

Menu 367

Chapter 367: First 'Formal' Meeting (2)

Of course, his previous words were not entirely an excuse.

In certain respects, Jason really felt that way.

Facing the "mansion" before, Jason once again felt his own insignificance.

And with his core skill, [Protection Against Evil], lacking four points of Excitement of Feast, wanting to improve it was an indefinitely distant dream.

Similarly, another core skill [Prus-Griffon Body Forging Technique] was restricted by [Protection Against Evil] and could not be improved in the short term.

Therefore, Jason, wanting to increase his strength, could only turn his attention to other skills and secret techniques.

But with the condition of "does not consume Excitement of Feast," Jason almost had no choices.

He had already improved the rest of his skills and secret techniques to the point where they required Excitement of Feast to advance further.

So, it was only natural for him to think of self-training methods.

As someone with an exceptional talent for refining his body through forging techniques, Jason believed he wouldn't fare too badly with skill and secret technique training either.

Previously there was no time, but now that he had some, he naturally wouldn't waste it.

Moreover...

He had a sparring partner like Aras!

In the recent battle, Aras had shown an extremely strong capability in barehanded combat.

Especially that refreshing and bold way of striking, which greatly appealed to Jason.

Of course, if there was time, he would also strengthen his swordsmanship.

Regarding swordsmanship, Jason still had considerable confidence.

If he could possess a secret technique like the [Chen Xi Sword], it was enough proof of his swordsmanship talent. The previous discomfort only pointed to one possibility: the learning method was wrong!

Yes, the learning method must be wrong, not my lack of talent!

Jason reaffirmed his belief.

Aras was unaware of these thoughts.

She only heard that Jason wanted to learn combat skills.

That meant...

Jason would stay!

"Really?!"

Aras looked at Jason with wild excitement.

When Jason nodded again, Aras grabbed the money from his hand, and then she tried to give Jason a hug.

But he dodged it.

Aras was stunned for a moment but then quickly stopped paying attention to these side issues, and very formally said, "The gym's study program is by month, quarter, and year, Jason, from which one do you want to start?"

As the heir to the gym, she considered herself qualified.

Bounty Hunters?

That was just a part-time job!

A part-time job for survival!

If she could maintain a living through the gym, she wouldn't become a Bounty Hunter.

At this moment, Aras looked at Jason expectantly, hoping he would stay longer and learn more skills through long-time practice.

She hoped Jason would say a year.

After all, without long and continual training, it is difficult to see much improvement in combat.

Yet Jason did not change his original idea because of Aras's hopes.

"One month,"

Jason answered.

He only had one month here; any more would be useless.

Immediately, Aras was filled with disappointment, but she quickly returned to normal.

"The tuition for one month is..."

"That money is all yours."

"I need to live here, and also... eat."

Jason interrupted Aras's words.

Aras instinctively wanted to say she would cover room and board.

However, the image of Jason consuming energy bars in the afternoon flashed in her mind.

Wisely, Aras swallowed back the offer of "room and board."

"I'll find you some bedding."

"There are many rooms upstairs; you can pick any."

"The bathroom is on the first floor."

"You can also use the second floor."

Aras said this as she walked upstairs.

Jason did not leave but walked carefully to the window, avoiding direct exposure in front of the glass; he stood in the shadow looking outside.

He had just heard a somewhat grating sound of brakes.

Through the window, Jason saw the familiar black muscle car.

Parked across the street on 'Hot Cocoa Street.'

However, there wasn't a whole squad of people exiting the car.

Just one person.

Jason had seen the individual earlier in the morning.

"Choosing an acquaintance to temporarily ease relations?"

"So, the 'Fridge' organization isn't absolutely exterminationist."

"When facing a strong entity, they also choose to compromise."

"If that's the case..."

Jason thought, and after confirming once again that the other party was alone, he immediately had some ideas.

...

Edmund got out of the car, still with a trace of bewilderment in his expression.

Why was he here?

He should have been off work.

He should have been on vacation.

He was supposed to be holding a plane ticket and boarding a plane, not here encountering that dangerous 'Masked Man'.

'Since you've made such an excellent and reasonable suggestion, you're naturally the best candidate to meet him.'

'Refuse?'

'If you refuse, you will be demoted to D-class.'

'This isn't the first time you've rejected an assignment.'

'The number of rejections you've made is enough to get you demoted.'

Edmund recalled the conversation with his superior, and the bewilderment finally faded, replaced by a ferocious expression on his face.

"Whether I comply or not, I'm done for... Maybe I should just defect!"

As soon as this thought appeared, it immediately vanished without a trace.

Firstly, what the superior said was true; as a senior C-level agent, he had used his authority to refuse numerous assignments (and it turned out he was right to do so, as those assignments were all one-way trips), and although this was a C-level right, this right still had its limits. If it weren't for his superior's help, he would have long become a D-class personnel, with treatment worse than a dog's.

Secondly, he had saved nearly a decade's salary and had just made a down payment on a house and car. To simply abandon them... he couldn't bear it.

Although for the next twenty-nine years and eleven months, he would need to make monthly mortgage payments, living days as dark as if there were no sun, when he looked at his own house and car, he felt some consolation.

Maybe that's what life is?

It's painful, yet filled with joy.

With that thought, Edmund sighed, then stepped towards the back alley of 'Hot Cocoa Street'.

According to the intel, the 'Masked Man' and a female bounty hunter named Aras had returned here to her fighting gym.

Walking to the back alley and ignoring the trash all over the ground, Edmund strode forward.

He had seen worse, much worse scenarios.

The trash before his eyes?

It really wasn't much.

In fact, to some extent, it was truly paradise.

What a tiny door!

After glancing at the gym's sign, Edmund judged the door in front of him, adjusted his coat, and then raised his hand to knock.

No one answered.

Thud, thud thud!

Edmund knocked harder.

This time, finally, there was an answer.

However, it did not come from behind the door.

Instead...

From behind.

"Whom are you looking for?"

As Jason's artificially deep voice resounded, the blade of a wide-bladed shortsword was pressed against the side of Edmund's neck.

As the cold blade rested against his neck, Edmund immediately raised his hands high.

Then, he spoke hurriedly but clearly:

"I'm here to see Lord Jason."

"I mean no harm."

"I represent 'The Ice House'."

The Ice House?

The official name for the 'fridge'?

Jason thought, and his hand holding the knife moved slightly.

Instantly, the blade advanced a fraction.

Immediately, the skin of Edmund's neck was cut open.

In the instant his skin was cut open, the seasoned C-level agent immediately leveraged his wealth of experience; he dropped to his knees in a flash.

"Don't kill me."

"I'll cooperate."

"Ask away."

After speaking, as if he felt his words weren't persuasive enough,

Edmund quickly added, "I still have twenty-nine years and eleven months of mortgage payments left. Please spare me so I can fulfill the most important mission in my life—having a home of my own, building my own family."

"If you spare me, I'll tell you everything you want to know."

"Do you think you need a pair of ears and eyes?"

"I was a special service agent, I'm very good at gathering intel."

Kneeling there, Edmund spoke tearfully.

Jason, however, did not glance at Edmund again. His brows furrowed slightly, and a cold glint appeared in his eyes.

Because, at that moment, he was being watched by an extremely malicious gaze.

Right at...

The entrance of the alley.