

Menu 1121

Chapter 1121: People around Hui Lijing will all... (2)

So, she chose to treat the 'gun' as if it were a long spear, short sword, and dagger.

She clearly remembered Jason's words: 'The advent of gunpowder has made everything gradually become fair!'

Afterward, she started to integrate a stabbing-like motion into her daily draw-and-shoot technique.

It was a bit difficult at first.

But after practicing a few times, it became easier.

And now, it was time to demonstrate the results.

Bang!

The gun fired.

The bullet accurately hit the monster's chest.

The monster's lifted palm froze in mid-air.

He looked at his own chest in disbelief.

He got shot?

By a nobody?

Shame instantly flooded the monster's heart, followed by fury.

Unmatched rage!

"I'm going to eat you!"

The monster roared.

An invisible current of air burst forth from its body.

Poorly-fitted clothes were instantly blown away.

Hair that seemed as trivial as chaff also took flight, revealing the creature's true face.

A snake.

Hidden under that hair was a strange snake head.

It looked somewhat human, but also demon-like.

Seeing this, Hui Lijing was stunned.

Once again, she was up close and personal with a being from the 'Inside World'.

Only...

Hui Lijing looked towards the creature's chest.

The fine scales, no longer obstructed by clothing, were completely exposed to the air.

An orange-yellow bullet was embedded in them.

The bullet was already flattened due to the impact.

And some of the creature's scales were shattered as well.

But that was all.

To say it was fatal would be far-fetched; the creature's wounds could not even be considered minor.

Indeed, I'm still lacking!

Next time, I must use armor-piercing bullets!

If there is a next time, that is!

Hui Lijing sighed inwardly, accompanied by a sense of self-mockery.

As for the fear of death?

Of course, it was there.

But not very intense.

On the battlefield, Hui Lijing had gradually grown accustomed to living with the presence of death.

As for survival?

Hui Lijing also desired it.

However, that last modified 'stab' had already drained all her strength, even pulling the trigger was done with great difficulty.

Otherwise, Hui Lijing would definitely have fired off an entire clip of bullets.

A formidable enemy was right in front of her.

Unable to move a muscle.

Then, only death remained.

With this thought, Hui Lijing closed her eyes.

Then—

Bang!

Another gunshot.

Not far away, Uesugi was holding his gun, pulling the trigger.

The bullet accurately struck the half-human, half-snake monster.

"Do you want to die too?"

The half-demon roared.

And Uesugi kept on firing the trigger.

Bang!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Bullets rapidly poured onto the half-demon.

The half-demon began to dodge.

Then, he was hit repeatedly.

Not a single bullet missed.

All the bullets were embedded in the half-demon's body.

Especially the last two shots, the bullets even struck the ones already lodged in the half-demon's body.

This miraculous scene left Hui Lijing astonished.

It caused the half-demon to keep his distance warily.

What kind of marksmanship was this?

Uesugi was actually a sharpshooter?

No!

A King of Gunmen, that's more like it!

Hui Lijing, who was familiar with the use of firearms, was utterly shocked.

Meanwhile, the half-demon quickly recovered.

"Worthy of the Uesugi Family."

"Even in decline, you have such capabilities."

"Too bad..."

"You're not using armor-piercing bullets!"

The half-demon sneered.

However, it kept moving further away.

Inside the barrier, Hu Qiandai's eyes were wide open as she watched her father.

As his daughter, she knew all too well.

Her father was not adept at shooting.

In fact, he seldom even touched firearms.

It was not a facade.

It was indeed the truth.

Her father's hobbies were drinking tea, fishing, and reading.

Sometimes he would listen to music.

Marksmanship?

Sorry.

Never.

Which means...

Impossible?!

Upon reaching this conclusion, Hu Qiandai's gaze towards her father couldn't help but become strange.

"Could our luck really be this good?"

While Hu Qiandai was feeling emotional, Uesugi felt the same way.

Just a moment ago, he had fired the gun in desperation.

Hui Lijing was there in the ancestral home because of him, and now, she was in danger.

He couldn't just stand by indifferently.

In fact, Uesugi was somewhat regretful.

It wasn't that he regretted impulsively following them.

Hu Qiandai was his daughter; it was only right that he followed her.

His regret was that he shouldn't have allowed Hui Lijing to come along.

Dragging an innocent person into this was simply not right.

Thinking so at the bottom of his heart, Uesugi gestured to Hui Lijing.

But at this moment, Hui Lijing was completely exhausted, even standing there was her utmost effort.

She simply couldn't move.

This made Uesugi all the more anxious.

He knew his own capabilities best.

He had merely guessed out of luck, which had made the half-demon wary.

Real power?

It was as fragile as paper.

Ready to break at the slightest touch.

"Hmph, think you can escape?"

"None of you will get away."

While saying this, the half-demon didn't rush towards Uesugi but towards Hui Lijing.

Compared to Uesugi, whose Marksmanship posed a threat, Hui Lijing was undoubtedly a better target.

Although initially he hadn't seen Hui Lijing as a target, the circumstances had now changed.

Taking Hui Lijing hostage, and then capturing Uesugi more easily, was undoubtedly a better plan.

Thinking thus, the half-demon acted accordingly.

Bang!

Bang Bang Bang!

The sound of gunfire rang out again, and the half-demon, now on guard, was shot once more.

Although the wounds were insignificant, they made the half-demon even more suspicious and cautious.

He had clearly anticipated Uesugi's predictions.

How could he still be so accurate?

While the half-demon hesitated, wondering whether to distance himself again,

Click, click-click!

The sound of the firing pin hitting empty echoed once more.

Unlike the previous mockery towards Hui Lijing,

This time, the half-demon was ecstatic.

No more bullets!

A gun king without bullets!

What's the difference between that and a toothless old tiger?

With this in mind, the half-demon rushed towards Hui Lijing with Swift haste.

Uesugi's face changed.

The gun in his hand was picked up randomly, without a spare magazine at all.

At this moment, replenishing ammunition was impossible, and he could only watch helplessly as the half-demon drew closer to Hui Lijing, and when he saw the half-demon raising its claw, Uesugi's heart sank.

It's over!

What the half-demon wished to do, he knew all too well.

Similarly, Hu Qiandai was fully aware.

Therefore, Hu Qiandai charged out.

Although Kusakabe Mi had warned her not to come out, at this time, Hu Qiandai was unable to ignore the situation.

There was the friendship she shared with Hui Lijing.

And because Hui Lijing was wholly involved in this matter because of her father.

All of this made it impossible for Hu Qiandai to just stand by.

Her principles.

Her determination.

Forced her to step in.

"Come on!"

After psyching herself up, Hu Qiandai charged towards Hui Lijing.

She hoped to push Hui Lijing away, keeping her safe from harm.

And then—

She collided with the half-demon's lower back.

It wasn't because Hu Qiandai had changed her running direction, but because the half-demon had.

The half-demon had been guarding against Uesugi!

Although Uesugi no longer had bullets in his gun, who said he only had one gun?

Thus, in the midst of its charge, the half-demon changed direction abruptly.

It positioned itself beside Hui Lijing.

The half-demon intended to use Hui Lijing as a shield to block Uesugi's line of attack.

Then, it was hit solidly in the lower back by Hu Qiandai.

Bang!

Amidst the dull thud, the half-demon's expression drastically changed.

The power core hidden in its lower back had been struck!

How could this be?

I had taken so many precautions to hide it!

Everyone would assume my power core was in my skull!

How could it be discovered?

The half-demon turned its head to look at Hu Qiandai, its expression changing once again.

Hu Qiandai!

She was the target of this capture operation.

Naturally, he would not mistake her identity.

But the data indicated that Hu Qiandai was just an ordinary heiress.

Could an ordinary heiress locate his power core?

Impossible!

Even some powerful Onmyoji couldn't do that.

Not to mention an ordinary heiress.

Furthermore!

Her father's unbelievably skilled Marksmanship.

Once again, the half-demon retreated.

He looked at Uesugi and Hu Qiandai with an unprecedented serious demeanor, and after a moment, he slowly said—

"I see now!"

Chapter 1122: You really are an old general on the stage!

The Uesugi Family has fallen.

It could even be said to have decayed.

This point is beyond doubt.

According to the information collected, the Uesugi Family has long become an ordinary family. Despite having a fairly decent winery as its support industry, in the 'Inside World,' there have long been no rumors about the Uesugi Family.

It's the kind that has completely disappeared, gone without a trace.

Even yōkai that have lived for over a hundred years do not know of this so-called 'Uesugi' family.

If it weren't for the fact that their Leader was also of no ordinary origin, it would be impossible to know that the Uesugi Family once had such a glorious time during the Warring States period.

But there was one thing they got wrong.

The Uesugi Family was indeed in decline.

But it wasn't completely deprived of 'legacy.'

Perhaps over the long years, the 'legacy' of the Uesugi Family had already been reduced to one-tenth of what it once was, already fragmented and broken.

But, some legacies were still passed down.

Uesugi, Hu Qiandai is the best example.

The former should have combined the secret technique with gunpowder weapons, otherwise, how could the Marksmanship be so exaggerated?

Moreover, the secret techniques that combined gunpowder weapons have existed since the end of the Warring States period.

It's just that it has only become valued in the last 50 years.

And Hu Qiandai?

A secret technique similar to 'Xin's Eye'?

Thinking this, the half-yōkai took a deep breath.

The next moment

"Even if you have some legacy, you're still far too lacking!"

"I will show you what real Strength is!"

With such a declaration-like statement, the half-yōkai's body began to swell.

In a single breath, the half-human half-snake yōkai transformed into a gigantic snake that was 10 meters in length.

It hissed its forked tongue.

Its cold gaze swept across Uesugi, Hu Qiandai, and Hui Lijing.

The three who were being stared at felt a tightness in their hearts.

Hui Lijing, who had just regained a trace of her mobility, pulled Hu Qiandai along and started to retreat step by step.

Uesugi also ran over, shielding his daughter with his body.

However, such 'defense' was utterly useless against a completely yōkai-transformed half-yōkai.

A lash of the tail.

The 'defense' of the three was shattered.

Hui Lijing rolled out flying and fainted there.

Uesugi, the one specially taken care of, suffered broken arms and fell far away on the ground, unable to get up at all.

A marksman with broken arms made everything easy to deal with.

Hu Qiandai still stood in the same place.

The half-yōkai's attack did not reach her.

But the thick tail coiled her up.

Her face smeared with the blood of Hui Lijing and her own father, Hu Qiandai began to struggle fiercely.

But it was useless.

The gap was too great.

"Hahaha, do you see the gap now?"

"Human beings like you are completely vulnerable under my earnestness!"

"Don't waste your energy!"

The fully yōkai-transformed half-yōkai let out a piercing laugh.

Especially upon seeing Hu Qiandai's struggling, the laugh grew even louder.

With that laugh, the snake yōkai stood upright, lowered its head, and its massive body's shadow covered Hu Qiandai.

The shadow as large as a small mountain, brought with it endless pressure, causing the struggling Hu Qiandai to pause.

"It seems you understand!"

"We, born with racial Talent, are destined to stand at the top of the food chain!"

"And you?"

"You're nothing but our food!"

The snake yōkai sneered viciously.

And as if to intimidate Hu Qiandai, it lowered its head while speaking.

The hissing forked tongue constantly swept by Hu Qiandai.

Goosebumps rose all over Hu Qiandai's body.

She wanted to struggle.

But the cold breath made her utterly unable to move.

It wasn't like the previous horror.

It was the true sense of 'Strength.'

The unique Strength of a yōkai.

It was a kind of racial suppression.

Similar to how a mouse feels when it sees a cat.

Hu Qiandai even felt her lungs beginning to go numb, her breathing about to stop.

Indeed...

She was not an opponent at all?

Hu Qiandai thought to herself silently.

Just now, she inadvertently hit what the opponent called the core, and together with the Marksmanship her father displayed, a bit of luck rose in Hu Qiandai's heart.

Maybe I could do it.

But luck was indeed too fickle.

Just now, Hu Qiandai felt like she was the child of destiny.

Now?

Why had she turned into just a bystander?

After high hopes, there was the most thorough disappointment.

Just a moment of luck, yet still thinking of turning the table?

It's really naive!

Hu Qiandai couldn't help but mock herself silently.

But, the thought of struggling did not disappear.

Even at this moment, when she had lost the ability to move and even breathing became difficult, she did not give up struggling.

If only there were a Renowned Blade!

Hu Qiandai thought to herself in her hard struggle.

The snake yōkai saw Hu Qiandai who had not given up and couldn't help but laugh again.

"That look in your eyes, that expression, isn't it saying that if you had a blade, you'd be fine?"

"Don't deny it!"

"I've seen too many such looks before!"

"Before they get eaten by me, they all look like this!"

"You're just as foolish as they are, truly believing that a mere blade can bridge the gap?"

"Even if they were the Renowned Blades collected by the big boss, their strength lies in being held by powerful people!"

The last words of the snake yōkai were almost a roar.

With such roaring, Hu Qiandai's ears rang with buzzing noises.

Her eyes, too, experienced a brief bewilderment.

And in the distance, Hui Lijing was slowly coming to.

The female detective instinctively tried to get up.

But the pain all over her body made it impossible for her to move.

Chapter 1123: You Are Truly an Old General on the Stage! (2)

Watching the giant snake and Hu Qiandai being entangled by it, she was extremely anxious.

What to do?

What to do?

The female detective asked herself.

Meanwhile, the serpent demon continued to speak.

"Not to mention you!"

"Even those among you once called 'Swordmasters', when they brandished those laughable swords, in the end, they're still just food!"

"Their fate as food never changed!"

"You're the same!"

"I've eaten more than one Swordmaster!"

"And you, an insect like this?"

"I don't mind eating one more!"

"You know?"

After the threatening words, the serpent demon stopped, satisfied.

It was just boasting.

Although it had eaten Swordmasters, it was with the help of the boss, as it went to clean up the 'aftermath',

Fight a real Swordmaster?

Average Swordmasters were no problem.

Slightly more powerful ones, and it would be slain.

But, what does it matter?

In any case, it was only to deceive Hu Qiandai before its eyes.

Hu Qiandai didn't know the truth.

As long as it was fooled, that would suffice.

And judging from the current situation, it was doing quite well.

Hu Qiandai, dazed and confused, was clearly taken in.

Immediately, the serpent demon prepared to leave with Hu Qiandai in tow.

But at that moment, Hu Qiandai suddenly spoke up—

"What did the Swordmasters fight for?"

"They were already strong, even without fighting you, they should have been able to live well, right?"

"Why did they fight?"

Hu Qiandai asked with her head bowed.

"Fools!"

"Those guys, always mouthing off about so-called 'justice', about protecting others, and never backing down even a step, are fools."

"Then... they brandished their laughable swords and became our food!"

The serpent demon laughed scornfully without looking back.

Then, it paused.

It felt something odd about its own scales.

Instinctively turning its head, the serpent demon saw Hu Qiandai biting into its scales.

Bang!

Without any hesitation, the serpent demon flung Hu Qiandai away.

"Bastard!"

"Lower life form!"

"Dare to bite me!"

Even though the bite didn't damage it in the slightest, such an act enraged the serpent demon.

Looking at Hu Qiandai, who had fallen with a bloody head, it struck out with its tail without hesitation.

Bang!

Hu Qiandai was powerless to dodge and was heavily smashed into the ground.

Blood sprayed out accompanied by the sound of bones breaking and tendons snapping.

"Hu Qiandai!"

Uesugi, Hui Lijing called out loudly.

Uesugi, the father with both arms broken, shakily stood up by pushing his head against the ground.

Hui Lijing, enduring the severe pain throughout her body, began to move step by step toward Hu Qiandai.

The serpent demon watched with its cold eyes a scene that felt somewhat familiar.

"So that's how it is!"

"You too are such fools!"

"Hahaha!"

Commenting thus, the serpent demon laughed again. It looked at Hu Qiandai, covered in blood, consciousness clearly fading, then glanced at Hui Lijing, who could barely stand due to her injuries, and spoke directly—

"No!"

"You're even bigger fools than them!"

"At least they had a sword."

"What about you?"

"Defenseless!"

"But... even if you had a sword, what could you do with it?"

"You, an insect like this, even if you had a sword, what could you do? Could you use it to slay me?"

The serpent demon laughed out loud.

The semi-conscious Hu Qiandai, as if sensing something.

She murmured in a daze.

"The sword."

"My sword."

This murmuring made the serpent demon all the more disdainful.

At a time like this, still lost in an illusion.

How could there possibly be a sword here?

It couldn't just fall from the sky!

Hui Lijing, moving a step at a time, heard Hu Qiandai's murmuring.

She looked at her friend lying in a pool of blood, her teeth clenched tight.

At this moment, the female detective hated her own weakness profoundly.

Why couldn't she be as strong as Jason?

No!

She didn't need to be as strong as Jason!

Just half as strong as Jason would be enough!

At least!

At least fulfill Hu Qiandai's last wish!

Yes!

Her last wish!

The female detective could tell, Hu Qiandai wasn't going to survive.

Such injuries, a normal person would have died long ago.

That Hu Qiandai could still speak, it was a miracle.

Or rather, it was determination.

Longing for a sword.

That was Hu Qiandai's determination.

"Please give her a sword!"

"Please give Hu Qiandai a sword!"

"Whoever can hear, does it matter who, can you hear me?"

"I beg you..."

Hui Lijing staggered on, shouting loudly in her heart.

She did not know what to do anymore.

All she wished was to fulfill Hu Qiandai's last desire.

That was all.

Ding!

A clear and sharp sword cry suddenly rang out.

Echoing in everyone's ears.

The next moment—

Sword Qi soared into the sky.

A straight line, cutting through the clouds.

The clouds were split in two.

Under the sunlight, a cold light emanated.

The unmatched sharpness, as if to cleave the sky itself.

Roar!

Roar roar roar!

Draconic chants emerged from the abyss-like depths below.

It.

Had been waiting for a long time!

It.

Finally heard its master's response!

It.

Has come!

Clang!

With a flash of cold gleam, a long blade shot out from the ground, landing precisely in the blood-soaked hands of Hu Qiandai.

Upon gripping the hilt, Hu Qiandai, whose life seemed to be ebbing away, lifted her head as if revitalized.

She wanted to look at the blade in her hands.

However, she saw a woman dressed in gorgeous ancient attire, beautiful like a princess.

The woman, seeing Hu Qiandai's gaze, gave a low curtsy.

"My Lord,"

The woman said.

The voice was familiar, very familiar, it was...

"Were you the one in my previous dreams?"

Hu Qiandai asked subconsciously.

"It is I, my Lord,"

"I am..."

The woman's voice was drowned out, leaving only the movement of her lips opening and closing.

But to Hu Qiandai, it was unmistakably clear.

The words appeared at the bottom of her heart.

"It's Himekazu Hitachi!"

She was so certain.

And just as she called out the name of her beloved blade, a brilliance emerged.

A substantial white glow spread from 'Himekazu Hitachi' covering Hu Qiandai's whole body.

The next moment, the light converged.

Hu Qiandai, who was on the brink of death, stood up again.

A blue-and-white armor skirt replaced her original dress.

She held the long blade and looked ahead.

Behind her, a huge banner, suspended in mid-air, fluttered noisily.

The banner rippled.

The light danced.

Gradually converging.

Finally, a word emerged resplendently—

Bi!

When the 'Bi' character appeared, the dragon chant sounded again.

Unlike the previous ethereal presence.

This time it was real.

It made the serpent demon in front of her retreat continuously, quivering with fear.

It was as if she faced her true bane!

No!

To be precise, it was the suppression by a higher being!

An otherworldly presence, forcing it to submit to the ground.

But how could this be!

A mere mortal!

"I will eat you!"

The incomprehensible suppression drove the serpent demon completely mad as it lunged at Hu Qiandai with bloodshot eyes.

Roar!

A putrid wind assaulted her face.

Hu Qiandai, however, lowered her head to look at the treasured blade in her hand.

"Himekazu Hitachi, we can fight side by side once more,"

She murmured softly, drawing her sword.

Clang!

With the unsheathing of the blade.

A cold light flashed.

Slash!

The massive serpent demon was cleaved in half.

Its head also shattered into pieces.

The incomplete eyes stared at the 'Bi' character banner in the void.

Suddenly, it recalled a rumor about the Uesugi Family from the Warring States period—

Where the 'Bi' banner goes, unstoppable!

But that was during the Warring States!

That person had long been dead beyond death!

How could this be?

With such doubt, the serpent demon plunged into complete darkness.

Hu Qiandai breathed a sigh of relief.

She looked at the 'Bi' character banner fluttering above, her eyes filled with bewilderment.

Then, she collapsed backwards.

"Hu Qiandai!"

Uesugi, Hui Lijing, stunned by the scene before them, ran over in a hurry.

Neither of them knew what had happened to Hu Qiandai, but the concern in their eyes and on their faces never changed.

Just like the unwavering conviction in Hu Qiandai's heart.

Whether it was in a past life... or in this one.

Jason was no different.

He suddenly stopped in his tracks, raising his head to look in the direction of the ancestral home, unconsciously swallowing his saliva, and whispered to himself—

"How fragrant."

Chapter 1124: Heterogeneous? Homogeneous?

The aroma was rich.

It reached an unprecedented level.

Almost the moment he smelled it, Jason was stupefied.

All kinds of food began to appear incessantly in his mind.

Naturally, Jason's steps came to a halt.

He discarded those thoughts about food, beginning to restrain himself.

His breathing became rapid.

And then—

He yanked his backpack off his back.

In the backpack were ten blades from the 'Ten Blades' that Jason had planned to savor after the battle was completely over.

But now, he really couldn't resist.

In fact, after collecting the ten 'Renowned Blades,' he had been enduring hunger.

He considered this a rare test of 'hunger.'

Similar to his previous experience with 'Liquor Gourd.'

But it was different.

Facing the 'Soul-Collecting Gourd,' Jason could 'resist' completely.

Because that was relatively safe.

But now?

He was still in battle!

In Jason's perception, at least three extremely powerful presences were lurking around here.

Not on him.

Just passing over.

Or to be precise, all three gazes were attracted to the Uesugi ancestral home.

Therefore, Jason pulled out one of the 'Renowned Blades' and threw it into his mouth.

[Swallowed Anko Small Cutting Blade (Damaged)]

[Physical Strength, Stamina, Injuries recover beyond expected levels!]

[Fullness +100]

[Fullness:1231]

[Excitement of Feast: +1]

[Excitement of Feast: 2]

...

It felt like freshly fried french fries.

Crisp.

Jason frowned, took a packet of ketchup from his backpack, tore it open, and squeezed it into his mouth.

French fries + ketchup.

It had become a default combination at some point.

Just like when you go for roasted duck, you've got to have a set of pancakes.

Jason didn't mind this default.

After all, it suits the taste of most people.

Of course, adding some personal flavor makes it even better.

So, the next moment, Jason fished out a packet of black pepper.

French fries + ketchup + black pepper.

The flavor was odd, but paired with fries, it was truly satisfying.

First crisp, followed by sweet and sour, then a mild spiciness and saltiness.

When the flavors finally mixed and reemerged on the taste buds, it was the true taste of potatoes.

Jason chewed voraciously.

He did not even spare the scabbard.

However, there was no increase in fullness, let alone Excitement of Feast.

It was just tainted with the scent of 'food.'

Like the packaging bag.

Therefore—

Ptooey.

Jason spat out the scabbard and took out the next blade, stuffing it into his mouth.

[Swallowed Anko Large Cutting Blade (Damaged)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Excessive Recovery from Injuries!]

[Fullness +150]

[Fullness: 1381]

[Excitement of Feast: +1]

[Excitement of Feast: 3]

...

It still tasted like French fries.

But it was different from the Anko Small Cutting Blade.

The Anko Small Cutting Blade was thin fries, while the Anko Large Cutting Blade was thick fries.

Or more accurately, wide fries.

Not quite to the extent of being a potato pancake.

But each one was softer in the potato flesh.

Without hesitation, Jason tore open two packets of sweet and spicy sauce.

Unlike the crunchiness of thin fries, the softness of thick fries was more suited to the sweet and spicy sauce—at least that's what Jason thought.

The initial crispness, sweetness as the lure, with spiciness leading.

As the final spiciness began, the next thick fry was already in his mouth.

Before he knew it, a bag of thick fries was gone.

In Jason's case, without realizing it, the blade had been completely digested.

After consuming the two 'Renowned Blades,' Jason's previously heavy breathing became slightly more normal.

Not because the hunger had disappeared.

For Jason's stomach, it was always hungry.

The two 'Renowned Blades' only gave him some psychological satisfaction.

However, that was enough.

At least, Jason could think more rationally now.

"Does every Renowned Blade possess 'Excitement of Feast'?"

Jason looked at the text prompt in front of him, full of surprise.

Keep in mind, he still had eight 'Renowned Blades' left.

Translated, that meant eight points of 'Excitement of Feast.'

Although Jason had high expectations for the true 'Renowned Blades' beforehand, he was still shocked at the benefits of each blade after actually consuming them.

Of course, there was also one thing that left Jason puzzled.

"Why are all 'Renowned Blades' damaged?"

This became even more pronounced after Jason finished eating the remaining eight 'Renowned Blades.'

Each 'Renowned Blade' was broken.

'Excitement of Feast' was present, just like the flavors they exuded.

Similarly, Fullness began another surge—

[Fullness: 2321]

[Excitement of Feast: 11]

...

One 'damaged' item could be seen as an accident.

Two 'damaged' items might be considered a coincidence.

But what about five, ten times?

"What exactly happened that caused these Renowned Blades to become 'damaged'?"

"They look fine on the outside, maintaining their Sharpness."

"So, is it the inside... that's damaged?"

Jason thought.

But there was too little information.

Jason couldn't really determine what had happened.

After noting this in his mind, Jason started to focus on his gains from this experience.

"2321 Fullness, 11 points of Excitement of Feast..."

"That should be enough... No, it's still a bit short."

In the end, Jason shook his head.

According to his plan, the next step would naturally be to bring another core skill, [War Patterns. Prus. Griffin. Shadow Hiding Body Forging Technique], to the Transcendent level.

In the past, 2321 points of Fullness would have been enough.

But considering the unexpected promotion of [Protection Against Evil] and the appearance of [Evil-Slaying Slash], Jason slightly raised the requirement for Fullness.

Chapter 1125: Heterogeneous? Homogeneous? (2)

3000!

After reaching 3000 in satiety, further enhance [War Pattern. Prus. Griffin. Shadow-hidden Body Forging Technique]!

Of course, Jason also had another consideration.

[Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique]!

Can the core inheritance of Tongshou Temple be integrated into [War Pattern. Prus. Griffin. Shadow-hidden Body Forging Technique]?

Jason has always tried this experiment.

However, previously with slightly less satiety, he was unable to fully demonstrate his 'Talent'.

Now?

It should be enough.

However, that's a matter for later.

Now?

His gaze shifted towards the nearby bushes.

Inside the gathering place of the Uesugi family, not only is the original old style preserved, but many bamboos, pine trees, and some vine plants are also planted.

These plants are distributed along both sides of the road or at street corners.

Arranged in a special way, they appear misaligned but orderly.

Clearly, such planting was carefully arranged.

Under such an arrangement, when two groups of people passed by different paths, even if they were 4-5 meters apart, unless they made louder noises, they absolutely couldn't see each other.

But, that's only for ordinary people.

For Jason.

Strong, almost nine times stronger than normal people's perception allowed him to clearly sense the people around him.

Not to mention when someone was staring at him with fervent eyes.

Jason looked towards a pine and bamboo grove on one side.

The other party didn't hide at all, and just came out openly.

Dressed in a white Swordsman outfit, revealing a tall figure, black hair tied up in a high ponytail, held together by a pure gold hair band, making her look very capable.

But her fox-like eyes added a charm to her capable appearance.

Her high and firm nose added a heroic touch to the charm.

Such a contradictory temperament perfectly appeared on a woman.

Making her already beautiful face even more eye-catching.

Jason was no exception.

However, different from what normal men would notice, Jason was looking at her hands.

Those hands were fair, slender.

With an extraordinary flavor.

Delicious food!

Jason squinted his eyes.

The woman, seeing where Jason's gaze was, not only wasn't offended but rather smiled.

"Do you feel them?"

The woman asked Jason.

"Yeah."

Jason nodded without hesitation.

The flavor of the food, he could confirm.

Such a nod made the woman's smile even brighter.

Even having a kind of unusual sweetness.

"Do you eat swords?"

The woman asked in this manner.

"No."

"That's 'Purification'."

Jason said succinctly.

It must have been seen, most likely when a strong food aroma emerged from the ancestral home, creating a 'laxity' in perception during his fight against hunger.

Jason had anticipated this.

Although he was no longer his original self, and he wasn't so blindly submissive to 'hunger' anymore.

But not being able to control it 100% could lead to problems.

So, Jason had prepared early on.

"It originated from an obscure method of exorcists from overseas."

Jason emphasized overseas and obscure.

The 'Inside World' and 'Mystical Side' of the island are quite isolated.

For most of the mystical side figures overseas, they just know about it.

Understand?

Maybe understand a little.

But definitely not too much.

Even if they understand quite well, what Jason emphasized as 'obscure' was meant to address this point.

However, the woman just smiled and shook her head.

"How does the taste of the sword compare?"

The woman didn't press further on other matters but instead inquired about the flavor of the 'Renowned Blades'.

This made Jason frown, who was prepared with follow-up explanations.

Why isn't she playing by the usual rules?

Shouldn't she be asking what method he used?

Why is she asking about the flavor?

"It's 'Purification'!"

Jason emphasized again.

"What does the flavor taste like?"

The woman asked again.

Moreover, this time, after she finished speaking, she asked Jason in an increasingly serious tone, "Are you justifying the flavor you tasted with such evasive words? Are you justifying those 'foods'?"

"Or say..."

"Can you use 'food' as a vow to tell me it's 'Purification'?"

Pressing question!

Jason was at a loss for words.

If it's something else, Jason doesn't mind lying.

For Jason, who lives in the Nightless City, such lies are really commonplace.

It simply comes naturally.

But when it comes to using 'food' as an excuse...

He cannot bring himself to speak.

It's a fact that he cannot utter after taking a stand.

Everyone has their own principles.

Some are about responsibility, some about justice in their hearts.

Others are simply about 'love' for family and friends.

But Jason is different.

His is a 'love' for 'food'.

It's a kind of love that comes from the bottom of his heart.

Facing this love,

Jason cannot ignore it.

Nor can he disguise it with lies.

Not to mention using it as an excuse.

If he really did that, it would be an insult to 'food'.

Huh!

Jason took a deep breath, looked at the woman in front of him, and finally said—

"Delicious."

He said it word by word.

The woman smiled, her eyes curving like crescent moons.

Then, the woman raised her hand.

Two 'Renowned Blades' appeared in her hands.

Jason instantly became alert.

But the next moment, it was unexpected.

The woman just tossed one of the blades to Jason.

Jason didn't catch it but let it fall to the ground.

He also stepped back.

He worried it was the opponent's special attack mode, or simply a trap.

But when the 'Renowned Blades' fell to the ground, nothing happened at all.

Jason looked at the woman, puzzled.

"My treat."

The woman said while drawing the 'Renowned Blade' in her hands and started chewing it extensively with her mouth.

This scene stunned Jason.

Aside from him, there were other people who eat blades?

Jason's dumbfounded expression greatly pleased Kusakabe Rei.

Because when she saw Jason consuming blades unintentionally, her expression and thoughts were the same.

Aside from her, there were other people who eat blades?

Kusakabe Rei is a taboo within the Kusakabe family.

Not just because of her defiance, but also because of the forbidden art she practiced.

'Sword Devouring Art'!

A secret technique of devouring 'Renowned Blades' to gain strength.

This is an extremely terrifying technique.

It requires immense talent, a will strong as steel, and a considerable amount of time.

Especially talent!

It's truly one in a million!

From the Warring States period until now, in the recorded history of the Kusakabe Family, besides the original creator, only Kusakabe Rei has mastered the 'Sword Devouring Art'.

Without a doubt, the 'Sword Devouring Art' has given Kusakabe Rei tremendous power.

So much so, that it can truly be described as terrifying.

But such power also made her an outlier.

Not human.

Not demon or monster.

Not ghost or ghoul.

Not Shikigami.

Completely a different kind.

The family-outcast Kusakabe Rei had spent a long time searching for her kind.

Because she firmly believed she was not alone.

But ultimately, she was disappointed.

She was alone.

She tried every method to no avail.

Even, she searched for people with great talents to study the 'Sword Devouring Art' together.

Not one was successful.

Even those true swordsmen exploded and perished.

So when she unexpectedly saw Jason consuming 'Renowned Blades'.

She was stunned.

Already completely disappointed, she suddenly saw hope, like spotting a light when looking up from the abyss.

Instantly, she changed her plans.

After dumping the four knocked out, Amakasu, Usami, Naoe, and leaving the other two infiltrators after quickly dealing with them, she took the opponent's 'Renowned Blades' and went to find Jason.

She saw a kindred spirit.

She wanted to witness it with her own eyes.

She wanted to ascertain that what she saw was real.

Therefore, after chewing the 'Renowned Blades', she looked at Jason unwaveringly and said—

"Please!"

Chapter 1126: Stand Firm!

Jason stared at the woman who was chewing on 'Renowned Blades,' somewhat dumbfounded.

This was the first time he had seen someone Devour 'swords.'

Teeth, tongue, were they all modified?

That's not right!

Not only the teeth and tongue but the entire oral cavity, esophagus, and stomach as well.

Like him, yet different.

His enhancement was very straightforward.

The whole process was just a moment.

One could even say that after a moment of distraction, it was all over.

But the other's transformation?

It would be extremely painful.

And moreover, for the body to truly adapt and absorb other types of food, that process would be tremendously lengthy.

It was already painful.

Then add the protracted duration.

Jason just had to think about it, and he couldn't help but sigh.

Facing such a person, what reason did he have to refuse her invitation?

It was absolutely not because the 'Renowned Blades' in front of him smelled so appetizing; it was because he admired her capacity for enduring pain.

Therefore, the next moment—

Hum!

Jason promptly picked up the 'Renowned Blade' in front of him.

This 'Renowned Blade' seemed to sense something, beginning to tremble incessantly, emitting buzz after buzz.

Even, there was an intention to break free from Jason's control.

Jason immediately tightened his grip.

Then, without any hesitation, he opened his mouth and put the 'Renowned Blade' into his mouth.

Crunch! Crunch!

The crisp chewing sound was transmitted.

Kusakabe Rei's eyes lit up.

It's him! It's really him! It is indeed him!

The one she had been waiting for had finally appeared!

Before she fully succumbed to darkness!

He has come!

It is truly... wonderful!

For no apparent reason, Kusakabe Rei's eyes reddened.

Who could understand the loneliness of being alone?

Especially when those around are supposedly 'companions,' yet not a single one is like oneself—such loneliness.

Being lonely alone is not terrible.

What's frightening is feeling lonely in a bustling environment.

But, that was before!

Now?

She has met someone just like her.

That's right!

Human!

Kusakabe Rei firmly believed she was human!

Just because she likes to eat something a bit special, how could she not be considered human?

Jason completely agreed with this.

He just eats a wider variety of things, a larger quantity of things, doesn't he know that being able to eat is a blessing?

Savoring the food as sweet as honey, Jason comfortably squinted his eyes.

The crust was crispy.

The inside was tender and soft.

The sweet taste lingered with his taste buds from the beginning to the end.

Caramelized banana!

Jason instantly recognized what it was.

What surprised Jason was that this 'food' was unexpectedly delicious.

Any one of the previous ten 'Renowned Blades' couldn't compare to this 'food.'

It's not that those ten 'Renowned Blades' weren't tasty.

It's that this 'Renowned Blade' was more delicious.

Despite being made from similar materials, the taste was on another level altogether.

It was as if it were the same dish, one made by an ordinary chef and the other by a culinary god.

The former being flavorful and complete in every way is admirable.

But the latter, it endows the dish with a soul.

For example: the soul-stirring rice dish.

The former is just ordinary char siu rice.

The latter has a 'soul' that elevates the entire dish beyond its own category.

At this moment, the 'Renowned Blade' in Jason's mouth is just like that.

It was not any false sensation.

It's definitely not a problem with Jason's taste buds.

But rather a true sense of—

[Devouring the River's Edge (Complete)]

[Physical Strength, Energy, Injury Recovery Exceeding Normal Limits!]

[Fullness +450]

[Fullness: 2771]

[Excitement of Feast: +3]

[Excitement of Feast: 14]

...

The data before him accurately reflected the precision of Jason's taste.

A fullness callout far beyond any other 'Renowned Blade,' Excitement of Feast.

Especially the Excitement of Feast!

3 points!

Even for Jason, gaining 3 points of Excitement of Feast at once was a cause for delight.

However, Jason didn't glance at the 'Complete' tag.

"Complete?"

Jason muttered softly and couldn't help but furrow his brows.

He had a guess.

Subconsciously, Jason looked at the woman before him.

Kusakabe Rei, facing Jason's gaze, blushed.

But this Onmyoji who defected from her family didn't have any intention to avoid or equivocate. She spoke very honestly—

"Could you resist the temptation not to taste 'food'?"

Jason nodded to this question.

He really couldn't do it.

The gourd at his waist was an exception.

He used unconventional means.

It was not comparable.

Moreover, what amazed him was that after tasting it, she was able to resist not eating up all the previous ten 'Renowned Blades,' for which Jason had immense respect.

Because, he simply couldn't do it.

Of course, this did not prevent Jason's frown from tightening more and more.

She had eaten it.

Then he ate it.

An indirect kiss?

That doesn't count! That doesn't count!

Matters of food are pure, how can you mix up other things with it?

This is an insult to food!

No!

It's actually blasphemous!

I have to face this fact!

Quickly, Jason threw this thought out of his mind, stood up straight, and bowed slightly.

"Thank you!"

"I'll return the favor later!"

Jason spoke in such a manner.

When someone treats you to food, you must be grateful.

And returning the favor later is a must.

The reason why food lovers can live in peace is by following these rules.

"Sure thing!"

"I am Kusakabe Rei!"

Kusakabe Rei extended her hand generously.

Jason hesitated for a moment, then shook her hand.

"Jason."

Jason said his name.

Chapter 1127: Standing Firm! (2)

The palm was swiftly withdrawn.

Or more accurately, it was a brief touch followed by an immediate separation.

Then, placed behind his back, he gently wiped it.

He was not very accustomed to interacting with the opposite sex.

If it wasn't for the fact that she had just invited him for a meal, he wouldn't have shaken hands with her at all.

There was both the shyness inherited from his original hometown and the caution cultivated in the 'Nightless City'.

Kusakabe Rei keenly noticed this.

However, this fugitive Onmyoji didn't care at all.

Instead, she found Jason to be genuine and adorable.

A big guy over two meters tall, having such childlike gestures was just too cute – she felt like hugging him!

Wondering if he would be soft to the touch.

Even if he was a bit firm, that would be fine too.

Under the premise of being 'of the same kind,' Kusakabe Rei automatically applied a 'filter' when looking at Jason.

No matter how you looked at it, Jason seemed really nice.

"I..."

"Kusakabe Rei!"

Just as Kusakabe Rei was about to say something more, Kusakabe Mi appeared in the distance, her roar interrupting Kusakabe Rei's words.

Watching Kusakabe Mi appear, Kusakabe Rei sighed softly.

"I will come to find you."

Kusakabe Rei whispered to Jason.

Then, she took a step back and merged into the bamboo forest.

Kusakabe Mi chased swiftly.

But she was still a step too late.

"Damn!"

Kusakabe Mi murmured to herself, turning to look at Jason, her eyes filled with undisguised scrutiny and doubt.

Indeed, this Onmyoji had her hand on her sword hilt from beginning to end.

A male who was talking to Kusakabe Rei was far too suspicious.

After all, she knew Kusakabe Rei's character too well after tracking her for so long.

Kusakabe Rei was uncourteous towards any males.

Even with her own subordinates, she was only slightly more amiable.

But if there was even a slight impropriety, Kusakabe Rei would deal with it in the most direct manner.

One cut down.

The world would become tranquil.

And now, Jason was able to converse quite pleasantly with Kusakabe Rei, especially with a smile on her face—Kusakabe Mi, as her sister, could tell that this was no ordinary smile.

But because of this, she was even more suspicious of Jason.

Kusakabe Mi knew Jason's identity.

The renowned 'Sword Saint'!

Even though the news had just arrived, she also knew of his identity as an Exorcist.

And some rumors from outside the island, she was aware of those too.

So—

"Are you in league with Kusakabe Rei?

Are you conspiring to usurp the 'Uesugi' heritage?"

Kusakabe Mi asked in a grave tone.

At the same time, her eyes were fixed intently on Jason.

When Jason looked back at her, Kusakabe Mi's gaze became sharp at that moment.

Sword Gaze!

A secret technique of the Kusakabe family.

It can shake the spirit of the person being looked at, making them feel intimidated and speak the truth.

Jason felt a slight sting in his eyes.

Like someone pressing down through the eyelids.

But that was about it.

Beyond that, Jason felt no discomfort whatsoever.

This result made Kusakabe Mi tense.

She was confident that aside from Kusakabe Rei, anyone would be affected by her 'Sword Gaze' to some extent.

Jason was unaffected?

Kusakabe Mi slightly adjusted her stance, into a posture more suitable for drawing her sword.

This Onmyoji had not given up.

If 'Sword Gaze' was ineffective, then she would capture Jason to get the truth.

Thinking it, she acted!

And just as Kusakabe Mi changed her stance, Jason also went into a defensive state. He didn't know what grudge the woman before him had against his food-loving buddy.

But at this moment, she had clearly shown her intention to fight.

Naturally, he would not shy away.

Click!

Kusakabe Mi's thumb pushed against the scabbard, and the sword blade slightly revealed itself.

Clang!

Although the sword was not fully unsheathed, the sound of the blade resounded.

However, the impending fight came to a quick halt with the arrival of Hui Lijing, Uesugi, and Hu Qiandai.

"Wait!"

"We are all on the same side!"

Hui Lijing exclaimed loudly.

At this time, the female detective had completely recovered to normal.

Not just the detective, Uesugi with his broken arms was also back to normal.

Hu Qiandai's attire had once again turned into its original home clothes. There was no change in her appearance, but from time to time, she emitted an aura of extreme sharpness, as if at this moment.

When she saw that Kusakabe Mi was about to draw her sword—

Roar!

A dragon's roar.

Beneath Hu Qiandai's feet, a straight crack over three meters long appeared on the bluestone ground.

The cut was smooth and incredibly deep.

Completely unaccustomed to her current state, Hu Qiandai watched the scene unfold and quickly bowed in apology.

"Sorry! Sorry!"

"I didn't mean to... Ah!"

As Hu Qiandai was bowing in apology, several more fissures appeared.

This left Hu Qiandai completely at a loss.

Similarly, it caught the attention of Jason and Kusakabe Mi.

"Stay calm!"

"Stabilize your breathing!"

"You need to communicate with the 'Renowned Blade' within your body, let it know you're safe."

Kusakabe Mi, having evidently encountered similar incidents before, immediately advised.

And Jason?

He quietly swallowed.

So fragrant!

The moment Hu Qiandai appeared, he was certain that the unprecedented scent he smelled originated from the Renowned Blade within Hu Qiandai's body.

Another 'Renowned Blade'?

Seems...

It had surpassed the category of 'Renowned Blades'.

Jason thought.

Hui Lijing and Uesugi had already walked over at this point.

"Truly sorry!"

"To have involved you in such trouble."

"Fortunately, it hasn't caused you any real trouble!"

"Whatever compensation you decide, I will triple it!"

"Also!"

"You'll always be a valued guest of the Uesugi Family!"

"Whatever you seek, we'll do our utmost to satisfy!"

While speaking, Uesugi bowed deeply.

This gentle middle-aged man hadn't forgotten how Jason single-handedly confronted the Ten Blades.

If it weren't for Jason, the Uesugi Family would likely be finished by now.

Even with his daughter's sudden transformation, it would have been irremediable.

Therefore, Uesugi was extraordinarily grateful to Jason.

Jason, however, shook his head.

"No need."

"Just go by the normal compensation."

For Jason, the ten Renowned Blades, plus one intact Renowned Blade, was reward enough.

More?

He didn't need it.

With a raised hand, Jason halted Uesugi, who wanted to continue persuading.

"I'll leave it to you."

Jason said to Hui Lijing and then started to walk towards Hu Qiandai.

It was completely subconscious, instinctive.

Jason was drawn by the scent.

But after taking just one step, he quickly came to his senses.

He immediately turned around.

No hesitations.

Jason walked towards the exit of the Uesugi household.

He loved food.

More than anyone, he cherished and revelled in the joy and happiness food brought.

But to take by force without cause?

Sorry.

He couldn't do that.

Even in the challenging environment of Nightless City, Jason had principles—a set of beliefs that seemed laughable to the residents of Nightless City.

But Jason still held onto them.

Because such principles were rooted in the memories of his hometown.

They were the upbringing he received there since childhood.

The values formed in that place.

It was also the reason he believed he was still 'human'!

Because his bottom line was still intact.

The bottom line he adhered to was the best interpretation of his humanity.

Jason always aspired to be 'human'.

So, he would never breach his own bottom line.

Maybe this approach was exhausting.

But isn't 'rarity' valued exactly because it's challenging?

Jason marched forward deliberately, daring not to linger, as deep down he knew that pausing might lead to regret.

He swiftly exited the Uesugi Family's gate.

Several police cars sped towards the scene.

As the cars stopped, Ryosuke and Urashima got out and saw Jason standing at the Uesugi's entrance, both letting out a sigh of relief.

Ryosuke knew that things hadn't reached the worst case scenario he imagined.

"Lucky we had you!"

Ryosuke said loudly, approaching Jason.

Then, making sure he wouldn't be seen, he whispered urgently and quietly—

"That guy has arrived!"

Chapter 1128: Selection!

That guy?

Jason instantly thought of who it was.

The guide assigned by 'Blossom Cherry' to truly lead Ryosuke into the 'Inside World,' and also Ryosuke's covert partner.

About that previous incident, Ryosuke had not concealed anything from Jason.

Therefore, Jason knew what had happened.

And judging from the attitude of Ryosuke right in front of him, the person arranged by 'Blossom Cherry' was more troublesome than imagined.

In fact, it was exactly so.

About three hours earlier, Ryosuke had met with his guide and covert partner.

It was a guy named Sato.

He had never seen this stern-faced middle-aged man on any occasion before.

However, the man seemed to know him quite well.

Without any pleasantries, he began to speak directly.

"Hello, officer Ryosuke."

"I am your guide, as well as your partner."

"I hope we can work well together."

The other person spoke in an unchanging tone.

It sounded like a robot.

Everything seemed to be part of a procedure.

After finishing his speech, the other person then placed the suitcase he was carrying on Ryosuke's desk.

"You have chosen to directly strengthen yourself twice."

"According to your request, the organization will provide two physical enhancements."

"Although I would recommend choosing 'Bloodline Enhancements,' two such enhancements are sufficient for dealing with most dangers that may occur in everyday life."

The other person said this while opening the suitcase.

"I prefer the part about being human."

This was Ryosuke's response.

Even if it was only for a few short days, Ryosuke was no longer the rookie completely ignorant about the 'Inside World.'

Especially after coming into contact with Jason, every person around Jason had deep knowledge about the 'Inside World.'

Whether it be Master Tongshou Temple, the wandering Onmyoji, or that young Onmyoji from the Hanakaiin Family.

They were all happy to inform Ryosuke of things that ordinary people wouldn't know.

Therefore, Ryosuke was very clear about what so-called 'Bloodline' enhancement entailed.

Artificial half-demon transformation!

Not a natural-born half-demon.

But artificially created!

Similar to his colleague he had encountered before who forgot his own identity and became a killing demon.

The conflict between human bloodlines and demon bloodlines was inevitable.

In such a conflict, death was a highly probable outcome.

Even if one survived, their personality could become twisted.

Although 'Blossom Cherry's' technology made the mortality rate negligible.

In contrast, the probability of personality distortion increased dramatically.

When he chose to directly strengthen himself twice, the person in charge informed him candidly and suggested that he divide the two opportunities into one enhancement and one knowledge enhancement.

This would maximize the benefits.

If it were under normal circumstances, Ryosuke wouldn't mind doing so.

But now?

He chose direct enhancement on both occasions.

And he excluded the more effective but riskier 'Bloodline' enhancements, opting instead for the commonplace 'Physical' enhancements with almost no side effects.

Because, Ryosuke knew what he had to do.

He wouldn't blindly pursue so-called strength.

However, this seemed to bring dissatisfaction from his guide, his partner.

The other person frowned, making that stern face brim with a sense of oppression.

But quickly, the face returned to normal.

"It's up to you.

"Everything is your choice.

"Just don't regret it."

The other person said this and turned the briefcase around towards Ryosuke.

Inside were two syringes with a peculiar design and a somewhat special appearance.

They had the shape of a normal syringe, but with metal rings on both sides that perfectly allowed the holder to insert two fingers, and not only were these rings metal, the outside of the syringe was also wrapped in metal. Only through gaps in the middle could the glass and scale be seen, and at a glance, one might even mistake it for a thermometer.

What caught Ryosuke's attention most, though, was that this syringe had no needle.

Ryosuke looked towards the guide named Sato, his partner.

"The needle is hidden inside, it will pop out upon pushing."

"After the subcutaneous injection, you will enter a state of unconsciousness for about half an hour."

"If you want the best effect, I recommend administering the injections separately, one hour apart, not consecutively — unless you have a lot of confidence in your body's condition, or you wish to die."

The other person explained.

After speaking, the person immediately turned and left.

Listening to the sound of heels hitting the floor.

Ryosuke looked at the syringe in front of him without injecting it immediately. Only after truly confirming that Sato had left did he close the door and return to his desk.

He picked up the syringe; it was cool to the touch and quite heavy.

Without hesitation, Ryosuke injected it into his forearm.

He believed that Sato didn't lie.

Not that he trusted the person's character.

But simply trusted that the person wasn't that foolish.

If something happened to him at this time, 'Blossom Cherry' would not let the person off the hook.

So, Ryosuke felt very assured.

There was a slight pain.

The cold liquid entered his body.

Then, Ryosuke leaned back in his office chair.

As for consecutive injections?

Before witnessing the 'Inside World,' Ryosuke was very confident in his physical fitness.

But having seen the 'Inside World,' even though Ryosuke was reluctant to admit it, he couldn't ignore the harsh fact that his physical condition was very poor.

As Ryosuke sat in the chair, it only took a few seconds before the strong sensation of drowsiness hit.

Ryosuke fell into a deep sleep immediately.

Chapter 1129: Selection! (2)

About twenty minutes later, this deep sleep abruptly ended.

Ryosuke woke up.

A feeling of being mentally refreshed made him feel better than ever before.

Then, a more direct sensation appeared.

The once well-fitted shirt became taut.

Whoosh!

Ryosuke inhaled deeply, his muscles tensing up.

Rip!

The shirt was instantly torn apart by his bulging muscles.

And this wasn't all. Ryosuke turned around and braced his hands against the edge of his office desk, and with just a slight exertion of force, the whole desk was lifted.

This was a solid wood desk with drawers and cabinets full of documents which, all together, weighed over 100kg.

Ryosuke had tried to move it before.

But it took a great deal of effort.

Compared with now, the ease of it was night and day.

Afterward, Ryosuke tested himself in multiple ways.

Speed, reaction, resistance to striking force, and so on.

Even though there were many restrictions due to being in the office, the results still left Ryosuke extremely satisfied.

In terms of speed, he could sprint from the desk to the door in an instant.

In terms of reaction, he flicked a pencil back and forth between his fingers at a speed that was too fast for the average person to follow with their eyes.

As for resistance to striking force, a careless moment left a pencil stabbing into the back of his hand, but he only felt a slight pain, the pencil tip broke, and the back of his hand was not harmed at all.

Ryosuke could say with confidence that he could easily defeat the previous him who had a gun, with bare hands.

Even if there were two or three more gunmen, it would be effortless.

"Is this what strength feels like?"

Ryosuke muttered to himself.

Then, he looked at the second injection.

While taking deep breaths, he watched the time.

After an hour had passed, Ryosuke waited another ten minutes before starting the second injection.

The reason he waited ten more minutes was to remind himself not to be dazzled by the current power he possessed.

He must remain 'sober'.

The injection of the second potion was also quite successful.

After coming to, Ryosuke stood up from his chair. Without bending his knees, he simply pushed down with his toes and his palm easily touched the ceiling.

"Stronger than before!"

"The exact extent needs further testing!"

"Hm?"

Ryosuke was pondering when his gaze swept over the clock on the desk and he was taken aback.

He remembered that it had been 9:30. According to Sato, if he had been unconscious for half an hour, it should now be 10 o'clock, yet it was already 11 o'clock.

He had been unconscious for one hour longer than expected.

Cold sweat appeared on his forehead.

A bad premonition surged in Ryosuke's heart.

The next moment—

Thump, thump thump!

The hurried knocking on the door sounded.

Following that was Urashima's slightly rushed and panicked voice.

"Officer Ryosuke? Officer Ryosuke?"

Ryosuke quickly opened the door.

Seeing Ryosuke who appeared behind the door, the young Urashima finally breathed a sigh of relief.

"Thank goodness! Senior Ryosuke, I thought..."

"What happened in this last hour?"

Looking at Ryosuke, Urashima's emotions were so agitated that he changed his form of address, but Ryosuke interrupted his speech, immediately inquiring.

Urashima began to compose himself right away.

"There was a call transferred over earlier for assistance in an investigation. Something like 'Inside World' has occurred at the 'Uesugi' family's place, and we are needed."

Urashima spoke truthfully.

"When did this happen?"

Ryosuke asked.

"About 20 minutes ago."

Urashima replied.

"Damn it!"

Ryosuke cursed under his breath.

By now, Ryosuke was certain that he had been duped.

Sato, the guide and hidden partner, played him.

He could now be sure that something else had been mixed into the second potion.

Otherwise, there was no way he could have been unconscious this long.

And it was unlikely that extending the unconsciousness after consecutive injections was a coincidence.

But it wasn't a common occurrence either.

This must have been Sato's inevitable excuse.

So far, Ryosuke couldn't be sure what Sato intended to do, but he knew he had to get to the 'Uesugi' family's place now.

"Urashima, let's go!"

Ryosuke said, and without even taking the time to change his torn shirt, he grabbed his jacket and ran outside.

Hope it's not too late!

Ryosuke prayed in his heart.

He floored the accelerator all the way.

Until he saw Jason.

A frantic Ryosuke completely relaxed.

He knew that with Jason here, even if things turned out bad, they wouldn't be too bad.

In fact, the situation turned out much better than he had anticipated.

"Sword Eater Group?"

"Does Sato have a connection with the 'Sword Eater Group'?"

"Did he intentionally prolong my unconsciousness to cooperate with the 'Sword Eater Group'?"

Ryosuke muttered to himself in a low voice.

Jason looked at Ryosuke with a gaze that seemed to regard him as a fool.

When Ryosuke looked up, he met that gaze.

Immediately, Ryosuke's face turned red with embarrassment.

He knew he had just been a bit narcissistic.

In front of him, neither the 'Sword Eater Group' nor the 'Uesugi Family' was something he could control on his own.

The strength demonstrated by both parties was such that even if he arrived in time, he wouldn't cause the slightest ripple.

"Then why would he do that?"

"Couldn't it be to use this incident to have me dismissed from my duties?"

"That's way too, too..."

Ryosuke said in a joking tone.

But Jason's expression became serious.

"Maybe that's exactly what it is?"

"For an organization as well-informed as 'Blossom Cherry', it should be impossible to conceal the movements of 'Sword Eater Group' even if 'Sword Eater Group' hides very well, these thugs can't stay hidden."

"They must be under the watch of 'Blossom Cherry'."

Jason stated with certainty.

In the city, large-scale gatherings and movements cannot go unnoticed without a trace.

It's not just in modern times, but even a hundred or two hundred years ago, it would have been impossible.

Unless...

It's done under some sort of pretext.

If there are no covers, everything is crystal clear.

"Could there really be infighting?"

Ryosuke's voice was even lower, but the excitement was impossible to hide.

He had joined 'Blossom Cherry' to overthrow 'Blossom Cherry'.

If there was infighting within 'Blossom Cherry', it would definitely make his plan go more smoothly.

"I don't know."

"Maybe we could ask someone."

Jason looked at Ryosuke, and after they exchanged a smile, they thought of the same person at the same time.

Achoo! Achoo! Achoo!

Sitting at a streetside diner, Onodera sneezed three times in a row.

Quite loudly, immediately attracting the gaze of the people around him.

Onodera quickly made an apologetic gesture.

Once the attention of those around him had diverted away, Onodera sighed weakly.

Wondering who was cursing him again.

He was clearly doing this to repay a favor.

Why did he get entangled in what seemed to be a big troublesome incident?

Is it true that no good deed goes unpunished?

Or is it just...

My sheer bad luck?

Facing his favorite pork cutlet rice bowl, Onodera felt no appetite because of the troubles weighing on his mind.

He twirled the vegetable strips next to the cutlet with his fork, which quickly coiled around it, but he had no intention of putting it in his mouth.

What should I do?

Should I make the phone call?

If I do, I will be thoroughly wrapped up in it.

If I don't, this current unease is also unbearable.

While Onodera was conflicted, a figure walked in.

The person was in plain clothes, wearing a cap that shadowed most of their face.

However, even with that, Onodera recognized the person at a glance.

Hanakaiin Itsuki!

The most dangerous individual among the younger generation of the Hanakaiin Family.

What was he doing here?

Onodera thought to himself, quickly diverting his gaze.

But his ears perked up, purely a professional reflex.

He heard clearly—

"A milk tea with double sugar, double red beans, and double coconut jelly."

Hanakaiin Itsuki ordered.

When the server brought over the milk tea, he took it and walked to a corner of the diner.

Did he come here just to drink milk tea?

Onodera was taken aback.

A ruthless person wouldn't come to a place for no reason just to drink milk tea.

Onodera didn't believe it.

There must be some unspeakable secret.

But, it's none of my business.

I'd better leave quickly.

With that thought, Onodera discreetly made his way to the restroom.

Exiting through the front door would be too conspicuous.

The back door was the best choice.

Passing through the cramped and narrow corridor, Onodera pushed open the back door.

Someone was standing behind the door.

The person was about to pull the door open when they were startled by the door suddenly being pushed from the other side.

The person took a step back, and when Onodera could completely see the person's face, he couldn't help but exclaim—

"Sato?!" Chapter 1130: Reunion!

Sato, the director of the "Zero Section" Special Action Unit.

With two action teams directly under his command, and the authority to order other teams, his official rank is already one level higher than Yamashita's.

His actual rank?

It is more than three levels higher.

He is one of those commanders in "Zero Section" who hold real command authority.

The two action teams under his direct command are also the elites of "Zero Section".

Whether it's equipment or funding, they receive the full allocation.

Thus, a figure like Sato is naturally someone "Blossom Cherry" strives to court, and Onodera knows that "Blossom Cherry" offered quite generous conditions to woo Sato at the time.

Onodera remembers this very clearly.

But why is he here?

Onodera nearly froze on the spot.

Because he thought of Hanakaiin Itsuki inside the restaurant.

It's not just Yamashita who has ties with Hanakaiin Itsuki.

Does Sato have them too?

At this moment, Onodera wished he could slap himself.

Why did he choose this restaurant?

Why did he just call out Sato's name?

Why didn't he just stay in the bathroom for a while?

A multitude of questions arose in Onodera's mind.

But there were deeper concerns.

It's normal for Yamashita and Hanakaiin Itsuki to have connections.

Their relationship is one of mutual benefit and cooperation.

It's also normal for Sato to have connections with Hanakaiin Itsuki.

Sato's action teams need the help of Onmyoji from time to time.

But when both Yamashita and Sato have ties to Hanakaiin Itsuki, that's abnormal.

It's like two parallel lines starting to intersect.

This illogical intersection sends chills down Onodera's spine and a chill up his back.

He seems to see a net.

A hidden monster in "Blossom Cherry".

"Blossom Cherry" is the monster hidden within the police force, feeding on its nourishment.

And this monster is feeding off "Blossom Cherry".

"Big fish eat little fish, little fish eat shrimp."

Oddly enough, this saying came to Onodera's mind.

Also in his thoughts was that phone number!

Is this number related to Hanakaiin Itsuki?

If so, Hanakaiin Itsuki is more terrifying than what he currently sees.

If not, then "Blossom Cherry"'s situation is even more worrying.

Because there isn't just one hidden monster!

There are more monsters feeding off "Blossom Cherry"!

However, that's all for later.

The matter at hand?

"To think that I could run into you here!"

"What a coincidence!"

"How about a drink tonight?"

Onodera cheerfully asked the surprised Sato in front of him.

"How are you here?"

Sato's face quickly returned to its usual sternness, his gaze demanding.

"Of course I'm here for dinner!"

"But when I saw someone daunting, I quickly slipped away!"

"I advise you not to go in, either!"

Onodera pretended to look frightened.

"Who?"

Sato continued to press, his eyes concealed with murderous intent.

His fists were clenching involuntarily.

Just let Onodera dare to say that name, and he would strike like thunder, finishing Onodera off—though he didn't want to make a move in such a "public place", compared to the disclosure of the matter, such a move was nothing!

As if he hadn't seen any of Sato's murderous intent, Onodera leaned in close to Sato and whispered in a lowered voice—

"Sword Saint!"

Sword Saint?!

Sato was taken aback, his clenched fist trembling involuntarily.

It wasn't the name he had anticipated.

But this name was enough to surprise him.

"The one I'm thinking of?"

Sato asked.

"Who else could it be?"

Onodera said as he patted Sato's shoulder.

To this affectionate gesture, Sato did not hesitate to swat away Onodera's hand.

"You are always so cold, smile a bit if it's nothing major!"

With these words, Onodera walked towards the mouth of the alley.

"You better leave quickly, too."

"Getting involved with someone like that can cost your life."

Onodera spoke as he walked, appearing to be giving friendly advice.

But he alone knew his palms were sweaty.

How could he not have seen Sato's murderous intent?

The moment he saw Sato, he knew that if he couldn't come up with a satisfactory answer, his life was as good as over.

So he had to come up with an unexpected yet reasonable answer to satisfy Sato.

And within this city, what else could be more suitable than Jason?

Nothing!

Jason's fame had reached its peak starting from the sinking of the "Fateful" vessel.

The title of "Sword Saint", although still doubted by some, did not prevent people from acknowledging Jason's strength.

So Jason was the most appropriate choice.

As for deceit?

His life was almost at stake.

Onodera couldn't care less.

He planned to bluff his way through the present, then find Jason.

Firstly, to apologize.

Having used someone else's name, such an apology was necessary.

Secondly, to cooperate.

The current "Blossom Cherry" had already changed.

He needed a reliable collaborator.

Or rather...

Seeking protection!

But all that would have to wait until after he left this place.

Just as Onodera was about to exit the alley, Sato's footsteps came from behind.

Step, step-step!

Clear and forceful!

Had he been discovered?

A sinking feeling grew in the pit of Onodera's stomach.

Almost instinctively, Onodera wanted to quicken his steps and leave, but he forced himself to endure.

Not only did he resist fleeing, but he also turned around first.