a clean-shaven male Roselle.

Next to this character image was a corresponding description in ancient Feysac:

"Sequence 9, Assassin.

"Every Assassin possesses the ability to change their body for a short time, gaining feather-like lightness to perform a Leap of Faith, and has eagle-like vision and night vision, excelling in combat, evasion, and concealment.

"Shadows are their friends and their camouflage. Once they leave the shadows, they use their agile footwork to gather all their strength for a fatal strike on their target...

"Potion formula...."

Lumian reached out to touch the Card of Blasphemy that had become a miniature book, watching it continuously flip pages, seeing Emperor Roselle's image change from male to female, becoming increasingly beautiful and alluring, gradually "overlapping" with the appearance of the mirrored Roselle.

Finally, an image of the mirrored Emperor Roselle, seemingly much younger and resembling a young girl, appeared before Lumian's eyes.

The corresponding information was also revealed:

"Sequence 3: Unaging (Demoness of Unaging).

"Every Demoness of Unaging is forever youthful, skilled in resurrection, bizarrely difficult to kill, a darling of the mirror world, a true Gorgon...

"Potion formula:

"Main ingredients: One heart of a Mirror God, a pair of Gorgon eyes;

"Supplementary ingredients: Nine Mirror God fragments, 80 ml of Gorgon blood, an antique mirror over 500 years old with a corresponding mirror realm, 22 drops of water from a drowned person's lungs;

"Ritual: Find your mirror self, enslave them solely with your own power, or make them truly infatuated with you, or reconcile with them."

Seeing this, Lumian and Franca once again recalled Krismona's mention of "reconciling with your mirror self."

Will different handling methods result in different manifestations later? Lumian pondered for a while, then turned to the next page:

"Sequence 2: Catastrophe (Demoness of Catastrophe).

"Demonesses of Catastrophe bring various natural disasters such as blizzards, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, meteor strikes, etc. Everyone who mentions their names feels fear from the bottom of their hearts...

"Potion formula...

"Ritual: As a participant, cause a disaster affecting the entire continent, and advance during the disaster."

Lumian didn't read the specific formula in detail, just skimmed the Sequence name and corresponding ritual.

He turned to the next page:

"Sequence 1: Apocalypse (Demoness of Apocalypse)".

...

"Ritual: Advance at the universally acknowledged end of an epoch or the beginning of the next; advance during the signs and process of the apocalypse's arrival; advance when one's own involvement leads to the fall of a deity.

"Any one of the three rituals is effective."

According to the mirrored Emperor Roselle's words and my deductions, the apocalypse will come early.... Disasters frequently occur during the apocalypse, which indeed suits Demonesses... Lumian unconsciously held his breath and turned the Card of Blasphemy to the last page:

"Sequence 0: Demoness (Primordial Demoness, Chaos Demoness)

"The source of catastrophes, symbol of the apocalypse, the Demoness who wields chaos, ruler of the mirror world, corresponding to the feminine aspect of the Original Creator.

"Potion formula:

"Ingredients: Demoness Uniqueness, three Demoness of Apocalypse Beyond characteristics...

"Ritual..."

Lumian wanted to see what the apotheosis ritual for the Demoness pathway was, but found that the corresponding text was blurry and unclear, as if obscured by some force.

Did the mirrored Emperor Roselle do this when leaving this gift, or was it like this when She obtained this Demoness card? Lumian turned his head to look at Queen Mystic.

"Your Highness, can you see the content of the apotheosis ritual clearly?"

Bernadette stared for a moment, then slowly shook her head.

"The power obscuring the corresponding content is of a very high level, at least Sequence 0."

Lumian and Franca exchanged glances but didn't pursue the matter further.

For them, the apotheosis ritual was a distant matter. They should focus on the Demoness of Unaging first.

"Since I wasn't kicked out of the dream, I can also participate in your operation tomorrow," Queen Mystic said in a somewhat low voice, looking towards the window area where Huang Tao had been standing earlier.

"Thank you," Lumian said without being polite.

He put the Demoness card into his Traveler's Bag.

...

When Lumian and the others returned to Xinhong District, the sunlight was still bright, and it wasn't even afternoon tea time yet.

"Should we let Ludwig eat that mushroom now?"

Franca pulled out a chair and sat down, asking with a mix of nervousness and curiosity. Lumian thought for a few seconds, then said with a smile, "Yes."

"But you should leave first, go back to Dechuang Garden. I'm afraid your life might be ended by the mutation brought by the mushroom."

This wasn't saying that the mushroom could directly harm Franca, but that the corresponding mutation might be very extreme, drawing the Celestial Worthy's attention, which would be completely unbearable for Franca, who hadn't fully digested the Despair potion.

"Alright." Franca suppressed her inner emotions and returned to Dechuang Garden through the mirror world.

Only then did Lumian sit down in the chair Franca had just pulled out and say to Ludwig. "You can eat it now."

Ludwig had been holding back for a long time and quickly took out the dried jellyfish-like mushroom.

Seeing this, Lumian turned his head to Anthony and said, "Pay attention to placating his mind and emotions."

"Okay," Anthony's eyes became vertical, reflecting Ludwig's figure in that pale golden color.

Ludwig swallowed and looked at the mushroom with a hint of fear as he stuffed it into his mouth.

He chewed it up, then swallowed it with satisfaction.

Lumian and Anthony's spirits instantly tensed to the extreme.

As time passed second by second, Ludwig finally opened his mouth and evaluated the changes after eating it.

"I can create a kind of spore that enters the human body, repairing nerves and flesh, merging with spirituality and soul."

"This might wake up people in vegetative states, but the condition of patients after merging with the spores is currently unknown..."

As Ludwig spoke, Lumian and Anthony saw masses of flesh writhing under his skin, sometimes bulging the skin outwards, sometimes sinking inwards.

This made Ludwig look like he was wearing a skin suit.

Suddenly, the skin on his neck split open, and a wet brown mushroom grew out of the flesh.

Ludwig raised his right hand nonchalantly, plucked off this mushroom with a snap, and stuffed it into his mouth, chewing and swallowing it.

The wound on his neck quickly healed.

And so, mushrooms intermittently grew out of Ludwig's body, sometimes of the same species, sometimes different, and he plucked them all off, using them as snacks.

This formed a strange balance.

"Can eating these mushrooms make you full?" Lumian asked curiously, secretly breathing a sigh of relief.

Ludwig glanced at his godfather, "Can you get full by sucking your own fingers?"

Lumian and Anthony immediately understood the answer.

Anthony then looked at Lumian. "Should we take him to Red Moon Hospital now to try and treat An Xiaotian?"

Lumian pondered for several minutes before answering, "There's no rush. Let's wait until tomorrow, when we officially take action."

Anthony didn't hide his confusion, but seeing that Lumian didn't explain further, he calmly closed his mouth.

If he's not saying, there must be a reason for not saying it.

...

The next morning.

Lumian stood on the balcony of the master bedroom, gazing at the tree-lined internal roads of the community and the slowly passing electric cars and bicycles.

After a while, he reluctantly withdrew his gaze, walked into the living room, and placed the magic mirror Arrodes on the dining table.

After the previous rental, they had figured out the rules for using this magic mirror:

Only three questions could be asked within 24 hours, and they could be asked at intervals.

Lumian looked at the silver mirror with ancient patterns and a black gemstone on each side, and calmly said in the presence of Anthony and Ludwig. "Great Arrodes, I want to ask you a question, the first question of today."

The surface of the ancient silver mirror suddenly darkened, and lines of blood-red ancient Feysac words appeared: "I can answer any question you ask, but you must also answer an equal number of questions from me, in the presence of at least one witness.

"If you refuse to answer, or if you lie, you will face punishment."

Lumian nodded and revealed a bright smile. "My question is, is it a coincidence that the Celestial Worthy's attempt to use the Mirror People and your birth as a mirror occurred at the same time?"

On the magic mirror, the blood-red words quickly lost their color and contracted into a single, lonely word:

"No."

Thanks to the user "[Максим Довбняк](#)" ([Telegram](#)) for the chapters provided!

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Chapter 1025: Sudden Event

[1,754 words]

Not a coincidence, so it was intentional? Did the original God Almighty see a certain scene while dying and disintegrating, and make corresponding arrangements? Lumian revealed a thoughtful expression.

He immediately said in a satisfied tone, "Thank you for your answer, great Arrodes."

This was the answer he wanted.

This also indirectly confirmed that the Celestial Worthy was trying to use the Mirror People.

The surface of the magic mirror rippled, and blood-red ancient Feysac words were outlined again:

"Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.

"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."

Lumian nodded slightly, then saw the ancient Feysac words on the old silver mirror change:

"Are you prepared to be scared out of your wits by that individual?"

What a gentle question, not embarrassing at all... Anthony thought instinctively.

Then, he realized, This seems more like a hint.

A hint to Lumian that the upcoming action might directly face the Celestial Worthy or His consciousness and power?

"I'm ready." Lumian answered with a smile, He also noticed the hint from the magic mirror Arrodes.

Then, he faced the magic mirror, pressed his hand to his chest and said, "I'll ask the other two questions later."

By eleven in the morning, Franca and Jenna had also arrived at the rental house in Xinhong District, each finding a chair to sit on.

"Queen Mystic is maintaining the illusion of Lumiana, preventing the police from discovering that I've left my designated residence," said Lumian, who had resumed his Li Ming identity. He stood up and looked at each companion, "We need to hurry now."

"Okay," Franca had been curious about Lumian's plan since yesterday.

Of course, she inevitably felt a bit nervous and uneasy, because if others failed, they would most likely just be kicked out of the dream, while she had a significant chance of dying.

Lumian smiled and said, "I've been pondering the phrase 'filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts' all day yesterday, and finally thought of a few details.

"One of them is that Chief Yagates only has the spiritual imprints of Mr. Door and the Celestial Worthy, with maybe a little bit of Amon's at most.

"If interfered with by complex information, one might deduce that Chief Yagates would likely lean towards the Celestial Worthy at crucial moments, or that he has always been feigning neutrality, and we must avoid encountering him.

"But I did stimulate Mr. Door's spiritual imprint with matters related to the Abraham family and our purpose for entering the dream city, preventing me from being completely kicked out of the dream.

"Moreover, the official forces of the dream city have indeed shown neutrality before, being impartial and following the law, otherwise we would have been finished long ago.

"So, what is the most fundamental fact among this information?"

Franca, Jenna, and Anthony fell into thought, while Ludwig continued to noisily eat from a large bag of chips, occasionally plucking a mushroom from his body to go with it.

After about ten seconds, Jenna said in a quiet voice, filled with doubt and uncertainty. "The Celestial Worthy is too weak?"

Lumian chuckled. "Correct. Unlike Amon, Mr. Door passed away long ago. On Chief Yagates, who is the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, there exists only His remaining spiritual imprint, without external help or subsequent replenishment.

"And it's this remnant imprint, along with a bit of Mr. Fool's cognition and a little of Amon's spiritual imprint, that has managed to resist the spiritual imprint of the Celestial Worthy, this great existence, maintaining balance most of the time and even gaining the upper hand when stimulated occasionally.

"What does this signify?"

"It indicates that the Celestial Worthy's current state is much worse than we imagined, and the limitations He's under are far greater than what we see daily!

"This is the most fundamental fact.

"And why is this so?"

At this point, Lumian closed his mouth, clearly not wanting to share his speculations and thoughts.

Hey, you're just going to pique our curiosity and not say anything? Franca felt uncomfortable all over, just like encountering certain authors and storytellers who leave a cliffhanger at the end of a chapter.

But she immediately understood Lumian's intention, which was based on complete trust.

"Some things can be known but not spoken, at most hinted at?" Franca asked carefully.

Lumian showed an expression of satisfaction that made Franca want to hit him.

"Didn't we already conclude earlier that except for outsiders, every manifestation in the dream city is a product of the subconscious cognition of Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy combined?"

Lumian extended his right hand, pointing at the green trees outside the window, at the surrounding walls, at the hot wind blowing in from outside.

"What I want to say is, apart from the dream characters, the birds, rats, cockroaches, earthworms, plants, buildings, and even the air in this city are all products of Mr. Fool's subconscious and the Celestial Worthy's subconscious combined.

"In other words, we've been living in the thoughts, cognition, and consciousness of Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy all along."

Franca was enlightened. "So the dream city is like the cerebral cortex, with some areas very active that we need to carefully avoid and not stimulate, like Zhou Mingrui's dream manifestation, while most other areas are in a dormant state and normally won't react unless we say key words or key information?"

"Once spoken, it's likely to be immediately noticed by the Celestial Worthy." Lumian raised his right hand and grabbed a handful of air.

With a mischievous grin, he remarked, "This not only brings attention and rejection but might also stimulate the Celestial Worthy, allowing Him to break free from His current unfavorable state.

"Let me give an example. The fundamental facts revealed by the information on Chief Yagates aren't that hard to figure out, but even with Amon's reminders and hints, it took me a long time to understand, and you and the Major Arcana card holders haven't even thought of it.

"Suppose there's a person who's been fooled, always feeling weak and unable to break free from certain limitations. In this situation, if someone suddenly tells him he's silly or stupid, wouldn't that stimulate him to regain clarity and become powerful again?"

"This is also why Amon and that individual related to the Aurora Order don't speak directly in and out of dreams, only hinting, letting us understand on our own.

"Some tricks no longer work once the key technique is revealed!"

Jenna finally understood what Lumian was trying to express.

There were two layers to this:

First, everyone who has entered the dream is essentially receiving joint corruption from Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy. It's just that due to differences in dream entry time and actions taken, the degree of corruption varies, and the corresponding influence will persist even after returning to reality.

Second, certain words and facts might stimulate the Celestial Worthy under similar corruption conditions, causing Him to "wake up".

"Just assign the tasks to us, you don't need to say anything else." Jenna said with a sigh.

Franca and Anthony also had some realizations and nodded in succession.

Just as Lumian was about to assign the corresponding tasks to his companions, Franca's phone suddenly rang.

Franca picked it up and looked, her expression changing slightly. "It's a call from Luo Shan!"

Has something become so urgent that it requires a phone call?

Franca chose to answer, trying to make her voice sound steady. "Hello, Shanshan?"

Luo Shan's urgent voice came through the receiver.

"Zhou Mingrui suddenly took leave, he asked for it twenty minutes ago, I just found out!"

Zhou Mingrui took leave? Jenna looked towards Lumian.

Lumian couldn't help but frown. Today is Wednesday, Zhou Mingrui's sister Zhou Sasa is arriving in Yangdu, but her high-speed train doesn't arrive until 1:40 pm. Zhou Mingrui doesn't need to take the morning off at all, he would have enough time even if he left after lunch.

Franca forced herself to stay calm and said to Luo Shan, "Don't panic, ask Zhou Mingrui on WeChat to see what happened."

"Right... I can ask him directly." Luo Shan, who was in the administrative department of the Intis Group, quickly hung up the phone.

She rapidly sent a message to Zhou Mingrui: "Why did you suddenly take leave?"

After a few minutes, while Luo Shan was silently praying, Zhou Mingrui replied to her message:

"Going to the high-speed rail station to pick up my sister."

"Your sister is coming to Yangdu? What time?" Luo Shan's heart tightened, as if glimpsing an unpleasant truth.

After nearly another minute, Zhou Mingrui sent a emoji: 😊⇒

"She was originally supposed to arrive on the train after 1:30, but she said she got to her hometown's high-speed rail station early and there were spare tickets, so she changed her booking. She'll arrive just after 11:50."

Why did she suddenly change her booking? Almost two hours earlier... Luo Shan had heard from Luo Fu and Jian Na that there might be issues with Zhou Sasa's arrival in Yangdu, and she immediately became more panicked.

She didn't bother to respond to Zhou Mingrui, quickly took a screenshot of the chat history, and sent it to True Hidden Blade.

At times like this, repeating is a waste of time!

Franca, in the rental house in Xinhong District, quickly scanned the information on the screenshot, and her whole body suddenly tensed up.

"Not good, Zhou Mingrui is almost at the high-speed rail station, and so is Zhou Sasa!" Franca held up her phone vertically, showing it to Lumian and the others.

Lumian glanced at it and smiled slightly. "No need to panic, there's still time. We have some redundancy."

His attitude infected Franca and Jenna, calming their mindset and spirits a little—Anthony and Ludwig didn't need reassuring.

Lumian then began assigning different tasks to each person, only telling them what to do, not why.

When assigning certain tasks, he even deliberately used the Bottle of Fiction, not letting the other companions hear.

Finally, Lumian said to Anthony, "Before taking Ludwig to Crimson Moon Hospital, make a trip back to the real world and relay what I told you to the Major Arcana card holders. Let them prepare, and when the dream city experiences anomalies, seize the brief window of opportunity to complete that matter.

"Of course, the anomalies may not occur, and our plan could very likely fail."

"Understood," Anthony replied steadily.

Lumian then turned his gaze to Franca, smiling again as he said, "Then let's split up and take action."

After saying this, he pressed his hand to his chest and said, "Praise The Fool!"

"Praise The Fool!" Franca stood up abruptly, returning the same gesture.

Then, she said in a deep voice, "You must all be careful..."

Lumian nodded lightly, and together with Jenna, walked towards the door and out of the rental house.

The operation had officially begun.

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Chapter 1026: Helper

[1,657 words]

After Lumian, Jenna, and Franca had each left the rental house in Xinhong District, Anthony waited for a moment before saying to Ludwig, "Keep eating, I'm heading back to the real world for a bit."

"Mhm, mhm." Ludwig, mouth full of food, didn't have time to reply properly.

Anthony leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes.

As a Dreamwalker, he didn't need to perform any complicated actions to easily return to the real world.

Upon opening his eyes in a room of the luxurious Trier mansion, Anthony instinctively rolled out of bed.

At the same time, Madam Justice's voice echoed in his mind: "Come to Two of Cups's room."

Anthony immediately left his room and headed to Franca's bedroom, which was closer to the staircase. He lightly knocked on the wooden door.

"Come in." Madam Justice's gentle voice came from inside.

As soon as Anthony pushed open the door, he was met with multiple figures:

There was Mr. Star standing in front of the bright window, wearing red gloves; a man sitting in a dim corner, his eyes crimson and his chin slightly raised; a rugged-looking man with bronze skin and blue hair, leaning against the mini-bar, holding a glass of Lanti Proof;

On either side of the long sofa were Madam Magician and Madam Judgment; Ma'am Hermit was sitting on a single-seater, wearing glasses and flipping through a book; Madam Justice sat by Franca's bed with Susie nearby, and a young man, over two meters tall, with simple white robes, paced at the foot of the bed.

Anthony scanned the room and respectfully said, "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen."

"Do you have something to tell us?" Madam Justice turned her body slightly.

Anthony repeated Lumian's instructions in full, without leaving out a single detail.

Madam Justice nodded thoughtfully. "I understand."

At that moment, the tall, brown-haired young man shifted his gaze to the other Major Arcana card holders and said in a calm voice, "From now on, no one is to leave this room."

As his voice echoed, the brilliant sunlight, brighter than the sky outside, flooded the bedroom, banishing all shadows and darkness, leaving no corner untouched.

...

Inside the administrative department of the Intis Group at the Tech Building.

"Haha, kids can be impulsive, Coming to Yangdu for y college?" Luo Shan sent Zhou Mingrui a message, holding her phone.

This was a continuation of their earlier conversation and also a way to "monitor" Zhou Mingrui's current state.

Luo Shan believed that chatting with Zhou Mingrui on and off would allow her to keep abreast of his movements in a timely manner.

While waiting for his reply, Luo Shan found herself unable to sit or stand still. She walked around but couldn't calm the waves of anxiety in her heart.

She sat back down, grabbed some paper and a pen, hoping to ease her complex, tangled emotions by drawing.

Scribble! Scribble! Scribble! Luo Shan scribbled on the paper aimlessly.

As time slowly passed, her sketch gradually took shape.

It depicted a girl, guarding behind a black barrier, fighting off childlike monsters.

Luo Shan had drawn a version of herself deep into the night, standing as a protector.

When she saw the half-finished drawing, Luo Shan froze.

After a few seconds, she pressed her lips tightly together.

She stood up abruptly and rushed to Deputy Director Zhang Qing's office, speaking urgently, "Director Zhang, I'd like to take half a day off!"

...

Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, arrival level.

Lumian and Jenna stood in front of the large display screen, checking the exit for Zhou Sasa's train.

"South Exit Three, arriving in six minutes," Jenna said, referencing the Information Luo Shan had provided, locating the correct train.

"I told you we had extra time," Lumian, in his male form, chuckled and walked with Jenna toward South Exit Three.

They didn't get too close, keeping a distance of about twenty to thirty meters, hiding near the taxi lane entrance while watching the target area.

The two Demonesses quickly spotted Zhou Mingrui.

Because the Intis Group had strong air conditioning and he had rushed out in a hurry. Zhou Mingrui was wearing a white T-shirt under an orange-and-black plaid shirt, looking as if he had been waiting for a while.

Neither Jenna nor Lumian spoke, quietly observing.

After two or three minutes, Jenna suddenly pointed in a direction and whispered, "Luo Shan... Why is she here?"

Following Jenna's lead, Lumian saw Luo Shan, dressed in a blouse and skirt, walking toward South Exit Three, glancing around as she moved.

"Call her over, don't let her disturb Zhou Mingrui." Lumian instructed Jenna,

Jenna had already been thinking the same thing.

Using her Assassin footwork, she quickly and discreetly approached Luo Shan, appearing right in front of her.

Luo Shan jumped in surprise, then opened her mouth in delighted shock.

Jenna raised a finger to her lips, signaling Luo Shan not to speak.

Luo Shan immediately closed her mouth and followed Jenna to the taxi lane entrance by South Exit Two.

When Luo Shan saw who was waiting with Jenna, she could no longer contain herself, pointing at Lumian and stammering, "You, you, you..."

Isn't this the dropout, Li Ming, who had a child when he was still a teenager?

Is he in league with Luo Fu, Jian Na, and Lumina?

"What a coincidence." Lumian smiled.

He gestured toward Jenna. "She's the mother of the child."

"Oh, oh..." Luo Shan suddenly felt a bit excited.

That explains it.

That is their relationship!

Suddenly learning this private detail about her friends dispelled much of Luo Shan's tension and anxiety.

Jenna finally asked, "Why did you come to the station?"

Luo Shan's expression instantly darkened.

She bit her lip and said, "I wanted to help you.

"I think, I think I can be of help."

As she spoke, her tone grew firmer.

Lumian was silent for a few seconds before saying, "Okay."

He glanced toward South Exit Three and casually added, "For now, there's nothing else to do but observe."

"Okay." This was Luo Shan's first time taking part in an operation like this, so she had no objections.

Looking back at Zhou Mingrui, Jenna thought aloud. "If Zhou Sasa really is a problem, if she's meant to make Zhou Mingrui produce a stable Mirror Person in the special mirror world, what would she do?"

Having experienced the events relating to the Hostel and with Moran Avigny, Jenna had a deep understanding of the special mirror world. She knew that to produce a stable, long-term Mirror Person in that world, the person either had to be a descendant of the Primordial Demoness or certain Fourth Epoch Trier nobles, or they had to be exposed to the overflow of corruption from the special mirror world-namely, frequent activity in underground Trier.

However, in the dream city, there was no real special mirror world-it was hidden deep within the mirror world, without any overflow of corruption.

So, making Zhou Mingrui truly come into contact with the special mirror world was no easy task.

Lumian thought for a few seconds. "I don't know."

His calm, steady tone made Luo Shan suddenly feel that things might not be as bad as she had imagined.

A few more minutes passed, and passengers started coming through the gates at South Exit Three.

Jenna and Luo Shan's nerves immediately tightened.

Before long, they saw Zhou Mingrui smile and walk toward the exit.

There, a young girl emerged, wearing a black dress that made her seem more mature than her age.

Hur suitcase was also dark-colored, without any fluffy toys attached like many young women would have, but instead, it had a mechanical-looking Transformer hanging from it.

Her backpack wasn't cute either-black, made of synthetic leather, and large enough to hang a silver- white pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns on one side.

"Her style is very similar to reality's Melissa Moretti..." Jenna muttered under her breath.

Luo Shan couldn't help but glance at her.

When Zhou Sasa saw Zhou Mingrui approaching, she smiled brightly, waving her hand.

"Mingrui!" she called out sweetly.

At that moment, she finally showed a hint of youthful charm.

"Perfect timing, I'll take you out for a big meal!" Zhou Mingrui grinned as he took his sister's suitcase.

"Mingrui, I fixed the pocket watch!" Zhou Sasa pulled the silver-white pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns from the side of her black backpack, showing it off to Zhou Mingrui.

Click. She pressed lightly on the top of the watch, and the silver-white cover popped open.

Almost simultaneously, Lumian and Jenna's eyes narrowed.

With their eagle-like vision, they noticed that the glass on the watch's face was dark, almost pure black, but still transparent enough to see the hands and numbers on the dial.

That glass gave both Lumian and Jenna a strong sense of familiarity, a familiarity rooted in their spiritual intuition and memory.

It was a fragment of the special mirror world!

They each possessed a piece of the special mirror world fragment!

"Is Zhou Sasa planning to use that pocket watch and the fragment of the special mirror world to make Zhou Mingrui generate a stable Mirror Person?" Jenna whispered, but instinctively kept her voice low.

She immediately recalled something.

The fragment of the special mirror world that Lumian possessed had come from the reanimated Panatiya, who had originally been arranged as Zhou Mingrui's lover, and eventually his wife.

"Was her intended function not only to stabilize Zhou Mingrui's mental state but also, after Zaratulstra's frontal attempt failed, to use that fragment of the special mirror world to somehow 'corrupt' Zhou Mingrui, so that a stable Mirror Person could be born? No wonder she has a fragment of the special mirror world... The Celestial Worthy always prepares multiple -no, three, or even more-contingencies..." Jenna bop suddenly realized.

She quickly said to Lumian, "We need to find a way to steal that pocket watch. We can't let Zhou Mingrui come into too much contact with it."

Lumian also thought of the reanimated Panatiya and observed for a few seconds before saying. "That pocket watch seems to hold significant sentimental value for Zhou Mingrui. He's holding onto it tightly. Taking it from under his nose won't be easy."

At this point, Zhou Mingrui had taken the silver-white pocket watch and was inspecting it repeatedly, looking very pleased.

Jenna understood Lumian's concern.

Not just difficult-nearly impossible, and extremely risky!

What Zhou Mingrui wanted to protect was what the dream subconscious wanted to protect!

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Chapter 1027: What Is Real

[1,643 words]

As Jenna quickly tried to think of a way to "take" the silver pocket watch from Zhou Mingrui, Luo Shan suddenly spoke up. "I'll go."

Uh... Jenna and Lumian both turned to look at Luo Shan at the same time.

Luo Shan flashed a smile that said, "It's no big deal."

"I know Zhou Mingrui. We're on good terms, we're close colleagues. It'll be easier for me to get close to him than you two.

"Although he's somewhat suspicious of me now and knows I have Beyonder powers, and he's picked up on my hints, overall, he should still see me as an ally. someone on his side. Right? My analysis is correct, isn't it?"

Luo Shan showed a lack of confidence in these kinds of matters.

Before Lumian or Jenna could respond, she gave a self-deprecating smile and said, "Zhou Mingrui might be wary, might be on guard, but he'd never suspect that my target is the pocket watch.

"And besides..."

She paused for a moment and then added, "You two are outsiders. Even if you just trigger his suspicions, he might kick you out, but I won't. I'm from here. At most, I just need to be a little more careful afterward!"

"No, it's still dangerous." Jenna warned Luo Shan seriously. "We've never tried having someone like you directly confront Zhou Mingrui or do anything to him, so we can't predict what might happen or what the worst outcome might be. And judging by similar cases, you could end up with a light suddenly falling from the ceiling, smashing your head, killing you instantly, or you could drop dead the moment you touch that pocket watch."

Luo Shan's expression turned solemn.

She nodded slowly and said, "I know."

Before Jenna or Lumian could try to dissuade her further, she unexpectedly asked in a low voice, "What is the real me like?"

While Lumian was observing Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, Jenna fell silent for two seconds and then answered, "She's a civilian staff at the police station. Her father was also an official Beyonder, but he died in a Beyonder disaster.

"She's lively, though a bit lazy, but her colleagues really like her. They all treat her like a little sister. She's married now, with a lovely child."

Luo Shan listened intently, and after a few seconds, she said, "Isn't that another version of me?"

"It really is another me..."

Her eyes flickered as she looked at Jenna, and with a hint of playfulness, she said, "If you ever meet her, please tell her:

"I envy her..."

Hearing this, Jenna suddenly felt a lump in her throat, and emotions swirled in her chest, making it hard to speak.

Luo Shan slowly straightened her back.

"And also tell her, I have my own pride, and I've had experiences she might envy."

Luo Shan's serious expression gradually softened, as though she was talking to herself.

"I've been reflecting a lot lately, thinking about my past.

"My mother was so real, my interactions with her were so real. My father was real, too, and his sacrifice was just as real. My childhood, my middle school, high school, college, and my work experiences, all those details, all those moments-they were so real.

"I can still remember the smell of my mom, the taste of her best dish, eggplant with pork. I can remember where my dad's police uniform had a hole burned by a cigarette, where he hid snacks he bought for me..."

"To you, these might be part of a dreamscape, but to me, they couldn't be more real. They are the meaning of my existence.

"And because of those memories and that past, I feel real. No matter how you see it.

"Now, I'm going to do something I've always dreamed of. It will make me even more real. It will give my life more meaning, no longer just a dream or someone else's fantasy!"

Before Jenna could respond, Lumian suddenly said.

"Alright. You approach Zhou Mingrui, and find a way to steal that pocket watch."

Luo Shan was stunned, not expecting Lumian to agree so quickly.

In the blink of an eye, a smile appeared on her face, a smile filled with pride and nostalgia.

She looked at Jenna and asked softly, "I-if this dream breaks apart and you two leave alive, will you remember me? Will you remember that there was a Luo Shan, and the things I did?"

Jenna's vision blurred instantly, and she choked up as she said.

"I will. I'll always remember that I had a friend named Luo Shan. She was lively and kind, though a bit lazy. She was a girl who always missed her mom, but she had a strong sense of justice, just like her father..."

Luo Shan smiled, full of relief. "That means I really lived. My life was real."

She took a deep breath and pointed toward Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa.

"I have to hurry. They're almost at the entrance to the ride-hailing parking lot."

"Alright," Lumian and Jenna replied briefly.

Luo Shan took a step toward the exit but suddenly turned around, flashing a bright smile at Jenna and Lumian.

With a mix of nerves and excitement, she said, "I can be a guardian too."

Without waiting for a response, she turned back and ran toward Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, wearing her blouse and skirt.

She used her Reporter ability in small bursts, speeding up quickly, moving as gracefully and nimbly as a young deer.

Lumian watched her back and softly repeated her words, "Guardian..."

...

Inside Crimson Moon Hospital.

In a dimly lit patient room, with the curtains drawn, even though it was noon, Anthony used the last remaining Mirror Traversal effect of the Ice Mirror Charm, bringing himself and Ludwig out of the bathroom mirror.

They walked over to the hospital bed, where Anthony studied An Xiaotian's head. There were centipede-like stitches across his scalp, and his face was covered with thick, dark facial hair. After a few seconds, Anthony turned to Ludwig and asked, "Can he be cured?"

"I don't know. We'll have to try and see," Ludwig replied. He plucked a golden mushroom from the cracked corner of his eye and chewed it down.

The efficacy of the spores he absorbed from mushrooms to heal An Xiaotian was uncertain-this wasn't something a Gourmet typically dealt with.

Anthony surveyed the room before pulling out a blank sketchbook and a pencil. He set the book down on the TV table and quickly began sketching.

Before long, he finished a drawing.

It was a complex maze, but every path seemed to be blocked.

Anthony carefully tore out the sketch, packed away the remaining pages, and cautiously walked to the door. Using his Psychological Invisibility ability, he opened the door just a crack and placed the drawing against it.

The sketch shimmered for a moment and then melded seamlessly with the door.

With that done, Anthony observed the bustling nurses and wandering patients in the hallway before retreating back inside, closing the door behind him.

He turned to Ludwig and said, "Begin the treatment."

Ludwig hesitated briefly before stepping forward in small, cautious steps. He stood next to An Xiaotian's bed and placed both hands on the man's shaved head, which was covered with multiple scars and attached to various medical devices.

In the next moment, a damp, fresh sensation emanated from Ludwig's body, making the air feel like a forest after the rain.

Anthony waited patiently as the seconds ticked by.

Suddenly, he noticed small lumps forming beneath the skin on An Xiaotian's face, as if something was trying to push its way out. The lumps quickly retracted, shifting a few centimeters under the skin.

On the monitors, the data for heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen saturation began fluctuating rapidly.

There's a response, but is it enough? Anthony held his breath without realizing it.

He cast Placate on himself, calming his nerves as he continued to wait.

Another twenty seconds passed before Anthony noticed the room becoming even darker, though he wasn't sure if it was real or just his imagination.

Then, all at once, the lumps beneath An Xiaotian's skin surged to the surface, tearing through his flesh and scalp.

They sprouted into various types of thumb-sized mushrooms-some had fleshy, veined patterns, others were soft and white, oozing a milky substance.

They kept growing, rapidly expanding until An Xiaotian's entire head was covered in a dense cluster of fungi, leaving only his eyes, nose, and mouth visible.

Beep! Beep! Beep!

The monitors blared, alarms going off as the data spiked wildly.

Several nurses rushed over, one leading the way and another pushing a medical cart.

But when they opened the door to the room, they didn't see the bed or the nearby bathroom. Instead, they were faced with a long hallway stretching into the unknown, with countless unmarked doors lining its sides.

Normally, the nurses would have stepped back to check if they were in the wrong place, but instead, they ran forward, opening door after door, desperately trying to find the real entrance to the room.

Amid the wailing alarms, Anthony felt the room grow even darker. An ominous, dangerous energy began to fill the space.

Ludwig withdrew his hands, stepped back to Anthony's side, and stared at the now mushroom-covered An Xiaotian. Licking his lips, he said, "It worked."

Just as he spoke, An Xiaotian, still unconscious, suddenly sat bolt upright.

Bzzz, the electrical appliances in the room—lights, TV, monitors—all emitted a loud buzzing sound, so intense that it drowned out the beeping alarms.

At that moment, An Xiaotian, sitting up straight, opened his eyes. They were deep, dark, weathered, and slightly hollow.

In stark contrast to the mushrooms growing all over his head, his eyes looked unnervingly normal and sane.

An Xiaotian opened his mouth and spat out countless tiny spores, his voice hoarse as he said, "Be careful..."

As soon as Anthony and Ludwig heard those words, they suddenly felt an overwhelming sense of oppression. The darkness around them seemed to solidify, closing in on them and pushing them out.

Even with Anthony's mental fortitude and emotional control, he couldn't help but shiver, feeling the urge to flee the room.

The next second, An Xiaotian's voice turned sharp and piercing.

"Be careful of Zhou Mingrui!"

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Chapter 1028: The Medium

[1,644 words]

"Be careful of Zhou Mingrui!"

An Xiaotian's voice echoed through the hospital room, drowning out the alarms from the monitoring equipment.

Wh- As Anthony struggled to hide his shock and out surprise, thunder rumbled outside.

The sky over the entire dream city suddenly turned gray, as if the brilliant sunlight had been cut off by a layer of clouds.

In Anthony's vision, An Xiaotian's figure suddenly be or became blurry, sometimes expanding, sometimes contracting, like a hazy, confusing dream.

The next second, Anthony and Ludwig felt the dream's strong rejection, sensing their rapid transformation into marionettes.

...

Inside Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.

Luo Shan quickly caught up with Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, intercepting them before they turned onto the road leading to the parking lot.

"Zhou Mingrui!" Luo Shan called out.

Zhou Mingrui, who had already put the silver pocket watch in his trouser pocket, turned around and looked at the rapidly approaching Luo Shan with confusion. "Why are you here?"

Weren't you just at work in the office, slacking off and chatting with me?

Zhou Sasa looked at Luo Shan, then at her brother, and smartly kept her mouth shut, saying nothing.

Luo Shan stopped within arm's reach of Zhou Mingrui and said urgently, "There's something important I need to tell you."

What could be so important that it couldn't be said over WeChat or phone, and you had to rush here to tell me in person? Zhou Mingrui remembered Luo Shan's previous warnings and looked at his colleague quizzically, waiting for her to continue.

On her way over, Luo Shan had already decided that today's strategy would be "honesty." She said with a serious expression.

"There's an item you shouldn't touch right now. I'm here to keep it safe for you."

Taking advantage of Zhou Mingrui's confused thinking, she suddenly reached out with her hand, using the ultimate speed of a Reporter.

Zhou Mingrui couldn't dodge in time and Luo Shan "forcefully snatched" the silver pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns from his trouser pocket.

"This is it!" Luo Shan quickly explained,

Zhou Mingrui, who instinctively wanted to grab it back, suddenly froze, looking at the pocket watch and muttering in disbelief.

"This?"

What could be wrong with it?

This change also left the observing Zhou Sasa confused and bewildered. She blurted out, "Mingrui, what's going on?"

What are you two talking about?

Are the two of you flirting?

Zhou Mingrui didn't answer Zhou Sasa's question, focusing his gaze on Luo Shan.

Luo Shan didn't bother to conceal anything and couldn't think of how to hint at it, so she directly raised the silver pocket watch.

"This will bring you danger!"

"Think carefully, isn't it a bit different from before?"

Although Luo Shan wasn't clear on what exactly was wrong with the pocket watch in her hand, from Jian Na and Li Ming's conversation, she knew the watch was linked to some special mirror world fragment.

In other words, the watch was different from before- if there had been an anomaly in the past, Zhou Mingrui would have had problems long ago!

Zhou Mingrui suddenly fell into thought, frowning slightly.

Indeed, the watch's glass face seemed to have been replaced...

Who would normally use black glass for a watch face, even if it was transparent...

Beside them, Zhou Sasa grumbled, "I've repaired it, of course it's a bit different from before."

Zhou Mingrui thought for a few seconds, then cautiously said to Luo Shan, "Alright, you keep it safe for me for a few days."

Although this watch held great sentimental value for him, no object, no matter how important, could compare to real safety. Even if it was lost because of this, he would only feel heartache and regret, but not remorse.

How understanding, just like usual... And I haven't had any problems yet! Luo Shan felt both relieved and grateful as she sighed to herself.

She quickly gave Zhou Mingrui a meaningful look. "I'll make a move first."

After getting Zhou Mingrui's permission, she turned and walked towards where Jian Na and Li Ming were.

She suppressed the explosive joy in her heart, not showing it for the moment.

I succeeded!

I did it!

I completed an important task at the risk of my life!

As Luo Shan's steps became increasingly light, she suddenly felt her body become weightless.

Her throat began to tighten, as if a rope was wrapped around it.

Her breathing quickly became labored, and her knees and elbows felt as if they were filled with thick glue.

Still... something went wrong....

Will I... be strangled... to death... like this... in public?

In this state, Luo Shan heard the rumbling thunder.

She found her surroundings had become quite dark and extremely oppressive, with the passing pedestrians all appearing blurry and distorted.

This... really is... a dream... Luo Shan suddenly had this realization, a realization tinged with sorrow and sighing.

At this moment, she saw Jian Na.

Jian Na was still clear.

Then, Luo Shan clearly saw the anxious and worried expression on Jian Na's face.

She once again felt that her life was still real, still meaningful.

She managed to give Jenna another smile, with difficulty.

Her body also gradually became blurry, like those background characters seen hazily in a dream.

Rumble!

Amid the rolling thunder, Zhou Mingrui also noticed the blurring and distortion of the people around him, and the darkness and unreality of the entire high-speed rail station.

The only light came from the side and behind him and Zhou Sasa, from the passage leading to the parking lot.

Clear radiance gathered there, as if forming a huge door.

Zhou Mingrui instinctively grabbed Zhou Sasa's forearm, no longer caring about the luggage, and ran wildly towards that door of light.

After running a few steps, he felt Zhou Sasa stop, becoming heavy, making it impossible for him to drag her forward.

Has Sasa also been affected by the anomaly? Zhou Mingrui turned his head concernedly to look at his sister.

In his eyes, Zhou Sasa had somehow already become transparent, thin, like a mirror and the reflection of a person in a mirror.

Zhou Sasa's black dress had half-merged with the "mirror," making the surface appear dark.

Zhou Mingrui saw himself in the dark mirror.

Short black hair, deep brown eyes, non-prescription glasses, soft contours and a somewhat handsome appearance....

As Zhou Mingrui clearly saw the image in the mirror, the him in the mirror suddenly curled his lips, revealing an eerie and chilling smile.

The Zhou Mingrui in the mirror began to overlap with Zhou Sasa, who had regressed to a pure female form.

Wh-Zhou Mingrui instinctively took two steps back.

Just then, he heard a "bang" of a gunshot.

A bullet tinged with a dull blue-green color shot out from somewhere, hitting the mirror that Zhou Sasa had become, hitting the reflected image of Zhou Mingrui in the mirror.

Certain Death!

Franca had lent the Inevitable Gun to Jenna.

Crack!

That mirror quickly shattered, falling to the ground like a rainstorm.

All of its fragments lost their luster, no longer reflecting anything.

Zhou Mingrui instinctively turned sideways and saw Jenna, holding a brass-colored revolver, with delicate features, not at all blurry or distorted.

He didn't recognize this beautiful young woman.

Jenna nodded slightly to Zhou Mingrui, trying her best to show her goodwill.

When Zhou Mingrui witnessed his mirror self revealing that chilling smile, he had already judged this to be an enemy, someone harboring malice towards him.

This led to a series of thoughts:

They've used Sasa!

I must find out what has happened to the real Sasa!

Based on this judgment, Zhou Mingrui held no ill will towards Jenna, who had shattered the mirror and his mirror self, believing she was sent by friendly forces to stop this.

Seeing Zhou Mingrui return a friendly nod, Jenna hadn't had time to feel joy, hadn't had time to think about how to save Luo Shan, when she suddenly felt the dream strongly rejecting her, felt her thoughts becoming sluggish, felt two kinds of pain attacking simultaneously.

She was being kicked out of the dream, she was being rapidly turned into a marionette.

Just as Zhou Mingrui was about to ask the woman opposite what to do next, he saw her face contort, seeming to be in great pain.

Has she been attacked? An invisible attack? Zhou Mingrui hurriedly looked around, searching for potential enemies.

He then saw that the pillars and screens throughout the high-speed rail station had become illusory, either elongated or widened, becoming dark mirrors.

All these mirrors reflected Zhou Mingrui's searching figure, but without exception, the Zhou Mingrui in the mirrors all wore cold, chilling smiles.

"They" suddenly stopped, all turning to look at Jenna. their voices overlapping as they laughed.

"It's too late!

"Zhou Sasa is the medium, the medium pointing to that mirror world!"

Jenna, who was fighting against the dream's rejecting force and rapid marionettization, suddenly froze.

Too late?

Has the Zhou Mingrui in the mirror already been born?

Is the Celestial Worthy about to use this?

On one side of the high-speed rail station that had transformed into a mirror world, Lumian, who had never formally appeared, unhurriedly took out the magic mirror Arrodes.

In a rich timbre, he intoned, "The second question.

On the surface of the mirror, pale words quickly appeared: "Ask quickly!"

Arrodes didn't repeat its rules, because this was the second question, not the first.

Lumian curled his lips slightly and said, "Are you a weapon, or a medium?"

On the dark mirror surface shimmering with water, the pale words writhed and changed, forming new content: "Medium!"

Then, the magic mirror Arodes posed its own question:

"How do you want to use me?"

"Certainly not as a brick to throw at someone," Lumian laughed.

...

At Four-Way Street, in the Jinxiu Dongfang Community, inside the Mute Art Studio.

Anderson Hood sat in front of his easel, bored, weal yawning.

At this moment, he heard the rumbling thunder and felt the light suddenly dim, the environment becoming extremely oppressive.

Anderson stood up and walked to the window, finding that the pedestrians below had all become blurry masses.

He smiled and looked up at the sky, saying. "My task is about to be completed."

As he spoke, he raised his right hand and snapped his fingers with a loud crack.

Boom!

A violent explosion occurred deep within the building, with flames rising from various places.

In an instant, the newly renovated but uninhabited "motel" was engulfed by raging red flames.

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Chapter 1029: Deep Darkness

[1,680 words]

As rumbling thunder sounded and the sky darkened, making the environment extremely oppressive.

Queen Mystic, maintaining the illusion of Lumina, picked up the phone and dialed a number.

It was the private number of Chief Yagates.

After connecting, Bernadette said directly, "I've received personal threats. I need the best protection."

She was reporting to the police.

She immediately explained, "It may be due to my father transferring power to me. I need protection!"

Bernadette emphasized the word "protection".

Chief Yagates was silent for a saying, "Okay."

...

In the gloomy oppression, most people in the dream city became blurry.

But this didn't stop them from going online, using their phones, checking information.

Just then, whether videos, books, novels, or messages, everything suddenly collapsed into pure snow-like static.

These countless noise points rapidly spread, forming a huge information vortex.

The online world experienced a malfunction.

...

Inside Mushu Hospital.

The blurry and distorted patients, doctors, nurses, orderlies and those who were still clear simultaneously raised their heads, looking up towards the ceiling.

The dark and gloomy sky suddenly split open, and pure brilliant sunlight instantly poured down, shining directly on the main building of Mushu Hospital, piercing every dark corner and every underground level.

In the low-hanging leaden clouds, countless silver white electric snakes intertwined into huge, flamboyant lightning.

Following the path carved out by the sunlight, this lightning struck the main building of Mushu Hospital, submerging it in a dazzling and intense ocean of thunder.

...

Inside the mirror-world-transformed Yangdu High - Speed Rail Station.

After answering the magic mirror Arrodes's question, Lumian didn't rush to take further action. He still calmly asked as if waiting for something. "The third question, how can we get the owner of the Star Dream Provisions Store to provide necessary help for Franca?"

On the surface of the magic mirror, those pale words didn't change color, but recombined into new content: "Pass Franca's Mirror Substitution through me, through the mirror world, to Her."

Then, the magic mirror Arrodes asked in return: "Don't you have it?"

"I do." Lumian laughed, took out Franca's Mirror Substitution, and pressed it into the glass mirror surface of the magic mirror Arrodes.

At this special moment when the dream city was shaken and character images were blurred, the restrictions on his Beyonder powers also lessened. He had recovered to a level almost equivalent to Sequence 4, which was why he could use the mirror world to quickly send an item to the Star Dream Provisions Store, which was clearly over ten kilometers away.

After doing this, Lumian glanced twice at Zhou Mingrui, who looked grave and was constantly moving away from those dark mirrors and mirror selves, then gripped the magic mirror Arrodes with his left palm.

It's time!

He unhesitatingly activated the residual aura of the Blood Emperor in the center of his right palm.

The brand that had turned dark red due to the fusion with an unknown boon suddenly became prominent, seemingly showing signs of melting back into blood.

However, that mad, violent, bloody aura didn't dissipate, being firmly suppressed by a deathly pale force.

Of course, after Lumian's last use of the corpse wax V candle, the pale and dark red had shown extremely subtle signs of fusion. Now, at that point of fusion, it strangely darkened, caving in slightly, showing unusual changes.

Lumian reached his right palm into the Traveler's Bag and took out the Card of Blasphemy he got from the mirror Emperor Roselle-the Demoness card!

He pressed this Demoness card tightly against his palm, against the mutated residual aura of the Blood Emperor and the Underworld Daoist's seal, against the slight depression produced by the fusion of pale and dark red.

Almost simultaneously, Lumian felt a bone-chilling coldness and horror in the center of his right palm.

He didn't need to look with his eyes; an image naturally appeared in his mind.

His palm had gained a "pinhole", a "pinhole" formed by pure darkness.

As expected, this Demoness card should be used here... If I didn't have it, I'd have to light the corpse wax candle, which would not only be rushed in terms of time, requiring the ritual to be held earlier and adding considerable risk, but the effect might not be as good... As these thoughts flashed through Lumian's mind, he extended his right hand holding the Demoness card towards the magic mirror Arrodes.

His hand penetrated the surface of this ancient silver mirror, reaching into the area behind the mirror.

But he didn't enter himself, it was more like using the magic mirror as a medium for "casting spells".

The next second, a scene appeared in Lumian's mind: the dark void around the area behind the mirror seemed to be covered by an invisible curtain, behind which pairs of eyes were watching the outside world, and nameless things were flowing silently.

This was the area behind the mirror corresponding to the magic mirror Arrodes, which was clearly somewhat special compared to other mirrors.

Then, Lumian "saw" that the curtain covering the dark void silently collapsed and peeled off as his right hand entered.

The entire darkness was collapsing.

What appeared in Lumian's mind wasn't the pairs of eyes he had imagined, nor was it a surging river, but a viscous liquid that was difficult to describe in words, seemingly containing all colors.

These liquids seemed to form an illusory ocean. Although Lumian hadn't truly "seen" or touched it, just sensing it made him feel that his body and mind were beginning to fall, his spirit gradually becoming abnormal.

Then, the illusory ocean was pushed aside by an invisible force, moving away from Lumian's "mind".

Following this path through the ocean, Lumian's consciousness quickly went forward, "seeing" the gray stone walls, "seeing" the blood flowing on the stone walls.

Those crimson blood formed sentences: "To test out the correct plan, He finally decided to let the Red Priest and the Demoness from the same era meet, guiding Them to combine together..."

"This will bring about a destined accident..."

The scene froze here, and the magic mirror Arrodes in Lumian's palm suddenly emitted an ancient, chaotic radiance.

Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, in the arrival hall.

Zhou Mingrui had already turned and started running wildly, but no matter where he ran, the pillars, walls, floor, and ceiling would turn into mirrors, reflecting his figure.

And the him in the mirror always wore a cold, chilling smile.

After running for a while, Zhou Mingrui suddenly stopped, because his head, feet, and surroundings had all become dark mirrors, all reflecting him.

"Give up..."

"Give up..."

Every Zhou Mingrui in the mirrors persuaded.

They were not only persuading, but also reaching their hands out of the mirror surfaces, grabbing at Zhou Mingrui, leaving him nowhere to hide, nowhere to escape.

Zhou Mingrui didn't give up. In the narrow space, he dodged left and right, barely avoiding the first round of grasps.

At this moment, a pure darkness covered with grayish-white fog and hiding a vast city appeared prominently in all the mirrors on the scene.

In the blink of an eye, the grayish-white fog and the vast city collapsed towards the depths of the darkness.

That darkness "came alive", surging towards the mirror surfaces, surging towards the mirror Zhou Mingrui behind each mirror.

The mirror Zhou Mingrui tried hard to grab Zhou Mingrui, wanting to escape from the mirrors, but in such a short time, it was really difficult to succeed.

Soon, the darkness surged to the area behind the mirrors, swallowing one mirror Zhou Mingrui after another, freezing the cold, chilling smiles on their faces.

This all-engulfing darkness irresistibly filled all the areas behind the mirrors with an overwhelming momentum.

All the mirrored Zhou Mingrui disappeared.

The darkness continued forward, breaking through mirror after mirror, pouring into Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.

This high-speed rail station began to collapse, inch by inch, as if the dream was gradually shattering, the fragments falling into the deep darkness.

At this time, Jenna found that the dream's rejecting force and the force of rapid marionettization had both weakened a lot. She hurriedly approached the blurry Luo Shan, trying to take her out of the high-speed rail station.

As for whether the damage to the dream would continue after leaving the high-speed rail station, and what would happen to Luo Shan then, Jenna didn't think about it for the moment, nor could she think about it.

Unfortunately, the distance between them was too far. Before Jenna could truly get close to Luo Shan, she saw that deep darkness swallow the corresponding area.

Luo Shan's blurry figure rapidly faded, bursting like a soap bubble.

The last scene she saw was Jian Na rushing towards her with an anxious face.

She smiled with relief.

She opened her mouth, but couldn't say anything.

She completely disappeared.

At the same time, Jenna seemed to hear Luo Shan saying: "Remember me, don't forget!"

Jenna stopped her steps, and before the deep darkness surged over, she left this city with the help of the remaining dream rejecting force.

She responded to Luo Shan's words in her heart, I will remember you forever!

Lumian, who was far from this deep darkness, silently sighed in relief after seeing Jenna's expression become confused and bewildered.

Next, he watched expressionlessly as the dreamscape Jenna was dissolved by the deep darkness, as Zhou Mingrui ran wildly in the high-speed rail station, trying to get away from the deep darkness surging like seawater.

The surge of that darkness gradually slowed down, as if suppressed and weakened by the dream's main consciousness.

Finally, after swallowing more than half of the high-speed rail station, the deep darkness stopped just tens of centimeters away from Zhou Mingrui.

The dream city stabilized again, and even the you remaining passengers and those meeting them gradually became clear.

Zhou Mingrui ran a few more steps, confirming that the danger had really eased.

He then saw the handsome security guard Li Ming walking out from a corner not far away, walking towards him.

"Is this upheaval over?" Zhou Mingrui asked urgently.

Lumian had already put the magic mirror Arrodes and the Demoness card back into the Traveler's Bag. He looked at Zhou Mingrui and calmly answered when they were still a few meters apart, "I'd like to say that things are over.

"But unfortunately, they aren't yet."

Zhou Mingrui was stunned for a moment, his back gradually straightening, the corners of his mouth curling up slightly, his expression no longer the same as before.

He chuckled softly.

"Yes, not yet."

Thanks to the user "[Максим Довбняк](#)" ([Telegram](#)) for the chapters provided!

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Chapter 1030: Face to Face

[1,793 words]

Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, half collapsed and fallen into deep darkness, as if swallowed by an abyss. The other half, though restored to stability and normalcy, remained dim with unlit lamps. Only a few paths leading to the outside world had light converging, forming brilliant and clear light gates.

In this environment, Zhou Mingrui, with his back to the deep darkness, looked at Lumian and asked in a calm voice, "You know?"

Lumian nodded lightly and said, "Yes.

"Theoretically, I should have waited for Anthony and Ludwig to wake up An Xiaotian, hear words like 'be careful of Zhou Mingrui' from his mouth, then be kicked out of the dream, and through the indirect influence of the Major Arcana cards, receive the corresponding information to know the corresponding truth. But Peng Deng's true hint has already given me the answer.

"On the surface, he was hinting to us that he was the childhood friend of both Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy, but the reverse is also true. Zhou Mingrui is both Peng Deng's childhood friend and the childhood friend of the original God Almighty. The two aspects of his identity are unified and merged together.

"In other words, Zhou Mingrui is both Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy!"

Zhou Mingrui, wearing a faint smile, slightly raised his chin, assuming a listening posture.

Lumian further said, "This also aligns with the magic mirror Arrodes's hint to 'beware of the night'. During the day, Mr. Fool's power takes the upper hand, and Zhou Mingrui equals Mr. Fool. At night, you, the Celestial Worthy, become active, and Zhou Mingrui will be closer to you. So, even just approaching, without any hints, there, would be risks.

"Based on this judgment, any hints, help, or awakening given to Zhou Mingrui would benefit both Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy."

"And Peng Deng, as a symbol of the original God Almighty, doesn't meet Zhou Mingrui at night because if you two were to meet, there's a high probability that very unpleasant things and accidents would occur."

Zhou Mingrui nodded and said, "He is formed from that bit of power left in the magic mirror and part of the spirit and consciousness that Grisha brought into the dream. He can't compare to me here. If we were to meet at night, it would be advantageous for me, but problematic for Him."

Zhou Mingrui didn't deny that his current self was The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings.

Lumian showed an expression of understanding. "That individual's real name is Grisha?"

Without waiting for Zhou Mingrui to respond, he continued, "Combining Peng Deng's true hint, Chief Yagates's state, the fundamental reason for the dream's restrictions, and other facts, I had roughly guessed what had happened before and your current situation when I entered the dream for the third time.

"Several years ago, shortly after Mr. Fool had just fallen asleep, he probably used himself as bait to lure you out and sealed you into the Zhou Mingrui manifestation formed from his spirit and consciousness.

"From a mystical perspective, this symbolizes the fusion and opposition of the both of you, while in reality, you are indeed within his body, indeed restricted by him. This is reflected in the dream with a similar symbolism!"

At this point, Lumian paused, as if observing Zhou Mingrui's reaction.

Zhou Mingrui, with his smile unchanged, said, "Continue, I'm listening."

Smiling, Lumian replied, "This also explains why only Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia from Zhou Mingrui's original character relationships appeared, while others came from the identities of Klein Moretti, Gehrman Sparrow, and so on.

"He doesn't want those feelings buried deep in his to be exploited by you. Of heart, the softest ones, to be course, for those you already know, there's nothing he can do."

Zhou Mingrui nodded lightly and said, "Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia didn't originally exist either. They were created by Grisha using the Dreamweaver ability and Zhou Mingrui's subconscious cognition."

"I see, no wonder Zhou Mingrui suddenly froze when mentioning other childhood friends. That might be the true reflection of Peng Deng." Lumian had a sudden realization.

He continued, "Afterwards, Mr. Fool might have made a wish or used some other ability to remove Beyonder powers from the dream city, allowing Zhou Mingrui to live as an ordinary human. During this process, he might have been fooled by you, forgetting who he really was, forgetting many things.

"Overall, this ordinary human state is very advantageous for Mr. Fool, because he became a great existence step by step from being an ordinary person. Even though he has inevitably been influenced and eroded by godhood, he still retains a part of his

humanity, the part that is intense and fervent for him. But you, The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, are naturally great and don't possess such humanity at all.

"When the battlefield between you two is fixed on an ordinary human with only humanity and in an urban environment without Beyonder powers, you are naturally suppressed, restricted, and weakened. Humanity temporarily triumphs over godhood,

"This can also be interpreted symbolically. The fact that Zhou Mingrui, who has merged Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy, is an ordinary person symbolizes that humanity has gained the upper hand, with godhood suppressed to a corner, temporarily negligible."

"Yes, at that time I was influenced by that drop of river water and couldn't do more. I could only accept this change," Zhou Mingrui frankly admitted.

Lumian glanced at those dream figures running out of the high-speed rail station and said,

"When you recovered, you started influencing this dream city, either with the help of other beings or by summoning your original believers, bringing items involving the supernatural, like automatic vending machines, onto the stage.

"One of their important meanings is to gradually guide Mr. Fool, letting him recognize that this is a world with supernatural abilities, recognizing from Sequence 9 step by step to Sequence 0. And as this recognition and sequence level changes, the godhood will gradually grow stronger, step by step suppressing humanity.

"According to this plan, the longer we linger in the dream city, the more we use supernatural abilities, the more beneficial it actually is for you. This is something you didn't tell Zaratulstra and other believers, fearing it might invite interference from other beings.

"Similarly, you don't want to wait that long, which is why you induced Zhou Mingrui to consume the Assassin potion and let the mirrored Emperor Roselle enter here.

"You wanted to use the method of creating a stable Mirror Person to split Zhou Mingrui. This is equivalent to opening a gap in the seal that Mr. Fool constructed with himself. Once the Mirror Person is gradually mastered by you, you can walk out of the mirror, replace the 'original body', using truth as falsehood and turning falsehood into truth. As for the gender change affecting cognition, those are just smoke and mirrors.

"But unfortunately, the original God Almighty foresaw this scene before His fall and left arrangements spanning several eras, leaving behind the magic mirror Arrodes.

"One of the functions of the great horror in the depths of the special mirror world is prepared for you!"

Zhou Mingrui said with a smile, "When I initially woke up and saw that magic mirror, I roughly guessed what kind of things would happen."

Lumian nodded quite approvingly. "Yes, you should have made extra preparations for this.

"However..."

At this point, he smiled and said, "Of all the things Amon said, the one I agree with most is:

"Filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts.

"So, what is the most fundamental fact now?"

Lumian stared into Zhou Mingrui's deep brown eyes behind his plain glasses and said,

"The most fundamental fact now is that I'm standing in front of you, saying so many words about your true situation, yet I haven't been kicked out of this dream, nor do I feel myself being marionettized!"

Lumian smiled again. "You had Zhou Sasa arrive in Yangdu early, not only to disrupt our rhythm and prevent the original God Almighty's arrangements from truly becoming reality, but also to prevent interference from other beings, wanting to create a stable, long-term Mirror Person for Zhou Mingrui before They were ready.

"This shows that you still attach great importance to and anticipate this matter. Extra preparations, if possible, are better left unused as they're not as convenient.

"I watched as things deteriorated step by step, as you truly found an opportunity to awaken, and had Anthony and Ludwig go to wake up An Xiaotian, which actually no longer had much significance. I asked Queen Mystic to help direct the dream's main consciousness's attention, asked Stiano and other gods to help confuse the information world and contain other places, all to attract your attention, to make you feel that you could win, to invest more power and stakes in this matter.

"This way, when the original God Almighty's arrangements erupted through the medium of the magic mirror Arrodes, you would be weakened to the greatest extent.

"So, I, who entered the dream for the third time, came right before you, spoke the truth of the facts, and still wasn't kicked out on the spot.

"You temporarily don't have this ability!"

Zhou Mingrui laughed. "Don't you think you're like bait right now?"

Lumian sighed and said, "I know, you're waiting for your extra preparations to arrive. Otherwise, how could I have this opportunity to dialogue with you?"

"But, I'm also waiting."

At this point, a brilliant smile appeared on Lumian's face.

"Haven't you noticed that one of my companions is missing?"

"So many things erupting simultaneously just now was also to distract your attention, to make you overlook her actions!"

Seeing Zhou Mingrui gazing at him, Lumian slightly raised his chin and said emphatically, "The Major Arcana card holders' guesses weren't wrong, their attempts weren't wrong either!"

...

Dream City, inside a movie theater.

Franca was sitting in the second row, watching the screen in front where The Great Pirate 3 was playing.

At this moment, her body was faint and indistinct, as if a sketch had been erased with an eraser. Around her, the few spectators had all become blurry, but were slowly stabilizing, gradually becoming clear.

Franca had checked earlier and found that due to The Great Pirate 3 about to end its run, only two theaters were showing it for the noon screening. So she specifically took a taxi to this one, the farthest from Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.

And her search information had been lost in the current chaos and disorder of the Internet.

Hearing the thunder in the sky quickly recede, seeing Gehrman Sparrow standing on the bow of the pirate ship appear on the screen, Franca suddenly stood up.

She walked to the front of the projection room in a few steps, and before the few spectators could protest, she took a breath, stretched out her right palm, and pressed it against the screen.

Her figure quickly became ethereal, leaning forward, entering that screen.

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