

Sorcerer's Handbook

Chapter 81: So It's You Who Brought the Sacred Bloodline Here

Watching the battered Swordfish Dragon hastily flee into the white fog, Sylphine fell into deep thought.

This was already the fourth knowledge creature she had encountered tonight.

Generally speaking, Sylphine would only experience one special event per night during her virtual world explorations, and most of the time she would just be strolling around leisurely – because the Sea of Knowledge was so vast and the fog so dense that it was difficult to encounter others without a life-and-death connection in the great sea.

However, she had met four knowledge creatures in a row tonight, which made Sylphine suspect that today might be the mating season for knowledge creatures, so they had gathered around to go into heat...

But Sylphine knew why she could continuously trigger combat events.

She turned into a little bat again and waited in place for a moment. Sure enough, she heard the familiar “plop” sound again!

There it was again!

Hearing this sound for the fifth consecutive time, Sylphine could no longer deceive herself that it was a hallucination.

She could even foresee that if she flew in the direction the sound came from, she would definitely encounter another knowledge creature! Just like the previous four times!

What was going on here!

The books “A Hundred Years in the Virtual World and Ten Years at Sea”, “Poor Sorcerer, Rich Sorcerer”, and “Sailing Ten Thousand Miles” did not mention this kind of situation at all!

The most similar situation was the legendary “Mermaid's Call”: it was said that there was a knowledge creature called the Lantern Dragon in the Sea of Knowledge. Its body was extremely ugly, but its tentacles were beautiful mermaids with enchanting voices, sweet voices, and sexy figures. When sorcerers couldn't resist the temptation and

approached the mermaids, the lantern dragon hiding in the sea would suddenly appear and swallow the sorcerers whole.

However, Sylphine saw no mermaids or any traps. It was as if the “plop” sound simply guided her to the nearest habitat of knowledge creatures.

She also considered whether other sorcerers were pranking her, but upon careful reflection, that was impossible – her ultrasonic detection at the platinum level was already considered top-notch reconnaissance among miracles, yet she could only probe the terrain within three meters around her. Any further and the ultrasound would be blocked by the white fog.

The stretch of sea she had flown over before ambushing the Swordfish Dragon was nearly a hundred meters away!

Even with the miracles of the prophecy or fate systems, it would be impossible to penetrate dozens of meters of white fog. If it could be done, it would definitely not be within the ability range of a platinum sorcerer.

However, sorcerers were on a one-way path once they advanced to the two-winged gold or three-winged saint stages. The door of truth they opened could no longer lead to the Sea of Knowledge. There could only be single-wing platinum sorcerers in the Sea of Knowledge.

Moreover, she could not think of any reason why someone would guide her – if the other party could really see through hundreds of meters of white fog, their abilities would definitely be enough to overwhelm Sylphine. Wouldn't it be better to just tie up Sylphine and have their way with her?

This was the virtual world. As long as the other party concealed their identity, even the Sacred Bloodline would not be able to find the culprit for revenge.

So Sylphine felt even more strongly that she had triggered some mechanism in the virtual world, which caused the virtual world to actively guide her to find the nearest knowledge creature, just like a whirlpool.

There were many incomprehensible mysterious mechanisms in the virtual world, some of which appeared randomly, while others were accidentally triggered by sorcerers.

For example, the “Great Path” in the Sea of Knowledge. Although the research institute still had not found a viable trigger method, by consolidating various data, it was discovered that earth-type sorcerers had the greatest chance of encountering the “Great Path.” It was highly likely that the actions of earth mages caused changes in the virtual world, bringing the Great Path into manifestation.

Sylphine had read a miscellaneous book called “Chronicles of the Illusory World”, which recorded many such unverifiable virtual world mechanisms: for example, throwing a single-wing spirit into the sea would make a masked sorcerer emerge from the sea holding a two-wing spirit and a three-wing spirit, asking which spirit you had just thrown in. If you honestly answered neither, you would get a reward... Most of the stories inside were this kind of nearly absurd, effortless, and bizarrely triggered fantasy.

Although it was almost impossible to reproduce such mechanisms, Sylphine still tried her best to remember what exactly she had done to trigger this mechanism.

Could it be that sentence she said earlier, “I hope to meet knowledge creatures”, was overheard by the virtual world?

“I want to meet Serendipity Isle... I want to meet a whirlpool... I want to meet golden fish... I want to eat truffle lalafu... I want to condense seven or eight more drops of colorless source blood...” Sylphine kept murmuring as she flew, hoping the virtual world would hear her wishes again.

But the virtual world did not seem to have heard her prayers. Instead, she heard the Swordfish Dragon’s faint screams again, as if it was being brutally beaten somewhere nearby after escaping.

This was not the first time. The few knowledge creatures that Sylphine had defeated earlier also let out piteous wails in the distance after getting away.

Could the new miracle she had learned, “Blood Flow Reversal”, really be that powerful, making knowledge creatures wail all night even after escaping, unable to heal?

If Sylphine flew ten meters to the right, she would see the escaped Swordfish Dragon being brutally beaten by a certain dog couple with a mixed combo attack. It looked at the two in front of it with an expression of ‘So it’s you who brought the Sacred Bloodline here!’ Then, letting out a cry of unwillingness and lament like ‘The tiger falls in Pingyang at the mercy of dogs’, it burst out a bunch of loot.

After licking the bag clean, the little boat quietly followed along Sylphine’s flight path.

Blood Moon Kingdom, Shattered Lake Prison.

Sylphine woke up from her bed and couldn’t help but stretch out lazily, her whole body’s bones making crisp sounds – due to the slow blood flow, the bodies of the Sacred Bloodline tended to become stiff.

If they wanted to explore the virtual world for a long time, the Sacred Bloodline would have to lie in coffins, reducing air exposure to lower oxidation rates. Otherwise, they would wake up with their whole bodies rigid.

Sylphine first took a warm bath, then brushed her teeth and washed her face. During this process, she had to keep all water sources still. One of the taboos of the Sacred Bloodline was that they could not touch flowing water. Although touching it would not hurt them, the sensation of flowing water to the Sacred Bloodline was like the steak you were eating suddenly started squirming, repulsive and frightening.

There were enough taboos for the Sacred Bloodline to fill a book as thick as a palm. Compared to that, the most well-known “fear of sunlight” was just one of the most trivial ones.

Although there were many restrictions, people seeking to join the research institute and become one of the Bloodline were still neverending. This was not only because the Sacred Bloodline had powerful innate talents, but also because they were the favored children of the Blood Moon Sovereign, one of the only two ruling races of the Blood Moon Kingdom!

“Reporting last night’s adventures to the research institute would probably earn a lot of research points... But then I’d have to talk with Teacher again, and he’d definitely ask all sorts of nagging questions, super annoying...”

Sylphine put on a loose black robe and crow mask while randomly thinking, and went to the exclusive dining room for medical staff.

“Good morning, Your Excellency.”

Seeing the passing medical staff bowing to her again, Sylphine hurriedly stopped him and said, “I’ve said that when it’s just us, treat me like any other medical staff, just say hello, this isn’t outside.”

“But...”

“You guys doing this, if word got to the research institute, Teacher would definitely scold me. Your badge number is [137] right? I’ll remember that. If I get scolded by Teacher, I’ll remember to bother you for it.”

[137] panicked at this, and bowed in fright: “I’m so sorry, Your Excellency, I just-”

“Hmm? Still using honorifics?”

“...Good morning, [222].”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 82: Drawing Cards!

Looking at the 9 spirits before him, Ashe had to do some broadcast calisthenics to calm his excited mood.

Last night's virtual world exploration, they had harvested a full 12 spirits!

Among them, 3 that were said to be able to sell for a good price were taken away by the Swordswoman, but even so, Ashe's harvest this night could almost top the total harvest of the past few days!

Not to mention they also got 2 experience orbs!

Ashe felt that unless he drew out new virtual world exploration artifacts again, it would be very difficult to replicate last night's results before White Wings was fully deployed.

And last night's experience also deeply proved the life lesson he had summed up while at work: working is not as good as slacking off, slacking off is not as good as exploitation, exploitation is not as good as reaping the rewards...

When they discovered a wild mage nearby in the virtual world map, Ashe and his companions' first reaction was to flee – not because their conscience was not yet lost and they were unwilling to rob an unfamiliar mage they had never met before, but because they were afraid neither of them was even a match for one of the opponent's hands!

That's right, Ashe was very sure that the two of them together could not beat the other person alone!

They had a good measure of their own strength: whether it was the Swordswoman or himself, they had reached their current strength through forcing growth, miracles seldom happened, and they barely had any combat systems.

The Swordswoman was still a little better, after all, her talent was evident, and she only needed to spend some time to catch up. Ashe was simply a thigh hanger, besides normal attacks he could only summon doppelgangers to send out, it would not be an exaggeration to describe him as 'the weakest of the combat mages of the same rank'.

Bullying the mage projections of Legacy Isle a little, beating up some knowledge creatures a bit, was already their limit, and it even felt a little beyond their capabilities – especially after condensing more than half of White Wings, the intensity of the battles they encountered rose by a level, almost exhausting their arcane energy every time, barely able to defeat their enemies with great difficulty.

Mages like Ashe and his companion were undoubtedly anomalies in the Sea of Knowledge. After all, they had only been mages for seven days. Among normal mages, they belonged to the stage where they hadn't even left the starting village yet, still at the novice phase of getting familiar with the game mechanics!

Whereas the mage who could appear nearby them must have condensed more than half of White Wings, spent over a month, or even half a year, a year was also likely exploring the virtual world!

The advantage of time was enough to create a huge gap at this point. To use a game analogy, Ashe and his companion were like players who had leveled up by cheating, but didn't do any of the class missions, main missions, side missions, and didn't even know how to combo their attacks.

And because their level had increased, the Gate of Truth would only transport them to higher level monster areas!

Fortunately, the two of them were bound as a team, if it was another solo mage who experienced their situation, they would have long been killed and forced to transmigrate by the high level knowledge creatures of the area.

A normal sorcerer would certainly only be able to slowly accumulate Silver Wings step-by-step. Whether it was sect level, combat system, mastery of miracles, or other aspects, they would far surpass Ashe and Gerard's hacked abilities. Not to mention the high probability that the opponent had experience fighting sorcerers – they'd likely discover right after exchanging blows that Ashe was a soft persimmon that could be easily handled.

Although Ashe could also gamble that the opponent was not a battle sorcerer, there was no need to take the risk – his real body was still imprisoned and at risk, if he or the Swordswoman died, even if Ashe wailed "I don't want to play anymore, give me back my life!", it would be useless. He could only obediently await the blood moon tribunal's punishment for the gambling addict.

Therefore, when Ashe saw the other party seem to be approaching, he immediately maneuvered the small boat to evade. But because of the fog blocking their view, the other party couldn't discover the small boat at a certain distance away at all. At this time, the Swordswoman suddenly bit his ear and suggested a rather thrilling bad idea.

"Wow, you're so nasty, but I like it."

"Tsk, you're one to talk like you're such a good thing yourself."

So the two of them sneaked around to the front of the unfamiliar mage, and in the virtual world map they found a "bit troublesome" area, threw small rocks to lure the mage there.

Based on their encounters over the past few days, the “bit troublesome” areas were mostly habitats of knowledge creatures, and basically those still growing, with larger bodies and tremendous combat power, who would make good use of spirits. Even if mages could defeat them, they definitely couldn’t subdue the knowledge creatures.

Sure enough, Ashe saw in the virtual world map that after a period of combat, the “bit troublesome” yellow area where the unfamiliar mage was gradually turned into a “go pick up the spoils” green area, and the green area kept moving, apparently the knowledge creature escaping.

And Ashe’s small boat was waiting right in the path where the knowledge creature escaped!

Judging which direction the knowledge creature would escape was actually very simple: unlike blind mages, knowledge creatures surely grasped the situation around their habitat, so they could escape to safe areas every time, rather than colliding into other knowledge creatures’ habitats to compete for territory.

Ashe only needed to observe all around, exclude the routes leading to “worth a visit”, “bit troublesome” and such areas, the remaining would be the escape route the knowledge creature had a high probability of choosing. Even if there was some inaccuracy, Ashe could keep an eye on the virtual world map and correct it in time, almost always able to let the young knowledge creature know what was meant by ‘disasters never come singly’, ‘escaping is shameful and useless’.

Relying on this method, Ashe led the unfamiliar mage to the knowledge creature’s habitat, then lay in ambush nearby. When the knowledge creature suffered a crushing defeat and fled desperately, he would go over to pick up the spoils, reaping the fisherman’s profits.

Not only were the gains from doing this abundant, the safety was high. Knowledge creatures had greatly reduced combat power when fleeing, and were easily bewildered when ambushed, like when you’re being chased by a ghost and suddenly step on a banana peel, anyone would become stupefied.

When the unfamiliar mage’s soul energy was depleted too much and he couldn’t keep going, needing to log off, Ashe and his companion still felt a tinge of regret. The two of them had slain a total of five knowledge creatures, harvesting 12 spirits and 2 experience orbs.

Especially those 2 experience orbs, in the Swordswoman’s words, were ‘what we earned in one night took an ordinary mage half a year’.

More importantly, among the 9 spirits that Ashe got, one was precisely the third type of spirit required for the Slash Me miracle!

It looked like a constantly spinning water ball, with a little water wing, held trembling in the hand, appearing extremely cute.

“Circulate”

“Single-Wing Spirit”

“Restriction: The targets affected must have a water source in their bodies.”

“Basic Effect: Transfer all effects (instant damage, persistent effects) received by the first target to the second target, the transfer speed varies according to factors like the distance between the two targets.”

“Passive Effect: When the mage’s body contains liquid, it can reduce physical impacts suffered.”

““Water flows to low places.””

Having gathered the doppelganger, sword heart, and circulation spirits, Ashe already possessed all the prerequisites to cast the ‘Slash Me’ miracle!

Next he just needed to hurry up and grasp the spirits, reaching the point where he could induce virtual world resonance even with his arcane energy restricted in prison, then he could try casting the miracle in a state where spells were prohibited!

Putting away the circulation spirit, Ashe opened Aurora’s Sorcerer Handbook and chose to charge all the remaining 8 spirits!

1 spirit was worth 8 points, so 8 spirits were 64 points. Adding the previous 40 points, Ashe now had a whopping 104 points, enough to purchase a ‘bunch of source crystals’!

Purchase successful!

Obtained 20 source crystals!

Then triggered the first recharge bonus, obtaining another 40 source crystals!

Plus the 4 source crystals from checking in these three days, totaling 44 source crystals, allowing 14 divinations!

It’s my turn, time to draw cards!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

- Chapter 83: Death Maniac Swordswoman's Growth Report

Chapter 83: Death Maniac Swordswoman's Growth Report

"If hurt enough, then slash open with a single stroke..."

Igor woke up with a yawn and went to take a bath as usual. He had just taken off his clothes and got into the tub when the doorbell rang persistently.

Although puzzled, Igor still wrapped himself in a towel and went to open the door, finding Ashe outside.

"Let's play rock paper scissors."

"What?"

"Don't ask, just play rock paper scissors with me, and you have to win three times!"

"Is this some kind of necessary ritual?"

"Yes!"

"Will it harm me?"

"No!"

Igor observed Ashe for a while and felt he was probably telling the truth, so he said, "Then I refuse."

"Why?"

"Helping you is friendship, not helping you is principle. Why should I help you complete the ritual?"

"Why do you need a reason to help others?"

"Your current position doesn't really support you saying that... And do I look like a philanthropist?"

Ashe pondered for a moment: “Do you know why mages can’t drink boiling water and have to wait for it to cool first?”

Igor was startled: “Why?”

“If you accompany me to complete this ritual, I’ll tell you.”

Could boiling water contain traces of toxins that damage arcane energy? Or is ‘boiled water’ part of some ritual that would have undesirable consequences if interfered with?

In the mage world, all things contain truths. Something seemingly trivial could be a ‘ritual taboo’ that mages spent centuries summarizing, like ‘chanting passages for the deceased’ can effectively reduce the lingering death aura.

Therefore, when Ashe said this, Igor became curious and agreed to Ashe’s request, easily winning him three times—with some mind reading ability, Igor could almost see what Ashe would play each round written on his face.

“Thanks, Igor!”

“What ritual requires someone to win rock paper scissors against you three times...”

“It’s called the padding blade ritual. I just lost to you due to bad luck, so now my luck will turn good. See you later—”

“Wait, you haven’t told me why mages can’t drink freshly boiled water yet.”

“Because it burns your tongue.”

Igor watched Ashe leave blankly, closed the door, and went back to the bathtub.

He looked at the ceiling, rubbed his temples, and fell into contemplation.

“Is it because I’ve been interacting with him too often recently that my IQ has also been affected...”

After the bath, Igor was fortunately triggered an ‘Inspiration’ spirit while brushing his teeth. He saw the splashing toothpaste foam leave a sentence on the mirror—

“Don’t try drinking freshly boiled water.”

“Who would drink that!”

The padding blade ritual completed, Ashe returned to his dorm.

“Confirm spending 30 Source Crystals for 10 draws? Note: You can manually increase the number of draws. More draws make it easier to draw rare cards!”

“Confirm spending 42 Source Crystals for 14 draws?”

“Confirmed!”

Whoosh—

It was still the extremely simple draw interface. Eight white lights, four purple lights, and...two gold lights appeared!

The eight white lights were 1 basic combat card, 4 Energy Potions, and 3 Experience Potions. Although the Experience Potions were acceptable since they could stack, drawing so many Energy Potions that a Operator could only use 1 of per week... These must be pool-polluting items!

Ashe looked on and his eyes lit up instantly: the four purple lights were 3 “Spirits’ Joy Potions” and 1 “Honey Belly Sword”.

Spirits’ Joy Potion (x3): Increases a Operator’s favorability with their spirit, speeding up their mastery. Lasts 1 week, effects do not stack.

Honey Belly Sword: Honey that can be hidden under the tongue. Bite down when needed to turn into a sword. Can pass any security check. Can be upgraded.

The Spirits’ Joy Potions were undoubtedly what Ashe needed most right now. He had just obtained his Heart Sword and Circulate spirits and couldn’t wield them freely in the virtual world, let alone resonate them in reality.

The effect was a bit strange though, supposedly increasing the spirit’s favorability towards the Operator... Did the potion make spirits go into heat...?

The Honey Belly Sword wasn’t useful yet, but Ashe would definitely need a weapon after the prison break. As seen in Shattered Lake Prison, the outside world was full of obstacles and security for escapees.

So the Honey Belly Sword, which could pass checks, was essential for fugitives.

Finally, there were two gold lights!

Alchemist’s Distillation Flask: Combine two of the same potions for a 30% chance to distill a stronger advanced potion, 30% chance to mutate into another rare potion, 40% chance of failure losing both potions.

Ashe perked up instantly—with this flask, those pool-polluting potions could be reprocessed. Although there was also a chance of loss, at least there was hope, like buying lottery tickets.

Random Spirit Summon Card: The Operator performs a summoning ritual to independently summon a rare spirit of their current level, instantly advancing the spirit's faction level to match the Operator's. Note: rituals vary in restrictions, duration, and requirements based on the spirit, but will not exceed seven days.

At first glance, this gold card didn't seem that special, just summoning a spirit. Ashe could get 12 in one night.

But upon closer look, the key was not the spirit but the 'current level'!

He now knew mages were split into Single-Wing Silver, Two-Wing Gold, Three-Wing Saint, Four-Wing Legend ranks. So if Swordswoman advanced to Two-Wing, using this card on her would surely summon a Two-Wing spirit—higher-Wing spirits were naturally better.

But mages needed sufficient faction level to summon matching spirits.

Without Gold rank in a faction, she couldn't summon a Two-Wing spirit, and so on!

So this gold card's true effect was: instantly advance a Operator's random faction to their current Virtual Wing level and obtain a spirit of that level!

For a One-Wing mage, it was just an Experience Orb + spirit. But for Two-Wing and above, it was terrifying.

Mastering an unfamiliar faction from nothing in under seven days!

Reason told Ashe this card became more valuable later, but the current situation left no room for hoarding.

To succeed, he had to convert everything into combat power. Regretting that a sliver of power cost them the escape and landing in Lorein's cooking pot was unacceptable.

First the Distillation Flask. With 7 Energy and 4 Experience Potions, he combined them into 2 Advanced Energy Potions and 1 Advanced Experience Potion.

Advanced Energy Potion: Adds an advanced action point during training for 7 days. Eliminates Operator energy consumption, increases positive feedback and mood, small chance of increasing Trust Level.

Advanced Experience Potion: +50% skill exp gain during training for 7 days, stacks up to 100% on an Operator.

That should have been it, but Ashe put in 2 Spirits' Joy Potions as well.

He still had 1 left if it failed, and if it succeeded...

Spirits' Frenzy Potion: Greatly increases a spirit's favorability towards the Operator, vastly speeding up mastery. Lasts 1 week, effects do not stack.

The name was sounding more and more like an aphrodisiac...

Ashe opened Operator Management, and the game suddenly prompted:

"Death Maniac Swordswoman's training has ended. Please review the growth report and set this week's regimen soon."

Growth Report 4.12-4.18

Swordsmanship Faction: 0 → Silver

Light Faction: 0 → Silver

Water Faction: Beginner → Silver

Arcane Energy: 0 → Silver Half-Wing

Training Evaluation: A!

Due to an A evaluation, Death Maniac Swordswoman gained the Sorcerer Handbook's Job Enhancement:

One-Wing Swordsmage → Annihilation Silver Swordsmage

Annihilation Silver Swordsmage: Recover 0.5% max arcane energy whenever dealing damage.

Ashe was surprised there was an evaluation and high scores gave special rewards—job enhancements.

Although unrelated to him, a stronger Swordswoman obviously increased exploration efficiency, and Annihilation Silver Swordsmage seemed quite useful.

The Silver water faction was from the 2 Experience Orbs yesterday, swordsmanship and water.

With Share Experience, he had let Swordswoman have both. Seeing her touched reaction in-game, he could almost hear the "Your bond with Death Maniac Swordswoman has deepened" prompt.

Then he opened Training Regimen.

Death Maniac Swordswoman

Current Mood: 6 (0% exp bonus)

Available Actions: Rest, Amuse, Train, Combat

Suggestion: Swordswoman hasn't had rest/amusement for a week. Appropriate leisure can effectively improve mood, work-life balance enables better training.

Ashe hesitated slightly: Swordswoman had complained many times about lacking rest, and she had helped him so much in-game that in justice, he should let her relax...

Bang bang! "Ashe, come out! We have to find the last teammate today!" Igor's voice came from outside.

Ashe instantly snapped out of it: Leaders must set an example and take the lead. If even he couldn't rest, how could Swordswoman?

I reject your suggestion!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 85: I'm Too Lazy to Write

"Ah! I forgot to wash my clothes!"

Adele frantically opened her wardrobe, her face full of despair. "I forgot to do laundry these past few days, and now I have no clean clothes left to wear. Iris—"

"Don't look at me, it's your own fault for being lazy," Iris curled her lips. "My clothes are tailored to fit me precisely. If you wear them even once, they'll basically be misshapen, especially the chest area which you'd stretch out with your bust..." She tilted her head towards Sonya. "You should ask Sonya."

Ingrid, who had just gotten out of the shower, chimed in while drying her hair. "I do have some loose-fitting clothes, but I'm taller than you, so the sleeves might not fit well."

Adele looked pleadingly at Sonya. "Sonya..."

Of the four roommates, only Sonya had a similar build to Adele. Sonya knew she couldn't get out of this, but still tried to make an excuse—she didn't want to lend her clothes to others either.

“No, I don't like wearing other people's clothes, nor having others wear mine.”

Iris and Ingrid exchanged strange looks at Sonya.

Adele blinked, then went to borrow some of Ingrid's clothes. But since Ingrid was a full head taller than her, the swordswoman's top looked almost like a dress on petite Adele.

They had a public lecture class this morning, so all four headed to the cafeteria for breakfast together.

Halfway there, a male voice suddenly called out, “Sonya!”

They looked over to see a rather handsome blonde young man approaching. Iris' face immediately darkened.

The student was Merowit, who had previously pursued Iris. Thinking he was good-looking and from a noble family, Iris had given him a chance to court her. But with just a few flirty glances from Sonya, Merowit had switched his affection, utterly humiliating Iris in front of her friends.

“Good morning, Merowit.”

“Good morning, Sonya,” Merowit said enthusiastically. “I rarely get to see you since you transferred to the Swordsmanship Department. What a nice coincidence today. How about we have dinner together tonight? It's seafood season now. Do you want to go to Golden Coast or Eel Matters Fish?”

Iris scoffed inwardly. Sonya doesn't even care for Felix now, let alone Merowit. Merowit is suddenly so proactive, he must have received hints from his family. After all, Sonya is Professor Trotzam's apprentice, and has the achievement of defeating Leone. She is almost destined to become a Saint Swordsaint in the future.

For middle and minor noble families, gaining a Spellweaver as powerful as a three-winged mage could provide tremendous assistance. While Merowit may have initially only been interested in Sonya's looks, now there was likely the allure of status and connections behind his interest as well.

Iris knew Sonya would surely reject him, but it was hard to predict how. She hoped Sonya wouldn't take the chance to make snide remarks at her...

“No, I'm training and have no time.”

“You’re so diligent, but relaxing is also important for cultivation,” Merowit persisted. “If you don’t like seafood, we could—”

“I don’t think eating with you would be relaxing.”

Merowit’s expression froze. He muttered a ‘sorry to bother you’ and quickly departed. After walking a few steps, Sonya noticed the other three hanging back, exchanging looks. “What’s going on?”

“Oh, nothing,” Iris smoothed out her strange expression.

The four arrived at the tiered lecture hall, with passing students actively greeting them. Putting aside Sonya’s recent antics, even before, she and Iris were considered a beautiful scenic line of the academy. Being surrounded by admirers wherever they went was standard.

Iris enthusiastically returned her classmates’ greetings, while Sonya just calmly nodded, not saying a word. Seeing this, the uneasy feeling in the other three grew stronger.

Having just sat down, Adele immediately turned deathly pale. “Oh no, I forgot to write my essay! The professor is going to collect it this class!”

Even Ingrid couldn’t help gloating. “Well you’re screwed now.”

This lecture was on Modern Cailleach History, taught by Professor Wesley, who was over sixty and infamously strict and traditional. Pop quizzes and collecting assignments on the spot were routine. If the after-class essay wasn’t completed, just wait to retake the class next year.

Sure enough, the first thing the white-haired, straight-backed old professor did upon entering was bark out the dreaded command: “Place your essays on the lectern, we’ll check them now.”

With a flick of his hand, a single-wing Scholar spirit floated up to the lectern. Despite having only one wing, it was the bane of countless students—the ‘Inspector’ spirit!

With detailed settings by its mage, the Inspector could swiftly judge if an essay met requirements. linking it to the school’s Archives, the mage could even cast a Miracle to check for plagiarism from the library’s sources on the spot!

One by one, the students turned in their essays. With a light tap, the Inspector would display green for a pass, yellow for significant similarity to existing works, and red for major suspected plagiarism.

The professor said nothing, merely sitting there watching everyone turn in their assignments, only giving a cold huff when a student had no essay, noting down their information.

When it was Adele's turn, she walked up empty-handed, big shiny eyes full of sincerity. "Professor Wesley, I accidentally fell asleep while writing my essay last night, so I haven't finished it yet. May I turn it in next week?"

Wesley glanced at her. "If your essay next week has over 10% similarity, your participation grade is an automatic fail."

"Okie dokie!" Adele bounced happily back to her seat, not bothered by the pressure at all.

Next was Sonya's turn. Seeing her also empty-handed, Wesley's expression softened considerably. "You didn't write it?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you write it? Was it because of heavy training? I heard Professor Trozam often has you for extra lessons. Though spellcasting cultivation is important, a well-rounded education is also essential."

The other students were full of envy and jealousy. No essay for them meant definitely losing points, but with Trozam's backing, Wesley was helping Sonya justify it!

If Sonya just went along with it and buttered up the professor some more, he might even waive the assignment for her completely—

"I was too lazy to write it."

Dead silence filled the classroom.

After a pause, Wesley's face seemed to say 'Did I hear that right?' "What did you just say?"

Sensing the strangeness from those around her, Sonya reflexively started to repeat herself.

But suddenly she realized—wait, wasn't I supposed to invoke Trozam's name here, compliment Wesley a few times, so he'd let me skip this essay assignment?

"I..." Sonya opened her mouth. "I was too lazy to write this pointless, time-wasting assignment with no nutritional value."

Seeing Wesley's face that looked ready to erupt with magma, and the admiring expressions of her classmates that wanted to laugh but didn't dare, Sonya finally understood what the 'sincere' summoning ritual really was!

My meeting you really is the greatest misfortune of my life!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 86: The Prison Break Research Society

"This is where the transport ships dock. The transport ships come to Shattered Lake Prison on the 1st, 11th and 21st of each month to deliver supplies and death row inmates. The ships are medium-sized cargo vessels, and they always have at least one team of Blood Mad Hunters escorting the prisoners. The Hunters usually have one or two wings – three-wing squad leaders only come for really important inmates..."

Ashe glanced at the guard puffing on a pipe not far away and couldn't help saying, "Maybe we should talk further away?"

Igor glanced at him. "No one will suspect you. This is my business."

"Business?"

"Didn't Igor invite you to break out with him when you first met?" Langna stood outside the yellow line at the shore, gazing at the calm, waveless lake surface. The clear blue sky was reflected in the water, and occasional glimmers of silver flashed across the surface – it looked like a beautiful natural scene, if you didn't know those "silver lights" were schools of Finger Sharks that could crunch bones like potato chips.

"Yeah, but I thought that was just an excuse to lure naive new inmates?" Ashe said.

"While I appreciate your accurate self-awareness, don't insult my professionalism." Igor glanced at Ashe. "I never lie. If you check the Club Directory in the library, you'll see on page 2, line 13 that I started the Prison Break Research Club."

Many questions bubbled up in young Ashe's mind. "How can a prison allow... This place has clubs... Why did you start this club?"

"The best hunters often pose as prey." Igor said calmly. "Remember when we first met, didn't I seem eager, like a friendly guy trying to recruit a new buddy?"

“Even wary new death row inmates get drawn in by the insider information I reveal. And I don’t just talk – I’ve actually researched escape plans and scouted the prison with them.

“As they get to know me, they realize I’m just an idiot obsessed with escaping, and they lower their guard without realizing they’re walking into a trap.

“I’m the bait, the club is my lure.”

Ashe said, “It sounds like a sweet innocent girl who pretends to be pure but actually seduces dirty old men...”

“I’m starting to doubt the speech control abilities of your chip. Those words could easily qualify as spreading obscenity.” Igor said calmly. “In short, pay the guards no mind – I’ve brought people on scouting trips like this dozens of times.”

Ashe blinked. “Is this your scheme? Pretend you’re always thinking of escaping, use that to lure new inmates, then when you actually want to escape, no one will suspect you?”

Igor looked at Ashe in surprise, then smiled amusedly. “Ashe, I’m hurt you think so poorly of me.”

“Hmph.”

After investigating the prison docks, the four headed back inside. Notably, although they reached the perimeter, they never actually went “outside” – Shattered Lake Prison covered the entire island. Other than the occasional glass atrium letting in sunlight, whenever inmates looked up, all they saw was the ceiling. Even the Ocean View terrace had shade canopies.

There wasn’t an inch of land outside the “prison” on the whole island.

Though unconfirmed, the chips’ strong control over inmates probably related to the omnipresent ceiling.

“Where we’re going next is my greatest find in exploring Shattered Lake. I’ve never shown anyone else – you’re the first lucky ones to share the secret.”

Before Ashe could feel moved, Langna calmly said, “Do you say that to every victim? Next will you say ‘So you have to swear to keep all my secrets’?”

Igor looked surprised. “Gourmet, how did you know I say that? Anyone I told should be magically bound by a spirit to keep my secret, unable to tell others. How could you know?”

“Walls have ears, Igor. As a martial mage, I happen to have very sharp hearing, unfortunately.”

“I see, I’ll be more careful and covert when doing dirty work next time – if I can keep living here, that is.”

Ashe glanced at Langna, then at the silent Ronat beside him. Ronat hadn’t said a word, just following Langna around after their talk yesterday.

The details of their subsequent deathmatch could be summed up as shredding a chicken. The aftermath was obvious – if Ronat was Langna’s reluctant servant before, now he was practically an accessory. He didn’t seem happy exactly, but no longer resistant.

Less and less of him belonged to “himself”, more and more to “Langna”.

Eventually when he emerged from the infirmary, even the regenerated parts would be engraved with “Langna’s” name.

Perhaps Igor was right and Ronat was sunk deep in quicksand. He thought commanding Langna’s love was his victory, unaware it was also Langna’s lethal counterattack.

Love is a frightening power – you can use it, but it uses you; you watch it, it watches you; you think you master it, but quickly become its slave.

Once love’s seeds sprout, all else becomes its parasite.

Privately, Ronat’s will to survive remained, insisting on escape, fortunately Langna couldn’t perform his ritual often. Otherwise Ronat would be scrap in days.

According to Igor’s intel, Langna’s “friends” lasted at least a month. Ronat should make it until the next Blood Moon Tribunal – enough, since Ashe just needed a temporary ally. Whether Ronat could resist Langna after escaping depended on his luck.

“But I never lie.” Igor smiled. “This place really is critical for our escape. I’d even call it as important as Ashe’s Purification miracle...”

We arrived. As key as my Slash miracle? A secret passage? Arsenal? Or maybe...

Ashe looked up eagerly, only to see a clear green sign above the room ahead –

“Men’s Restroom”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 87: The Weak Medical Mages

“To be honest, I’m the type who can’t pee when someone’s watching. Could you guys turn around for a second?”

“Is that so?” Igor glanced over with a slight upturn of his lips. “I see, no wonder.”

Ashe grumbled and cursed as he went into the stall.

Langna looked around with a bewildered expression. “What’s so special about this bathroom that it warrants the conman’s attention?”

“This bathroom is no different from any other bathroom. There’s nothing special about it,” said Igor as he wet his fingers and gently washed his eyes. “What’s special is that a bathroom can serve as a medium for us to trick the miracle chips.”

“Perhaps you know already, but before I was imprisoned, I was an insurance salesman – though my job wasn’t just contracting policies, marketing was also part of it. When I did marketing, I didn’t only market insurance. I had access to all kinds of products. In the end it was just work – I simply took on several jobs at once.”

Curious, Ashe asked, “Sounds ambitious. So why did you get caught and put in here?”

Igor sighed. “Well, I feel wronged about this too. All I did was help customers buy products they wanted, yet I got convicted of aggravated fraud.”

Langna suddenly said, “If I remember right, your crowning achievement was making a tycoon go bankrupt buying a glass of water.”

“A glass of water? Just plain old water?”

“Water is no ordinary thing. It’s the elixir of life, the origin of all life, the medium of miracles, the mother who nurtures the skies and the earth...”

Ashe completely understood now. Igor was the sort who could get full marks on interview questions like ‘Sell this pen to me for \$1000’.

“Alright, there are no customer targets here for you. Tone down the sales pitch and just tell us how to use the bathroom to trick the chips,” said Ashe.

Igor glanced at him. “Among the products I used to broker, there was a life sign monitoring device. It could receive the life sign signals emitted by the miracle chips and analyze the user’s condition based on various vital signs. The device itself isn’t key. What’s key is that when I was studying how it worked, I discovered the miracle chips don’t continuously transmit life signals. There’s a certain interval, with the default being 600 seconds, or 10 minutes.”

“The frequency can be adjusted, but the higher the frequency, the greater the demands on the device receiving the signal. For example, the device I marketed – even the highest spec one could only receive a signal every 5 seconds. Without any markup, just the device itself was extremely expensive.”

“The prison chip processing unit that collects and analyzes our vitals is undoubtedly military grade, but even so, the prison wouldn’t waste resources having our chips transmit continuously. With the chip limits, we have no way to break out of Shattered Lake Prison.”

“The only effect even if the signal frequency interval is maximized is that it’ll take longer to discover if we suddenly die.”

“The only place in the prison that makes us continuously transmit life signals should be the Deathmatch Society arena. Because when we send out the unconscious or dead signal in a deathmatch, the arena will immediately restore our attack limits – this shows life signals are monitored in real time.”

Ashe felt this was important information, but still didn’t understand how to utilize it. “It’s certainly interesting trivia, but what’s the link to breaking out?”

Igor glanced at him. “If you removed your chip so it stops transmitting life signals, how do you think the processor would judge your status? Even corpses still emit signals, you know.”

Ashe understood at once. “It would judge I removed my chip and am escaping, and would instantly notify the prison there’s a breakout!”

“Right. But to escape, we have to remove the chips – otherwise we can’t even leave the island.”

Ashe nodded. When they observed the port earlier, they noticed a yellow line around the shore with a “Do Not Cross” sign.

Though it said ‘please’, for prisoners it was an absolute limit – the moment they touched the line with a toe, their bodies would completely freeze, unable to move.

“So during the time between ‘removing the chip’ and ‘the processor discovers our breakout’ is our safest action window. Not only are all limits removed then, but the

prison doesn't know anything's amiss yet," said Igor, looking around. "That's the time gap we have to seize!"

"Figuring things out this far is the limit. As for the life signal frequency, we can only hope it's the default 10 minutes."

Lagna said, "It's already impressive. I thought this was just fooling around, but Igor, your performance makes me admit you've rekindled my hopes."

Even Ronald kept nodding, his will to survive slightly awakening his reason again.

"As expected of the man I chose. My eye for people is great after all," Ashe praised himself first, then asked, "But what's the men's bathroom for?"

Igor grimaced. "The purpose of a bathroom is naturally for excretion. Or do you have a hobby of eating in them? Please demonstrate if so."

Speaking of his research over the years, Igor was also a bit proud. "Now we know we have to utilize the time gap from the chip signals. But there's still an issue – how do we know when the last signal was sent?"

"The death row inmates definitely don't all transmit simultaneously. That's too great an instant load for the processor. So our signal times are likely evenly distributed within the 10 minutes. If the processor judges special circumstances, it'll temporarily adjust signal frequency, then reset all inmate signals to initial state after midnight."

"And the so-called special circumstances are really when the processor removes some of our privileges, so it needs our life signals immediately!"

"There are only three places in the prison where 'special circumstances' happen."

Igor held up two fingers. "First is the Deathmatch Society. Because before a deathmatch, the chips remove attack limits; after a deathmatch, attack limits are restored. Those two times are when the processor interfaces with the chips. The chips need to instantly send life signals!"

"And after a deathmatch ends, the chips naturally revert to default frequency, sending the signals of the dead 10 minutes later. This means by intentionally entering the special place of the Deathmatch Society, we can change the chip frequency and completely control the time gap!"

Even Ashe fully understood now.

He looked around the bathroom, eyeing the urinal. "So the bathroom is the second place?"

Igor smiled. "Theoretically we could also use deathmatches to change the frequency, but they are fights to the death. The bathroom is much more convenient by comparison."

"As for how a bathroom can achieve the same effect as the deathmatch arena, well, naturally it's because...the prison doesn't allow indiscriminate urination and defecation!" Igor and Langna burst into laughter.

Because the prison required inmates to only excrete in bathrooms, every time an inmate entered a bathroom, the prison processor would actively lift their "excretion privileges"!

Just like the deathmatch arena, it was a special status! Without that privilege, even if you were constipated to the point of bursting, the chip would forcibly control your sphincter shut tight, never letting a drop leak out the back end. If you really filled up, you could only vomit it out the top end.

For inmates, this was undoubtedly unspeakable humiliation. So Igor and Langna, long-term prisoners, couldn't help guffawing – the harsh rule made by the prison had become an accomplice in their escape. Such a bizarre reversal was naturally funny.

Though just how much of their laughter was self-mockery, no one knew.

"What's the third place?" asked Ashe.

Still smiling, Igor looked to Langna.

After thinking, Langna said, "The lovers' rooms?"

Like the bathrooms, the lovers' rooms also temporarily lifted some inmate restrictions, and even relaxed attack limits – after all, fetishes were freedom.

But like the deathmatch arena, lovers' rooms required applications to enter, far less convenient than bathrooms.

And rooms needed two people minimum to apply. Langna and Ronald were one thing, but did Ashe plan on applying with Igor!?

Leaning against the wall, Igor said, "You know all the secrets you need to. I'll now explain the breakout plan."

"Aren't we getting a fifth member?" asked Ashe. "We still lack rear support that can heal and move quickly."

Langna the moonwolf beastman could be vanguard. Ronald was good at guns and traps for ranged damage. But their rear support to heal and lead swift movement was still missing after Ashe and Igor searched for two days.

What, you ask what Ashe and Igor are responsible for? Igor is HR, Ashe holds the core tech. They're certainly not responsible for combat!

"We've searched everyone we could, can't delay any longer. Not everything can be fully prepared before acting – rushed battles are the norm, since crime opportunities are fleeting. And," Igor glanced at him, "even if we could wait, could you?"

Indeed, Ashe didn't think Professor Sylphine outside would just let him be to peacefully serve out his sentence in Shattered Lake.

The sooner he left Shattered Lake, the sooner he'd escape Professor Sylphine's schemes.

"The breakout plan is simple – sneak aboard the transport ship and leave."

Igor wet his fingers and drew a small boat on the mirror. "But to safely board the transport, we not only need to remove the miracle chips, we also need legal identities."

"Interestingly, there's a group in Shattered Lake Prison that can directly board transports and leave without applying. And they're people we can disguise as without drawing any suspicion -"

Igor drew a crow mask on the mirror.

"The weak medical mages."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 88: I, Sonya Therave, am a Good Person!

"I've seen with my own eyes a medic sneak onto the transport ship with the excuse 'I want to go back and have a good meal,' and they didn't even have to take off their masks when boarding the ship. No one checked their identity throughout the whole process."

"Although I don't know why they have this kind of privilege, investigations show that a medic's status should be above the prison guards."

Lonna's eyes wandered as she asked, "You want to deal with the medics?"

"I just want to borrow their clothes," Igor said plainly, "The specific process is – we meet in the bathroom, Ashe purifies the chips on our napes, then within the next 10 minutes

we each rush to the infirmary, subdue the medics with spirit beasts and take their clothes. Finally we sneak onto the departing transport ship before the prison alarm goes off. Of course, we can't harm the medics' lives, their deaths would set off the prison alarm and attract the guards' attention."

"Does everyone understand? It's a very simple plan. The only part that needs practice is how to get from the infirmary to the port within a few minutes. Practice this over the next couple days."

Ashe asked, "What if the prison discovers the injured medics and notifies the transport to stop and check us?"

"That's when the 'Gourmand' and 'Woodpecker's Golden Beak' come into play," Igor said lightly. "With intention or not, can you two handle the blood mad hunters on the transport ship?"

Lonna looked at Ronald, who took a deep breath and nodded heavily, "We can!"

"I will protect Ronald," Lonna said.

"Then when does the transport ship arrive?"

"The transport comes to the prison on the 1st, 11th, and 21st of each month." Igor wrote a '2' on the mirror. "Today is the 19th, so Ashe, you must master the purification miracle within two days, and cast it under restraints. Any issues?"

Ashe was silent for a moment, then nodded, "No issues."

"Then...dismissed. I hope everyone mentally prepares over the next couple days, simulates the routes, eats and drinks well, and leaves no regrets."

Lonna and Ronald left first. As Igor was also leaving the bathroom, Ashe suddenly asked, "The premise of your plan is that the chip changes signal frequency when entering special circumstances. But what if the chip keeps sending life signals at a fixed frequency even in special circumstances? Wouldn't the plan be doomed to fail? The prison processor might detect an anomaly the instant we disable the chips."

Igor looked back at him, "Yes, that is the worst possibility."

"Then what do we do if the worst possibility happens?"

"What to do? You're asking me?"

Igor seemed angry, he rushed over in one step and grabbed Ashe's collar, staring straight into his eyes.

“What are you expecting? That I design a perfect, flawless plan for you? That if you’re not satisfied you can throw it back for me to modify? Do you want to propose some interesting requirements, like escaping Shattered Lake Prison over a rainbow?”

He probably wanted to lift Ashe up or shove him against the wall, but the bathroom only enabled excretion permissions, not attack permissions, so Igor could only grab his collar.

Ashe did not shrink back: “If saying this makes you feel a little better...I’m very sorry for using you.”

“But I feel fortunate in my heart, that the one I used is you. If it were someone else, they definitely couldn’t have come up with a plan with such high feasibility.”

“You think saying some sweet words is useful?” Igor let out a cold laugh, but suddenly his angry look vanished. He straightened Ashe’s collar leisurely and said, “But if you really want to make more preparations, increase the fault tolerance of the escape plan, there are ways.”

“What ways?”

“Pray to your Four Pillars, my dear cult leader.”

Igor left him with a scornful look and turned to leave.

Cailleach, Swordflower College.

“Professor Lichtblume, I think Iris is the better choice. She’s hosted various events before, so I’m sure she’d be very willing to take on the MC job for the social...”

The young professor holding a textbook stopped and looked at the pesky female student helplessly, “Miss Therave, the MC list for the joint social between our schools was reviewed by six people in charge, and approved by the dean before being finalized. This isn’t a small event for a department or college, where you can freely switch out people as you like...”

Sonya was anxious immediately, “Professor, I absolutely don’t mean that. I’m not close with Iris at all, I’m definitely not trying to take care of her by giving her this opportunity! Or I don’t have to give it to her either, any second or third year senior can replace me!”

Professor Lichtblume sighed, “Miss Therave, do you still remember our school motto?”

“‘Keeping promises is the most beautiful rose on the sword hilt, protecting is the sharpest blade under the rose,’” Sonya said helplessly.

“Keeping promises and protecting – those are the school’s greatest expectations of you all. If you want to resign from the MC position, you must provide an appropriate reason, otherwise your terrible performance in such an important matter will greatly impact the school’s evaluation of you.”

Professor Lichtblume said seriously, “Moreover, you’re Professor Trotzam’s research apprentice. To show fairness, the school may even give you a warning!”

As Professor Trotzam’s apprentice, Sonya naturally enjoyed various benefits in private, like professors turning a blind eye to her assignments.

But in public, Sonya’s every move had to undergo the most rigorous scrutiny, because she was now the best student at Swordflower College, she represented the school’s reputation and could not have the slightest flaw, much less affect the school’s reputation!

Sonya didn’t want a warning either. The school’s first step in punishing students was a warning, the second was suspension, and the third was direct expulsion.

In other words, after this warning, Sonya would be just one step away from being sent back home to farm!

“I have some special reasons for being unsuitable as the MC...”

“What reasons?”

Sonya opened her mouth, her lips quivered, and she mouthed ‘ah-buh-ah-buh’ for a long time but couldn’t get a word out. Professor Lichtblume raised his eyebrows, “Miss Therave? Your reason is?”

“I...” Sonya spoke with great difficulty, as if her throat was on fire: “I...”

“Are you unwell? Is there a family matter? Too busy with schoolwork? Reached a critical point in sword training?” Professor Lichtblume thought it looked miserable, so he actively came up with many excuses for Sonya to find one to gloss things over.

“It’s just...I...can’t lie.”

Professor Lichtblume blinked.

“Very good quality, Miss Therave, I hope you can persist. So do you have a proper reason to resign from the MC position?”

The corner of Sonya’s mouth twitched, and she gritted her teeth fiercely after a long pause: “No!”

“Have a nice evening.”

Watching Professor Lichtblume leave, Sonya stomped her feet in frustration, unable to do anything. She struggled a bit more, but her feet walked towards the training hall – it was time to train.

The moment Sonya entered the training hall, she attracted everyone’s attention. But unlike the usual admiring gazes, this time the gazes contained something indescribable – admiration? Mockery? Gloating?

“Professor Westree was so angry he didn’t even teach class...”

“Serves that upstart right...”

“Not even Felix is as arrogant as her, how impressive is this genius!”

“Sigh, geniuses have the guts to be domineering and disregard interpersonal relationships...”

The more Sonya listened, the more grieved she felt. Her, who was meticulous, tactful, and discreet – she actually had a day where others saw her as an inconsiderate, arrogant genius who disregarded relationships!

She had even fallen to being mentioned in the same breath as Felix!

At this time, Felix also came to train. As he passed Sonya, he coughed twice and jokingly said, “Senior Sister Sonya, Professor Trotzam listened to your opinion and went to the stylist to change his hairstyle...”

Many of the sword trainees gasped – everyone in school knew Professor Trotzam maintained a very outdated mushroom hairstyle, but no one dared criticize Trotzam’s aesthetics, not even ‘Rhythm Swordsaint’ Nidhogg, who didn’t get along well with Trotzam.

Just how vicious were Sonya’s words that even Trotzam had to abandon his hairstyle that he’d kept for a full decade?

As expected of Sonya, easily accomplishing what others couldn’t!

At this time, Ingritt also came to train. When she saw Sonya, she jogged over and pumped her fists in encouragement, “Sonya, keep at it, you did the right thing. We swordswomen should be so stubborn and unbending, our inner and outer selves unified, we don’t need everyone to like us. You must persist!”

I don’t want to be stubborn or unbending! I don’t want my inner and outer selves to be unified!

I also want to lie, care about relationships, have everyone like me, accomplish things easily with help coming from all directions, instead of being seen as socially inept by everyone like now!

The more Sonya listened, the more grieved she felt. She channeled all her energy into beating the armor stands, every sword piercing 10 rings deep into the stand. For some reason, the more she hacked the more exhilarated she felt. The more she swung her sword the more she felt strength fill her body. Training didn't tire her at all, she could even feel a trace of joy, her stamina endlessly surging forth!

Ding! With a clear ringing, a single-wing spirit beast emerged on her sword tip – it was the single-wing spirit beast 'Slash Sword'!

Sonya was a bit stunned. She didn't understand why her training efficiency today was so high, the process so refreshing, that she even smoothly summoned a single-wing spirit beast. Of course she didn't know that was the effect of the high-level stamina drug. She could only find reasons from her performance today.

Today, she didn't wear a fake mask. She detested when appropriate, liked when appropriate.

Today, she didn't lie, didn't cover up to avoid punishment, didn't gloss over to maintain relationships.

Today, she didn't force herself. She directly criticized Professor Trotzam's hideous hairstyle, and decisively rejected Adele when she asked to borrow clothes.

Then her training efficiency greatly improved, the process easy and pleasant.

Taking all these factors into account, an alarming speculation naturally arose in Sonya's mind.

Could it be that she, Sonya Therave...

Was a thoroughly upright, good person at heart!?

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 89: Swordswoman, Do You Dislike Me?

In a certain legacy island in the virtual world, flames raged!

“Raging inferno, incinerate my mangled body!”

The axe-wielding warrior wearing heavy armor let out a roar. His whole body was engulfed in raging flames, even his pupils turned into flames. Flames spewed from his mouth, and boiling magma flowed from the crevices in his armor!

Raging flames ignited on the blade of his axe. He let out a great shout and swept it horizontally. Sonya immediately retreated back to dodge. Then he suddenly rolled left to charge forward, and his axe morphing into a sword to viciously stab at Ashe who was sneak attacking with Heart Sword!

Ashe immediately stabbed his sword into the ground, activating the spirit beasts ‘Earth Sword’ and ‘Wind Wall’ to form a miracle – “Sword Wind Barrier”!

A bright yellow sword-shaped barrier perfectly encapsulated Ashe!

Clang!

The resounding clamor of the sword colliding with the barrier. Even as the flames on the sword were ground away by the wind barrier, Ashe didn’t retreat a single step. The barrier itself didn’t have the slightest damage either!

This defensive miracle with two spirit beasts as the core was like an impenetrable fortress in the sea of knowledge!

The attack was frustrated, but the flames in the axe warrior’s eyes still blazed. He let out a low roar, and magma gushed forth from his sword to viciously stab at the sword wind barrier!

“Joy, anger, sorrow, delight – all return to dust.”

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

With each resounding boom, the magma-spewing sword bombarded the sword wind barrier like a heavy cannon. Ashe’s arcane energy drained away like a waterfall, and the light on the barrier also dimmed, looking shaky as if it would shatter at any moment!

This was the axe warrior’s offensive miracle!

“Swordswoman!”

With Ashe’s shout, Sonya also finished her preparations. A steely light flashed on the tip of her wooden sword, slicing into the axe warrior’s armor as easily as cutting through butter!

At the same time, sharp fluctuations erupted from the wooden sword, turning into countless rotating blades that slashed the axe warrior into dozens of pieces!

After obtaining 'Slash Sword', Sonya's 'Rippling Slash' could be considered fully complete. Because the vibration sword was strong in impact but not slashing damage, and the split sword reduced attack power to increase the area of effect, her previous 'Rippling Slash' looked intimidating but actually lacked sufficient damage.

But now with the sharpness granted by Slash Sword, Rippling Slash made up for the lack of attack power. Along with the wide area of effect and medium-short attack range, it could be said to be the most practical sword miracle for single-wing swordswomen!

The only problem was Sonya had just obtained Slash Sword, and wasn't very proficient at combining them yet. It took some time to get used to it, which is why she hadn't been able to find a chance to use it until now when Ashe attracted aggro, finally giving her enough time to cast it.

Of course, whether or not she intentionally wanted to watch Ashe get beat up was something no one knew.

"Compassion for all living beings, worries and troubles abound..."

With the final lamenting sigh, the axe warrior extinguished like flames, leaving behind four spirit beasts and a sorcerer handbook.

But neither of them hurried to collect the spoils of war. Ashe looked at Sonya, somewhat perplexed: "What's wrong tonight? You haven't said a single word, does your throat hurt?"

The swordswoman had been very silent since entering the virtual world. Ashe thought she was in a bad mood, but her not commenting once after the fight was very abnormal.

If it were before, she would first talk about her contributions in the battle, then point out Ashe's mistakes in the battle, making Ashe unconsciously feel that he contributed very little and was full of gratitude towards her...

Huh? Wait a minute?

Thinking carefully, had the swordswoman been using words all this time to suppress him, making him dependent on her?

Just as Ashe's corporate slave radar reacted, Sonya shook her head and angrily pointed at Ashe, then pointed at her own mouth.

But Ashe understood: "You mean it's because of the random spirit beast summoning card taking effect, you're in a summoning ritual and can't speak?"

Sonya nodded.

“Then you can write. If there’s anything you want to say, just write it in the sand.”

Sonya suddenly realized and clapped her hands heavily. She used her wooden sword to write a few words in the sand.

“Observer, I curse you, you little loudspeaker.”

Ashe looked at Sonya as Sonya looked at the words in the sand, and said: “Turns out not only can I not lie with my mouth, even writing goes against my true feelings.”

In Sonya’s explanation interspersed with curses, Ashe quickly understood – she had randomly drawn the summoning ritual for the spirit beast ‘Sincerity’, a very simple ritual that didn’t require sweat like sword arts or large amounts of time learning like other schools. She just had to be honest and not lie.

To be honest, Sonya’s luck wasn’t too bad. Not only because spirit beasts from the Mind school were very rare, but more because this summoning ritual actually didn’t matter much for most people.

Like Ashe, he told the truth every day, yet no one believed he was wrongly accused as a cult leader right?

For other ordinary people, even if they had to tell the truth every day, they could try their best to hide at home and stay silent outside as much as possible.

But Sonya was different – she was the school idol, with countless people paying attention to her every move. Forget her not causing trouble, she had no lack of people causing trouble for her daily, some trying to curry favor, some with ulterior motives, some from school and some from outside school.

If Sonya had been a cool beauty from the start it would be fine, but the problem was she had previously been a good student, proper young lady, welcomed in the halls and adept in the training halls – the perfect character, even seen as the freshman sword flower.

Her sudden inability to lie gave people the feeling her character collapsed, that Sonya had gotten arrogant and no longer cared to maintain interpersonal relationships!

Ashe listened and laughed. Sonya got angry: “Are you mistaken? I’m in trouble now, shouldn’t you hurry and help me stop this ritual?”

“Sorry, I haven’t received professional training, I really couldn’t help laughing seeing your misfortune.” Ashe giggled and said, “But stopping this ritual, won’t you lose the

ability to independently summon 'Sincerity' and be unable to raise your Mind school to the silver level? Is that really ok?"

Sonya hesitated: "If I continue this ritual, I'll offend many more people over the next few days. Compared to them...the Mind school is clearly more important."

After speaking, even Sonya was startled – was this what she really thought? Was she the type who saw individual strength as most important, willing to destroy her relationships for it?

"See, you're the one who said it."

"But at least help me pause it for a day! I'm going to MC the joint social in a few days, I must be able to lie then, or I'll offend a lot of people!"

"I can't do that." Ashe spread his hands helplessly. "After I arranged your schedule for this week, even I can't cancel it. At most I can temporarily add some special events for you, I can't reduce your existing arrangements."

"Useless! A weakling who can only control me through despicable means!"

"You're right, after all the one controlling you isn't me, but Aurora...my legacy from my previous life." Ashe shrugged.

Sonya actually expected this. The observer's ability to control her differed too greatly from the observer's own strength, in other words the observer wasn't relying on his current abilities to control her.

If it wasn't now, then it was the legacy left by him as a legendary powerhouse, before losing his memories and reincarnating.

Perhaps this was why the observer kept relying on her – he couldn't arbitrarily utilize that legacy. The legacy randomly chose her, so the observer could only try his best to help her grow stronger, then have Sonya give back to him once she reached a certain level of strength.

Sonya's cursing just now wasn't a spur of the moment thing. From entering the virtual world, she had been laying out her plans, using the label of 'I can only tell the truth now' to say some slightly over the line accusations, to get the observer to voluntarily reveal more information, without causing his dislike.

'Sincerity' could also be utilized.

Just as Sonya was carefully digesting the information Ashe had revealed, Ashe suddenly asked, "Oh right, Swordsman do you dislike me?"

“I don’t dislike you.”

Sonya had just finished speaking when she covered her mouth, her willow brows almost standing upright – she was really angry now.

“I’m warning you, if you take this chance to ask about my inner secrets...” She said seriously, “I’ll resent you for life.”

“Sorry, my mistake, I shouldn’t have.” Ashe quickly apologized three times. “You have priority pick on tonight’s spoils to make up for it...huh?”

As he spoke, the four spirit beasts burst out by the axe warrior had unknowingly crawled onto Ashe. The most shameless one was a cat-shaped single wing spirit beast, constantly rubbing itself in Ashe’s armpits, as if it smelled really good.

Noticing Sonya’s puzzled gaze, Ashe explained: “I used an spirit beast excitement potion, the effects are stronger than the spirit beast joy elixir we drank, so the spirit beasts are clinging to me.”

“This potion will make spirit beasts take the initiative to look for us?”

“I don’t know, but it can increase spirit beasts’ favorability towards us, maybe it’s possible?”

The four spirit beasts were ‘Chop Axe’, ‘Incinerate’, ‘Magma’, and ‘Mangled Body’. Chop Axe was an essential spirit beast for axe warriors, effectively increasing the destructive power of axe and sword forms, it was quite interesting that it took the form of a cat.

‘Incinerate’ and ‘Magma’ were fire-type spirit beasts. The miracle they formed together almost blew apart Ashe’s sword wind barrier.

‘Mangled Body’ was from the Masochist school. Its effects were that the more heavily injured, the greater the recovery, resistance, and massive reduction in pain. So the axe warrior’s “natural miracle” just now was actually a common skill.

This battle also showed that the sorcerer projections they encountered grew increasingly powerful, from the very beginning with only a single spirit beast gunner, to this axe warrior with four spirit beasts and two miracles. The swift arcane energy growth led the Truth Seekers deeper into the sea of knowledge.

Unless they chose to give up, the virtual world would forever chase after sorcerers.

Sonya flipped through the sorcerer handbook for a bit before tossing it to Ashe. Ashe caught it and took a look, discovering it was a “Spoils of War Catalog” – looks like the axe warrior was a bandit before his death?

No, Ashe quickly dismissed his own idea. This axe warrior was probably a religious mercenary, or a mercenary with religious beliefs, because most of the spoils were contributed as supplies to the “Raging Fire Sanctum” mentioned inside.

For spoils that were resources, they would be offered to the Sanctum. For spoils that were sapient races, they would be developed into followers. Spirit beasts and miracle arts were also handed to the Sanctum for allocation. It was unknown whether the axe warrior had outstanding morals or if the Sanctum’s rules were harsh, but the axe warrior rarely embezzled spoils for himself, except for...

“Swordswoman, take a look here.”

“I’m not like you, indiscriminately taking anything greasy or vegetarian like a flirt.” Sonya spread her hands and said, “As you know, I can’t lie right now.”

Although Ashe felt she was taking the chance to openly scold him, and he didn’t even have the right to retort, he didn’t have evidence.

“It mentions the method to trigger a maelstrom.”

“A maelstrom huh, no wonder...” Sonya was excited, “It can trigger a maelstrom?”

Facing Sonya’s delighted gaze, Ashe nodded, “According to this, maelstroms can actually be manually triggered by the virtual world’s mechanisms!”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 90: The Vortex Toxin

“Plunder Item #221: Cylindrical Labyrinth”

“Origin: The caravan of the Emerald Cross”

“Obtaining Process: The Temple dispatched us to plunder a caravan from the Emerald Cross. Unlike most caravans, they did not carry any banners, meaning they were not under the protection of any forces. In this desert, it could only mean they were either thirsty for death, or had the strength to protect themselves.”

“They were indeed strong. After losing three Silver Fire Knights, our captain finally led us to completely annihilate this caravan. Their souls shall surely be purified in the flames and ascend the stairs of the sun, attaining eternal serenity.”

“When searching through the spoils of war, I found a very exquisite cylindrical object in one of the tents, which could be grasped with one hand. Just then, I noticed a child hiding in the shadows, staring at the cylinder in my hand.”

“Perhaps I was misled by the plundering fire. I asked him what this was, and he said it was a family heirloom containing the secret to triggering a vortex.”

“Before the captain came in, I had already purified the child. May his soul forever depart from this land of disaster.”

“I hid the cylinder. After some investigation, I learned it was a treasure called the ‘Labyrinth’, containing the aura of a four-winged spirit. If not opened correctly, the mechanisms left by the four-winged spirit would automatically damage its contents.”

“My wisdom was not enough to unlock this labyrinth. So I pursued the most clever woman in the Temple. After making an everlasting vow, I gave her the cylinder. She spent a month finally opening it and obtained its secrets.”

“With this secret, our arcane powers advanced by leaps and bounds. Due to my stupidity, I only triggered a vortex once, while she triggered it twice and completely unfolded her Silver Wings.”

“Until one day after leaving the virtual world, I found my body restrained by the Temple Knights. She stood behind the knights, with a stern expression.”

“She exposed me. I had a broken cylindrical labyrinth hidden in my clothes. She advanced to two wings and no longer needed this secret or me. What she needed now was the Temple’s favor, she needed to relieve the vortex toxin.”

“For privately keeping and damaging important spoils of war, I was sentenced to capital punishment, unable to be purified in the flames, only able to sink into nightmares in filthy waters. Until the very last second, I never revealed the secret in the cylinder, for the everlasting vow was still in effect. She only unilaterally dissolved the vow after advancing to two wings, while the vow still constrained me.”

“In fact, if I had used the miracle Incinerate Remains, I could have temporarily suppressed all abnormal status effects, naturally breaking through the vow and exposing her pretense.”

“But looking at her, I gave up for some reason.”

“Perhaps I was misled by the plundering fire.”

“Final Destination: Damaged.”

Sonya crossed her arms. “The Temple of Plundering Fire... Never heard of them.”

“Shouldn’t people normally comment on this sorcerer’s emotional experience?”

“Do you really want to hear it? I can’t lie right now.”

“Then let’s skip it.”

“What about the method to trigger the vortex that you deliberately skipped over?”

“I’m debating whether or not I should tell you.”

Sonya was slightly surprised and tried to keep her mouth shut, looking very strained. Ashe almost laughed out loud seeing the swordswoman like this.

Hearing the laugh, Sonya could no longer hold it in and whispered: “You actually distrust me this much, wanting to keep it all to yourself? My value to you is even less than a vortex secret?”

Ashe was somewhat shocked: “So you’re mad that I distrust you keeping it to yourself, or mad that your position in my heart isn’t as high as you imagined?”

Sonya’s eyes almost visibly filled with fury: “I—”

“Sorry, don’t answer that. It’s my mistake.” Ashe quickly said: “It’s not that I distrust you, but this secret is poisonous. Once you know it, you’ll be infected. I’m already poisoned, so I felt you didn’t need to know since we can enter the vortex together anyway.”

“Poisonous knowledge? I don’t believe that.” Sonya said: “I think you’re lying to me, big liar.”

“I have to say, you really are easy to get along with when you can only tell the truth.” Ashe said: “Then I’ll tell you, but don’t blame me.”

“How could that be? If I get poisoned, I’ll definitely blame you for not stopping me. If nothing happens, I’ll think you deliberately lied.” Sonya spread her hands: “Anyway, I won’t think it’s my fault.”

“...You really are unreasonable.” Ashe sighed: “But the poison isn’t too serious for now. As the saying goes, we’re in the same boat, so I’d feel pretty lame being the only one poisoned...”

“The method to trigger a vortex is: Find a scholarly lifeform of the fish dragon species, grievously injure it, chase after it as it escapes without killing it, and let it die naturally from exhaustion. A vortex passage will form where its corpse lies, because...”

Ashe and Sonya said in unison: “The sea of knowledge embraces its slumbering child.”

Sonya looked at Ashe in surprise.

She had blurted out that sentence almost reflexively, as if after hearing Ashe’s earlier explanation, new knowledge was bred from that knowledge and uncontrollably flowed into her mind!

At the same time, Sonya felt a strange sensation, as if the entire world had changed even though nothing was different!

She looked around to find what had changed. Soon her gaze focused on the seawater outside. After staring for a bit, she felt a surge of nausea—

“The toxicity of this hidden poison is that it makes us feel disgusted by water,” Ashe said.

He opened the of Aurora – “Operator Management” and saw that both “Apocalypse Observer” and “Death Maniac Swordswoman” had an additional abnormal status effect.

“Vortex Toxin”

“Number of People Infected by Toxin: 131”

“Toxin Strength: 131%”

“Current Effect of Toxin: Disgust Towards Water (Enhanced effect upon reaching 300% strength, alleviated upon dropping to 100%, turns into a buff at 50%)”

It was a very bizarre toxin, not damaging the body but twisting the soul. Most terrifying was that the more people who knew the secret, the higher the toxin strength, burdening everyone who knew!

When Ashe told Sonya about the toxin, Sonya immediately scowled: “Why didn’t you firmly refuse me earlier, you loudmouth!”

She really lived up to her word and blamed him as she said she would. Although the straightforward swordswoman was easier to deal with, she also became much more unpleasant, like a hypocritical and tactless child.

“Wait, you said earlier that when less than 50 people are infected, the toxin becomes a buff?” Sonya suddenly said: “Then we just need to take care of all the others who know the secret...”

She made a throat-slitting gesture. Ashe cowered back: “Are you the wife who betrayed the axe-wielding sorcerer in the story?”

“I won’t rashly sell you out before you wrong me.”

“That truthful statement really doesn’t reassure me...” Ashe muttered.

After this exchange, they understood why this secret was hidden inside the cylindrical labyrinth at all costs, and why the axe-wielding sorcerer was betrayed—because even if you could keep it secret, you couldn’t ensure others wouldn’t divulge it.

Once divulged and spread, the toxin might reach a critical point and become nearly fatal, such as being completely unable to touch water, or even dying from shock upon contact.

When it reached that point, the weak without survival means would die, quickly lowering the number of infected to a safe level.

So the knowers were natural enemies of each other. Each knower had to try to eliminate the others as much as possible to lower their own risk of harm. The sorcerer’s wife betrayed him precisely for this reason, unilaterally dissolving the vow to decisively expose the axe-wielding sorcerer and reduce the number infected.

But even if every knower actively kept it secret, the secret would still spread—like how Ashe and the others obtained similar intel from the sorcerer handbook.

The virtual world was the graveyard of sorcerers. Death could not keep secrets.

Therefore, by knowing this secret, Ashe had essentially taken deadly poison and set foot on a road of no return.

If he did nothing, when the number of infected suddenly spiked one day, strengthening the toxin to a level he could not endure, he could only complain ‘why me?’ and ‘how could this be?’ before perishing in the intense poison.

But unexpectedly, Ashe did not feel much fear.

Because he knew, all the troubles brought by the virtual world could be resolved with one method.

From beginning to end, sorcerers only had one path to survival.

“So next we need to find a scholarly lifeform of the fish dragon species.” Ashe said. “Only by becoming stronger can we have a chance to alleviate the toxin’s power, or even directly eliminate it—like forcibly forgetting this knowledge. In short, we have to make good use of this intel we paid for with poisoning and convert it into our own strength as much as possible, constantly pressing forward, never stopping!”

“Isn’t that obvious?” Sonya said, leaning against the boat. “Isn’t that what we greedy sorcerers are like?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 91: Countdown to the Prison Break

“If hurt enough, slice open with a pair of hands, the curses of yesterday. When night falls awaiting daybreak, only scars remain...”

As the wake-up song sounded, the prison entered free activity time and all cell doors turned from red to green.

Ashe went to the central hall and happened to see the light screen broadcasting the weather: “...the meteorologist has announced, April 21st will be cloudy turning sunny, with a significant increase in goblin fertility rates today...”

Death row inmates came and went in the cafeteria, business as usual. When Ashe entered, quite a few people greeted him proactively with rather respectful attitudes—having won two deathmatches consecutively and survived the Blood Moon Tribunal, the “demon” Ashe was now seen by the inmates as yet another powerhouse who could break through the prison floor.

Ashe had just sat down when Igor took the seat across from him. They looked at each other without speaking, quietly finishing breakfast, then went up to the top floor Observation Deck. Langna and Ronald were already waiting for them.

Except for those harboring ulterior motives who wanted to observe the waters, no one would come up to the deck to bask in the morning sun. With just the four of them on the deck, Igor directly asked, “Is the miracle ready?”

Ashe clenched his fists and closed his eyes, recalling the feeling of resonating with the spirit. He gently exhaled, “All I can say is I’ve done my best.”

After many days of calibration and practice in the virtual world, Ashe had mastered the Slash Me miracle and even succeeded in getting it for free without spending any arcane energy in the virtual world. But he still couldn't guarantee he could invoke the miracle 100% of the time. After all, the difference between reality and the virtual world could be as big as the one between a cafeteria and a restroom.

Igor nodded equivocally and looked to Langna and Ronald, "Having been locked up here for so long, can you still remember the fighting methods of sorcerers? If any problems come up later, you'll have to take care of the troublesome ones."

"I was admitted less than a month ago, no problem."

After two days out of sight, Ronald looked even more haggard. It wasn't that he had become emaciated, but rather his whole being—his spirit, energy and aura—had visibly deteriorated. In Ashe's words, 'he looked like a programmer who had been working 15 hours a day, eating, crapping and sleeping all in the office for a whole month.'

But his low voice was full of unspeakable vitality, as if there was light in his pupils and a burning fire in his heart, as if the decaying body harbored a life about to be reborn through fire.

So Ashe was even more worried.

Generally speaking, ordinary people would call this state—the light before death.

As long as he could make it through today... Ashe's mind was full of the coldness of capitalists who would exploit temporary workers to the last drop before discarding them.

"I've been here for years, so I really can't say if I can regain my past combat power." Langna said, "But I'm a fistfighter, I haven't neglected my combat skills even in here. Even if I can't use miracles, just being able to invoke a spirit is enough to get me to 70% of my past strength."

Among physical combat mages, especially unarmed ones like fistfighters, more or less all possessed spirits that could enhance their physical abilities.

After all, real fights don't follow rules. The opponent won't go easy on you just because you only use your bare fists. On the contrary, they are more likely to bludgeon you down with a tailored weapon. Therefore, unarmed combatants must possess spirits that can make up for the deficit in weapons, either by enhancing defense or increasing mobility.

As a Moonshadow werewolf, Langna's physical abilities would rise quite a bit after transformation. With a spirit to boot, his combat power in the cramped dark environment here would probably be the strongest on the team.

“Transport ships generally arrive in the morning. After offloading new inmates and supplies, they return to Caimon City’s Shattered Lake Harbor.” Igor said, “But there’s a detail—the ship crew and Blood Mad Hunters eat in shifts in the cafeteria.”

“Blood Mad Hunters are required during training to finish meals within 5 minutes max. Adding transit time, we can assume that when the second batch of Blood Mad Hunters appears in the cafeteria, there are less than ten minutes before departure.”

“That is, when the second batch of Blood Mad Hunters steps into the cafeteria, it’s the signal for us to act. We must purify the chips and change into medical crow suits within ten minutes, then use the medical access directly to board the transport ship.”

“Understand?”

The whole plan was extremely crude and urgent. The slightest hiccup in any part would be total failure, and many sections relied heavily on luck. But Igor had somehow managed to cobble together a theoretically viable scheme in this near-flawless Shattered Lake Prison, and Ashe’s group was quite impressed, all nodding with looks of admiration.

“Since that’s the case, let’s all make our final mental preparations and meet up early in the cafeteria for lunch.”

Igor looked to Ashe, “This is your last chance to reconsider. You have the ability to survive in this prison, you could take a less dangerous path.”

Ronald and Langna also looked to Ashe. They all knew Igor didn’t actually have a strong desire to escape, and didn’t know how Ashe had managed to manipulate him.

Ashe said, “I cannot go gently into that good night.”

Igor nodded thoughtfully, “You mean your dignity cannot tolerate you clinging ignobly to life?”

“No, I mean if I stay here, I’ll definitely keep getting picked for the Blood Moon Tribunal until I die.”

“Maybe you should reflect on your past deeds, if you have to worry about retaliation even after being jailed.”

Seeing Ashe’s determination unchanged, Igor also gave up that last sliver of hope. He waved and left first—he needed to go take a bath and calm down.

There was still an hour or two until noon. Ashe didn’t know what to do. He had completely mastered the Substitute, Sword Heart and Circulate spirits, and could invoke them anytime. As for miracles, he didn’t dare practice randomly, because the Slash Me

miracle required a specific target. If Ashe accidentally purified someone else's chip, triggering the prison's defenses prematurely, he'd be waiting for Igor's mocking to death.

After wandering around aimlessly, Ashe found himself at the most familiar Deathmatch Society.

A thought arose and he didn't go into the Society, but found a dim entrance behind it instead. The surrounding sounds suddenly became very distant. The entrance was a heavy, pitch-black iron door, exuding danger signals everywhere as if saying 'cowards dare not enter'.

This was the infirmary.

Ashe pushed the door open. The medical crow on duty at the front desk glanced at him and said, "Go to treatment room 1, your assigned medical crow will come get you."

Before he could even take out his ID tag [#222], how did the other know who his assigned medical crow was? Although it felt a bit strange, Ashe didn't think much of it and directly headed into treatment room 1.

Watching his retreating back, the medical crow at the front desk chuckled under the crow mask, "Feel honored for your future."

After waiting briefly in the treatment room, medical crow [#222] came in through the side door. She tossed an apple to Ashe, "Where are you hurt?"

Ashe caught the apple and bit into it without wiping. "I'm not hurt."

"If you're not hurt then why are you here? Although I hope you've come for cosmetic surgery, judging by your past resistance, you probably haven't corrected your cowardly aesthetic views yet. So you must be here for..." The medical crow held her hands contemplatively, "Bio-modification?"

Ashe looked speechless, "Don't you think you're overestimating my courage a bit too much?"

"There's no need for courage in bio-mods! Nowadays it's trendy to swap a hand, swap a leg, swap an eye, all very normal!" The medical crow said in surprise, "Could it be you're a fundamentalist Celestialist? An obstinate anti-technology fossil?"

"What's wrong with an original body that it has to be swapped?"

"Because it's not good enough! Don't you want to be more agile, stronger, better vision, more acute hearing?"

“I think my current body is adequate—”

“We can also mod the lower body to enhance mating endurance and pleasure.”

Ashe’s eyes lit up, “Next chance I get I’ll consult you on the profound intricacies of bio-modification.”

“Although I’m delighted by your interest in bio-mods, I feel like your lower body may never get a chance to be useful in your lifetime...”

“I’ve said many times I’ll definitely escape from here! I’ll definitely regain my freedom!”

“Even adding your unrealistic premise, I still have no plans to modify my conclusion...unless you’re willing to accept my hot stud transformation surgery! Consider it!”

“It’s not that I don’t believe in the power of hot guys, I just don’t trust you.”

“Hmph.”

The medical crow sat on the edge of the bed, looking puzzled as she asked, “Anyway, you have no issues, so why did you come to the infirmary? This is your first time taking the initiative to come here!”

Indeed, previously Ashe had always been carried in, this was the first time he walked in on his own.

“I came...to chat with you! After all, death row inmates like me have plenty of free time.” Ashe spread his hands helplessly.

“But I’m not free! You think I’m like you? I’m very busy okay, researching techniques, learning new knowledge, writing research papers...I don’t have that much time to chat with you! I’ll make an exception this once, but don’t do this again!” The medical crow said indignantly, hands on her hips.

Even with the crow mask and voice changer, Ashe could hear the joy in her tone.

As expected, workers in any world have a strong desire to slack off. And the happiest part of slacking off is gossiping with others.

After the medical crow excitedly talked about her ‘senior who always targeted her getting driven away for stealing things’, ‘recent good luck in the virtual world’, ‘eating two yolked eggs for breakfast’ and other happy news, Ashe suddenly changed the subject.

“Oh, I just realized you’re quite good-looking.”

“Huh?” The medical crow froze, “R-really? I’m not that good-looking—which part do you find good-looking?”

It took a full five seconds before the medical crow reacted to what nonsense Ashe had just said.

As she turned and carefully picked a scalpel from the tool box, Ashe felt impending doom—the person before him was capable of dissecting him completely before sewing him back up again, all while grinding medical EXP!

“222, I don’t have much time left.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 92: This is the Request of My Lifetime

The atmosphere in the medical room became serious.

“Didn’t you survive the Blood Moon Tribunal?”

“Yes, but my ordeal is not over yet.” Ashe said solemnly: “My enemies are still eyeing me greedily, and will use any means to put me to death in this prison.”

The medic shook her head: “This is Shattered Lake Prison, where the law is upheld like the truth itself. No one can violate the law here.”

“But they can legally and procedurally put me in dire straits.”

“Then it can only mean that you deserve to be executed lawfully and procedurally.” The medic shrugged. “It’s not that I don’t believe you are wronged. I also sympathize with what you went through. So I will pray for you too, pray that you find salvation in the divine kingdom of the Blood Moon Archon.”

“But there is only so much I can do for you. Anything more would be beyond my authority.” She warned, signaling Ashe not to make any unlawful requests.

Ashe waved his hand: “I’m not making any requests of you either. I also know my time is short, and execution is imminent... So I just want to thank you properly.”

“Huh?”

“Medic [222], you gave me humane care, allowing me to feel a little warmth in this cold and heartless prison.” Ashe said emotionally: “Being able to meet you before I die, I have no regrets and can accept my fate.”

“I’m not as good as you say...” The medic murmured shyly.

“But between life and death there is great terror. In the deep quiet of night, I still can’t help curling up, gripped by unspeakable fear, unable to sleep at night, no appetite, living in dire straits every day.”

“I can help with that,” the medic took out a gleaming silver syringe. “I have strong sedatives that will completely free you from your troubles. But they all have the same side effect, which is slowed thinking, simply put becoming a bit dull-witted...”

“So!” Ashe quickly interrupted her: “In order to spend my final days in peace, I hope you can accompany me, medic.”

“Accompany you? How?”

“Eating, sleeping, bathing and so on...”

“No! Absolutely not!” The medic stood up nervously, waving her hands again and again: “I’m not saying... There are rules and regulations! We medics are not allowed to enter the inmates’ activity areas or have too close contact with them! Yes! It’s not that I’m unwilling, it’s just really not possible!”

Ashe heaved a long sigh—this sigh was genuine. Although this response was within Ashe’s plans, the medic’s swift and vehement rejection giving him no chance at all still made Ashe feel a little sad.

Couldn’t she at least consider it for a bit? Or act more realistically?

Even the crow mask couldn’t conceal her unwillingness!

“I also understand your difficulties. I don’t want to trouble you either, but I really need your care and warmth.” Ashe blinked: “I thought of a good idea.”

“What good idea?”

“You can give me your clothes, then I can take them as you, and be able to hug the warmth every night.”

The medic was silent for a moment, took a step back, her voice trembling a little: “You... want to hold my underwear while sleeping...?”

"They don't have to be so intimate!" Ashe quickly explained: "And I haven't seen your underwear before, I can't equate them to your avatar!"

The medic finally understood: "You want this crow uniform of mine?" Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Yes, yes, yes! Do you have a spare uniform?"

"I do have a spare for changing. But according to regulations, I can't give this uniform to others... And you holding my crow uniform to sleep at night also sounds a bit..."

Ashe suddenly heaved a long sigh, his face dimmed: "You're right, I made an unreasonable request. You've helped me so much, I shouldn't trouble you in any way..."

"Someone like me doesn't deserve a peaceful end..."

"It was me harboring improper hopes, unwarranted wishful thinking..."

"I'm sorry. Just pretend I never came by. Thank you [222], I won't forget you..."

Although saying this, Ashe didn't get up, just looked expectantly at the medic. The medic had no choice, clicked her tongue: "Alright alright, I'll give you my crow uniform, will that do?"

Success!

Ashe was extremely delighted inside. He had set this up to get the medic to take the initiative to give him the crow uniform.

After all, he would have to grab a crow uniform when escaping later, but he didn't want to hurt the medic.

Based on his moral values from his previous life, he still had some respect for the medical profession, although he couldn't care less for survival, if it could be resolved peacefully he would still try to avoid conflict as much as possible.

Luckily his relationship with Medic [222] was still decent. It would be meaningless if he didn't make use of this rapport at the appropriate time. So Ashe acted pitiful and pathetic, first making an unreasonable request to accompany him, and when the medic rejected it, he asked for her clothes. Going layer by layer, he finally broke open the medic's defenses, luring her step by step into the abyss of crime.

"Oh, it seems I can't."

Ashe became nervous: "Why not?"

“I just took off my other uniform, it hasn’t been washed yet.”

“I don’t mind!”

“But I do! No, wait until I wash it then I’ll give it to you!”

Ashe panicked: “I actually prefer the original smell more. Just fulfill this wish of mine! This is the request of my lifetime!”

“No way, absolutely not!” The medic shook her head again and again: “Wait until I wash the uniform then I’ll give it to you.”

“How long will it take you to wash clothes?”

“Very quick. The laundry room has a dryer, it’ll be done in an hour at fastest.”

“Then hurry and go wash clothes. I’ll come get it at noon.”

Ashe pushed the medic to leave. The medic was baffled: “Didn’t you come to chat with me? Didn’t you want me to accompany you more?”

“Clothes can also chat with me, clothes can also accompany me more. Apart from that, clothes have many other uses! Anyway go quickly!”

The medic left in puzzlement to go back and wash clothes.

On the Guanhai Skyview terrace, Igor stared at the black dot on the lake surface gradually getting bigger, his heart thumping like crazy, even getting goosebumps. He felt his face heating up, legs going soft, his whole mind speeding up.

This was nervousness.

This was fear.

But it was also excitement.

This was the reason why he hadn’t stopped even after earning so much money. That unease and restlessness before taking action was like an addictive drug, making him unable to quit. Next, he would deceive the entire prison, escaping in broad daylight.

Just thinking that countless people would be shocked, angry, approving and afraid because of his feat, Igor couldn’t help but become excited. There was nothing more delightful to Igor than duping others!

Right in Igor’s expectant and nervous gaze, a ship billowing thick smoke sailed towards Shattered Lake Prison, riding the wind and waves.

However, Igor's expression became more and more ugly and pale.

There was nothing unusual about this ship's hull compared to ordinary military vessels, the only weird thing was that the hull was covered by a layer of high-strength steel walls that just happened to envelop the entire ship, making the ship look like a solid bullet warship.

That meant this ship had no deck exposed to sunlight at all. No area was 'outside', all areas belonged to the ship's interior!

Just as Igor was baffled, the transport ship arrived at Shattered Lake, dropping anchor at the port. And the first to disembark the transport ship was a white-haired man wearing a dark red hunter uniform, with a hood, and a jet black half-sleeve over his right shoulder.

Seemingly noticing Igor's gaze, he looked up and met Igor's eyes. His expression didn't change at all, and his blood-colored pupils under the hood pierced through Igor with a sharp gaze!

Igor's pupils contracted sharply.

Heresy Half-sleeve!

The hallmark of the Heresy Court's Hallmaster was the jet black Heresy overcoat. While the captains of the elite enforcement squads who fought on the frontlines, representing the Heresy Court's prestige, wore the Heresy half-sleeve to display their honor!

The captains of these two squads, without exception, were all...

Three-winged Saint Domain sorcerers!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 93: Gerard Wessminster

"Well, well, if it isn't tax bureau executive secretary Edmund! I told you that you would end up joining me here eventually. Brothers, this guy has a grudge against me. Don't fight me for him. I'll let you have the last 5 deathmatches, but the first 5 are mine to enjoy. No objections, right?"

"Tsk tsk, one big shot after another. So Archbishop Andrei's Everlife Elixir club has been wiped out? The mayor is ruthless, leaving not even one alive, huh."

“Caimon City has become Fernand Snow’s kingdom now.”

In the central hall, the death row inmates clustered around, greeting the newcomer cheerfully. In contrast to the gloating seniors, the rookies were much calmer, going up one by one to press their fingers on the copper register as instructed by the guards.

“Strange, I didn’t get such a grand welcome when I first arrived,” mused Ashe Heath, who was observing from the side.

“That’s because you’re special,” replied the necromancer Archibald Harvey, who had an uncanny habit of picking up Ashe’s threads of conversation as if they were old friends. “As one of the Four Pillars of Evil, you’re the first such cult leader in a hundred years. The prison didn’t dare let you near the other inmates before fully modifying your permissions.”

“Modifying permissions?”

“You saw that Sinners’ Registry right? We have to press our fingers on it when we enter. That transfers jurisdiction over our permissions to the prison. They can then fully control our various permissions, like attacking, arcane energy output, etc.”

“Huh?” Ashe was surprised. “Weren’t those permissions already restricted when we were arrested?”

“Yes, but previously the Inquisition controlled our administrative permissions. They have to be transferred to the prison upon incarceration.”

“Why go through all that trouble?”

“It’s necessary. Firstly, if the Inquisition still held our permissions, they could remotely lift our restrictions. If something happened here, it would be bad for the prison, not the Inquisition. So both sides want the transfer of jurisdiction.

“Secondly, the Inquisition’s processors are too far from the prison. Over time, the restrictions could degrade.”

Ashe was taken aback. “Restrictions can degrade over time?”

“All shackles will eventually face the day of rusting away,” Harvey philosophized. Then suddenly he walked out of the crowd and grabbed a lizardman by the collar. “Habren, where’s Nalbel?”

The lizardman’s scales paled at the sight of Harvey. “Archibald, how can you remember me? You shouldn’t be able to remember me!”

It took Ashe a moment to recall that Harvey's full name was Archibald Harvey. He had only remembered the last name.

But what did the lizardman mean by "shouldn't be able to remember"?

"I'm a necromancer. Adding a backdoor to a soul is easy for me... Memories only fade, they never vanish completely." Harvey glared at the lizardman. "Where is Nalbel!? Why isn't she here with you!?"

At first Ashe thought Harvey had a grudge against this Nalbel person – this was a prison for the condemned after all. Wouldn't one normally hope for their enemies to end up here?

But the lizardman's reply gave Ashe a whiff of melodrama. "Why do you want to remember her...? You're only making things hard for yourself."

"She betrayed you all? She escaped? Or is she-"

"Dead. When Andrei fell, we were hunted during our escape. A shot pierced her head. Nothing could be done."

Harvey's mouth twitched. "You promised me. The boss promised me too. You would..."

"The boss is dead too. I was the weakest, so I was caught first." The lizardman said, "The Inquisition sent a whole enforcement squad... Fernand Snow deliberately leaked our escape plans and hunted us down. We were just insects to be crushed along the way."

"Why do I care so much, why do I care so much!" Harvey's face was livid, but his legs grew soft and he sank to his knees as his eyes reddened. "Impossible... It's Nalbel, how could she just..."

No one pulled them apart, not even the guards intervened – the chips restricted them to at most grabbing each other's collars. They couldn't actually fight.

The drama was quickly forgotten, not even qualifying as gossip fodder. Ashe was curious about Harvey's melodramatic past, but it was obvious that asking now would just get him challenged to a deathmatch. Seeing it was about time for lunch, he went to the cafeteria.

Some of the crew members and blood mad hunters were already eating on one side of the cafeteria. The inmates automatically sat on the other side – even the rowdiest knew better than to start anything here. They couldn't make trouble and they couldn't curse others out. Were they going to politely greet the blood mad hunters?

Today's recommended menu was red bean paste flatbread, beastman cheese salad, and coconut tartlets. Ashe had just sat down when a scholarly looking young man took the seat across from him.

Ashe felt like he had seen this man during the registry. "New arrival?"

"Yes, hello. I'm Baraka." The young man replied shyly.

"Hello, I'm Ashe."

After being here so long, Ashe had developed wariness. The shyer the outer appearance, the more wicked the insides tended to be. This meek young man was likely a ruthless renegade. "What brought you here to eat?"

"Because... it's lunchtime now?"

"Shouldn't you newbies be restricted to your cells on the first day, waiting for meals to be delivered?"

"No, after being shown our cells we could move freely. No restrictions."

Ashe understood now. Solitary confinement on the first day was special treatment for cult leader big shots.

"Were you also imprisoned for political struggles? To achieve political prisoner status so young, you have promising talent!"

"No no no, I'm actually... a writer."

When speaking of his profession, Baraka became even more bashful.

"...They're that strict out there, that writing books gets the death penalty now? Politics? Obscenity?"

"Actually, I haven't written yet."

"Huh?"

"After finishing my last novel a few months ago, I came up with an amazing idea for my next book. I discussed it with my editor, but he said if I insisted on writing it, he would have no choice but to report me to the Inquisition. He suggested I come here and write it in prison instead of getting the publishing house in trouble."

Ashe blinked. "So you came?"

Baraka nodded. "After hearing my idea, the Inquisition sent a mnemosurgeon to examine my memories. I was convicted in tribunal of 'public endangerment' and sentenced to redemption through the Blood Moon Tribunal to purify my thoughts."

"Couldn't you just not write it?"

"The mnemosurgeon found that I had no repentance at all. My memories were full of details about the new book. They believed that as long as I lived, I would find ways to write it out. And that is indeed the case – I'm not a creator, merely a scribe. I can't allow such an amazing story to rot away in my mind."

Ashe gave him a thumbs up. "Go for it, I'll support you! Does it have romantic content?"

"No."

"Then I'll support you in spirit. I don't actually have much interest in books."

During their chat, Ashe finally saw Igor enter the cafeteria. He quickly returned his tray, dumped his uneaten food into the waste barrel, and hurried over to sling his arm around Igor's shoulder. "Had your meal? The blood mad hunters are almost done, the signal will come soon. Why aren't Ronat and Langna here yet?"

"They're not coming."

"Hm?"

"I told them the plan is cancelled."

Ashe didn't show any surprise or agitation. There was no confusion in his eyes either, only calm as he looked at Igor. He didn't say a word.

"Ashe, you know the effects of our contract. I cannot go against your wishes unless absolutely necessary." Igor said, "Moreover, I don't truly resist deep down – if I did, I could not have conceived a plan I've been preparing for years."

"To me, this plan is also a long-awaited stage, the final touch you contributed. To be honest, even without your wish, I likely would have gone along to help you scheme, unable to restrain myself."

"Believe me, I want to leave this suffocating cesspool as much as you do."

Igor gripped Ashe's shoulder. "But it really won't work today. The plan must be cancelled."

"Why?"

“Because every important step of the plan has become impossible now. Too many special events happened this week that I didn’t account for in my calculations. Reality deviated too far from what I envisioned.”

A commotion came from the entrance as the first batch of blood mad hunters finished their meals and started leaving while the second batch entered the cafeteria.

Ashe glanced at them and sighed. “The signal came.”

Igor gently shook his head. “That’s a danger signal... You’ll see very soon – the first unstable element that ruins the plan.”

Suddenly, all the blood mad hunters stood up and bowed their heads towards the newcomer. “Captain!”

“Greetings, everyone.” Search* The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

The white-haired blood mad hunter in a black sleeveless shirt glanced at the inmates and smirked. “Scum, good afternoon.”

One aggravated inmate lifted his head. “I’ll file a complaint with the Inqui-”

“It’s so rare I get to insult so many scum at once. I’ll gladly accept the punishment, it’s just a month’s pay deducted per offense right? Well, that’s two months’ pay gone now.”

The blood mad hunter snapped his fingers and sneered. “But I like the number three, so let’s add one more – scum, how does it feel to only be able to take my insults but not retort? Frustrating isn’t it, being angry yet unable to do anything? I just love seeing scum make those aggrieved, powerless expressions!”

Another sullen inmate said, “I’ll remember you. You had better-”

“You should remember me, because many of you are here because I caught you!”

His eyes flashed red as he casually glanced around the cafeteria. His gaze was like sharp swords, chilling everyone it landed on. Ashe recalled their previous encounter even more vividly –

That feeling of a sword impaling his chest. It spread through his body once more.

“I am Inquisition blood mad hunter Gerard Wessminster, Hunter ID 307791.” Gerard grinned mockingly. “When you see the Blood Moon Sovereign, remember to send him my regards.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 94: Crisis!

“Gerard Wessminster, the three-winged Sanctum swordsman and Blood Mad Hunter...”

Ashe hid in the corner of the restaurant, observing the confident white-haired hunter with doubt and apprehension.

He was no longer a newbie who had just crossed over into this world. Naturally, he knew that this white-haired hunter, who had made his crossing over experience awful, held an important position in this city.

Single wing silver, double wing gold, triple wing sanctum, quadruple wing legend.

Under the starry sky, legendary mages were the pinnacle, the top echelon of all forces, the limits of individual combat power. The triple wings sanctums were the pillars, often taking charge of important matters when legendary mages were engrossed in researching arcane arts and exploring the virtual world. Generally speaking, they held the greatest secular power and represented the highest level of conventional combat power.

This also showed that the Four Pillars cult Ashe thought Hesk had created was not just some amateur troupe. For the City of Caimon to send out Gerard, the Heresy Court's star hunter, it was enough to prove Hesk was a high value target that could be used as a 'political achievement'.

Compared to his status, Gerard's strength was even more despairing. The hypothetical enemy in their original plan was a double wing mage level Blood Mad Hunter, but now a sudden appearance of a triple wing Sanctum, Gerard alone was enough to wipe out Ashe and his gang.

If the original plan had a 30% chance of success, now it was practically doomed. The transport ship could not return to Caimon City within 10 minutes, and the prison would definitely discover their jailbreak within 10 minutes – hijacking the transport ship was part of the plan, they could not avoid fighting the Blood Mad Hunter.

Ashe sighed, “Since it's him, giving up on the plan is inevitable. We're just too unlucky.”

“No, it's not just bad luck.” Igor brought him to the Shattered Lake pier, “Look.”

Ashe looked at the bullet-shaped ship completely covered up, “The shape of this ship... is very streamlined!”

“This is no ordinary ship.” Igor said, “This is a mobile prison...they’re just about to board now.”

In Ashe’s astonished gaze, the death row prisoners lined up near the pier, under the hunters’ watch, arrogantly crossed the yellow line and embarked the transport ship, leaving Shattered Lake Prison.

The prison’s famous “Black Beast” Took, before boarding the ship, suddenly turned back and shook his fist at the prison, laughing loudly, “Hahaha, old me is finally leaving this sh*t hole!”

The other death row prisoners looked at them enviously, but that yellow line drawn on the ground was an uncrossable chasm. They could only watch helplessly as others left while they themselves were not even allowed to get close.

“They’re volunteers!” Ashe finally remembered the recent call for volunteers, “The ship is here to transport them!”

“That’s the flaw in our plan!” Igor couldn’t help but bite his finger, “Because this kind of thing is so rare, I didn’t take it into account at all! So the ship that came this time is not an ordinary transport ship, but a ‘Pig Cage’!”

“Pig Cage?” This was the first time Ashe had heard of such a bizarre ship name.

“This ship will not return to Caimon City, but will head east along Shattered Lake directly to the Lakeside Warzone east of Caimon!” There was frustration on Igor’s face, “I should have thought of it earlier. Even if the mayor used benefits to persuade the orderly organizations in the council, they still wouldn’t allow death row criminals to return to the city districts, the risks are too great!”

“If the news leaked that death row criminals escaped trial, it would surely cause large-scale public opinion fermentation. The entire council would suffer!”

“So the only destination for those volunteers is the Lakeside Warzone responsible for suppressing the Abyss!”

Ashe watched the last volunteer enter the cabin and said, “So if we get on the ship too, it’d be like walking right into a trap, escaping from the prison to the Lakeside Warzone full of powerhouses?”

Although Ashe still didn’t have a thorough understanding of the Blood Moon Kingdom, just piecing together the keywords ‘suppressing the Abyss,’ ‘Warzone,’ he could guess with his toes that it would not be a water park.

“No, we don’t even have a chance to get on the ship.” Igor shook his head, “There are also processors inside the ship that will automatically detect any living being coming on

board. The moment unauthorized people like us get on the ship, alarms will sound all over the ship and our locations will be marked!”

Ashe was puzzled, “Hold on, doesn’t that mean your plan had no chance of success from the start! If every ship has this kind of security system, we’d never be able to leave Shattered Lake Prison by ship—”

“No, only special purpose ships like the ‘Pig Cage’ would be equipped with processors. Most other means of transport do not have security systems.”

“Huh? Why? Are those processors for security checks expensive?”

“One, they are valueable. These processors are artificially crafted by mages and must be made manually. Two, detecting other’s chips without authorized permission is a serious illegal act.”

Ashe blinked, looking confused for a moment.

He touched the back of his neck and asked, “Outside, checking chips is against the rules?”

“Yes, absolutely.” Igor looked at him strangely, “This kind of violation of privacy is a very serious crime.”

Although Ashe also understood there must be many differences between inside and outside the prison, hearing that “the outside world is a country that highly respects privacy,” Ashe still felt Igor was messing with him.

A place that implanted controlling chips in people since young age, can check memories, abolished family institutions and had completely socialized upbringing, even turning capital punishment into a variety show, would it really respect privacy more than this prison that makes him poop in shackles!?

He gave up discussing this matter and asked, “Then how can this ship called the ‘Pig Cage’ check every uploaders’ chips?”

“Because the ‘Pig Cage’ is a punishing tool prepared for warriors.” Igor explained, “The ‘Waterways Abyss’ suppressed by the Lakeside Warzone requires people to be sent to explore the deep layers periodically.”

“But the deeper one goes into the Waterways Abyss, the easier it is for mages to have mental breakdowns, all kinds of situations like losing sanity, self-harm, running away can occur.”

“Since almost no one is willing to take on this task, the warzone makes mistaken warriors who are being punished board the ‘Pig Cage’. Many rules are added to their

chips, allowing the ship's processor to control them from self-harm, escaping, killing each other. Meanwhile, the processor is also responsible for detecting life forms on the ship. If any monsters sneak into the cabins, it will alert the warriors to clean them out."

"When they complete the task and return, their crimes will be erased and they can start with a clean slate."

"Even if the warzone feels it's going overboard to transport death row criminals, Mayor Fernand Snow would surely still require them to dispatch a 'Pig Cage'!"

Igor gritted his teeth, "I knew exactly what kind of person Fernand Snow is... He would definitely personally oversee matters concerning his future... Every detail would be arranged to the highest standard!"

Ashe respectfully said: "You even fooled the mayor?"

"Investigated the plan but gave up due to the miniscule success rate and great risks." Igor murmured, "If I knew I'd eventually end up imprisoned, I'd definitely have given it a try – the most powerful figure I've scammed so far is just a councilor after all."

People scam for money, you scam for achievement points...

Although Ashe didn't quite understand what mayor, warzone, abyss meant, he could still tell from Igor's implication: "So you mean every part of our plan now has unsolvable problems?"

"Just for this time." Igor said, "The next blood moon tribunal is on the 1st next month. If we're still going ahead with the plan, it can only be scheduled for the 11th next month. But judging from Professor Sylin's energy, I highly suspect you might get selected for the tribunal on the 1st—"

Suddenly!

A light screen popped up in front of Ashe!

"Good afternoon everyone, this is Shattered Lake Prison Administration, I'm prison guard Nago McMillan." Nago in the light screen said, "Here to announce two notices."

"First, there will be an extra Blood Moon Tribunal this month on the 27th, the list of names to be tried will be announced on the morning of the 27th."

"Second, to set up the tribunal scene for the 27th, the Blood Mad Hunters need to stay overnight in the prison. We hope everyone will cooperate well with the Hunters' work. Any enthusiastic people who assist the Hunters will receive contribution rewards of varying amounts."

When the light screen closed automatically, Ashe had not yet recovered from the shock.

An extra Blood Moon Tribunal added?

The Hunters staying overnight?

“Generally speaking, this extra tribunal that was just added should be prepared for those political criminals who have just entered prison.” Igor slowly said, “But I would not be surprised if your name gets selected for the tribunal as well.”

Ashe’s expression turned ugly, “It can’t be that vicious right?”

“When you think things are about to turn bad, it will definitely become even worse than you imagined.” Igor said, “This is the only profound lesson I taught my clients after scamming for so many years.”

“I know you often represent society to beat up rich people, no need to keep emphasizing your achievements to me.” Ashe said irritably, “At worst my name gets selected for the 25th tribunal, how could things get any worse?”

Just then, Ashe suddenly felt the light around him dim, as if a tall figure behind him was blocking the light.

“Ashe Heath, were you watching the ship to the outside world because you want to escape prison?”

Igor discreetly slipped away to the side.

Ashe turned around, took a step back, and forced out a smile to the newcomer: “Of course, which youngster in prison doesn’t want to escape?”

“That’s not necessarily true. Villains can also repent, scumbags can also change their wrongs. Giving you the right despair is the meaning of the Blood Moon Tribunal.”

Gerard looked down condescendingly at Ashe, he glanced at Igor and said lightly: “Found a new friend? As expected of a devout follower favored by the Four Evil Gods, I highly doubt that if you stay here long, you’d turn the entire prison into a hotbed for evil gods.”

“I’m going to take a nap, Captain Gerard if you want to chat you can talk to Igor Bukin here, he’s very good with investments and finances, I’m sure you can gain something—”

“Wait, Ashe Heath.” Gerard stopped him, “The prison ordered you guys to assist the Hunters right? I need you to assist me.”

Ashe had a bad feeling: “How to assist? You see I can’t lift my arms nor legs, just a useless titanium alloy scrap, usually only eating or sleeping, afraid I can’t meet your requirements—”

“That’s great, you just happen to meet my requirements.” Gerard snapped his fingers: “Here’s the thing – because there are too many prisoners, there are no extra dorms for us Hunters who came to help. As the team captain, I of course gave the singles to my team members, so I’ll have to squeeze in with the prisoners.”

Ashe sucked in a breath, “Sorry, I don’t know any flowers in this prison, can’t introduce you any. Why not consult Igor over there—”

“No need for that.”

The Hunter held down Ashe’s shoulder, the crimson pupils full of mocking laughter: “Ashe Heath, I don’t think you’d mind squeezing for a night with me right?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 95: I Will Watch Over You

Cailleach, Swordflower College.

As the three bright stars gradually sank in the west, a young professor walked steadily along the campus path. When he saw a beautiful young female student approaching, he immediately changed direction, trying to hurry away.

“Professor Liebrom...”

“Miss Therave.” The young professor stopped and said helplessly, “I have to admit, your sincerity has moved me. After all, if you keep pestering me like this, I won’t have any reputation left. My strict and serious father even came to warn me specifically not to do anything that would damage Swordflower College’s reputation, such as getting entangled with female students.”

Sonya’s eyes lit up. “Then—”

“But I really don’t have the authority to make last-minute changes to the emcee,” Liebrom interrupted. “Either you disappear before the party starts in half an hour, and I’ll initiate the emergency plan if I can’t find you, at the cost of you getting a warning. Or

you go directly to the principal – if you can get the principal's permission, the rules can naturally be bent for you. But without even giving me a 'suitable reason' for cancelling your emcee duties..."

Sonya shook her head repeatedly.

"The principal is reclusive, and she's a legendary four-winged sorcerer. I don't dare go to her. What if I make her angry? Even Professor Trotzam won't be able to protect me."

"So you're not afraid of making me angry?"

Sonya immediately covered her mouth, but her voice still leaked out between her fingers. "Because you're just a two-winged alchemist who's good at academic theory and research. Even if I offend you, it won't affect my interests much."

After speaking, Sonya looked at Liebrom pitifully. "Professor, I really have no choice. This is the truth, I can't lie."

Liebrom was so angry his face turned rigid. He took a deep breath. "Thank you very much for your honesty, Miss Therave. You've made me understand my true worth in the eyes of ordinary students, very enlightening."

"But since you don't dare go to the principal, you only have two choices left: fulfill your duties, or take a warning. It's almost dinner time, please decide quickly. I'll be waiting for you backstage at the party."

Watching Liebrom leave, Sonya was also helpless. She wanted to ask the Observer for advice, but remembered today was also the Observer's action day. She didn't want to disturb the Observer either.

I wonder if the Observer has smelled the air of freedom yet...

Sonya sighed dejectedly and returned to her dorm in low spirits.

Just then Iris and the others returned from dinner. Seeing Sonya, they were greatly surprised. "Why are you still here? People from Trinity College are already at the school gates. Hurry and change into your dress and put on makeup!"

"I don't want to go."

"What's with this childish temper? If you're absent, it's not just your own face you're damaging, but Professor Trotzam's face and Swordflower College's face too. Don't think you can do whatever you want just because you're a genius at swordsmanship!"

Even Iris was shocked. As roommates living under the same roof, they naturally knew Sonya had been acting very strange these past few days. But they didn't expect it to be this bad.

This was a social mixer between the two schools!

The mixer was not just a simple party. Under the gazes of the stars, both schools would send their best students to compete in a 'friendly' match – it was actually the annual prelude to the Cailleach Intercollegiate Competition, where everyone got to see the rosters of the other schools' competition teams this year, and roughly gauge the strength of their competitors.

Although sorcerers focused on combat weren't as important in today's society, with production-type mages gradually gaining more influence, and schools reducing combat curricula while adding more production-focused subjects, students were also more interested in researching spirits, miracles and spell systems with production value.

Even so, combat-capable sorcerers could still obtain the most resources and respect!

This was not because people feared the violence of mages, but because for mages, combat ability equaled potential! The more adept at combat a mage was, the more they could gain in the virtual world, the farther they could go, the higher their ceiling!

Among single-wing mages, the number of those specialized in production exceeded those focused on combat.

But by the time they reached two wings, the number of combat mages far outstripped production mages.

And if it came to three wings, even mages who specialized in production would definitely have a flawless combat system, or they wouldn't even be able to survive and adventure in the virtual world!

To encourage mage apprentices to improve their combat ability, the Cailleach Intercollegiate Competition was thus born. Now in its 167th year, it had long become the highest rated show across Cailleach, even the whole Starfields.

For mage apprentices, being able to compete and place in the Intercollegiate Competition was the fastest way to make a name for oneself!

As a prelude to the Competition, the importance of the social mixer naturally rose as well. And with the mixing being with Trinity College this time, they couldn't be the slightest bit sloppy!

Yet Iris saw Sonya still lying lazily on the table not moving. She realized this country bumpkin had really gotten herself into trouble.

“Adele, go dig through her closet and get out the custom school dress. Ingritt, hold her still, I’ll put on her makeup.”

“Roger!” “Oh.”

Adele and Ingritt followed orders. Sonya also let them fuss over her without resisting.

In her heart, she was still conflicted, unable to judge whether ‘telling the truth at the party’ or ‘getting a school warning’ would have worse consequences.

If the ‘school warning’ was -100 points, then the ‘attending the party’ would be between 0 to -1000 points.

Perhaps Sonya could keep things within reasonable bounds and perfectly fulfill her emcee duties. But it was also possible she’d spout madness, offending all the professors from Swordflower and Trinity and becoming the worst student in history.

“Haven’t you been looking forward to this chance?” Iris asked puzzledly as she put on Sonya’s fake eyelashes. “We signed up together two months ago, stood out from over a hundred female mage students, and you finally won the final selection, beating me and the other seniors. It was hard-earned, so why are you giving it up?”

“You know the Intercollegiate Competition emcees are often selected from the party emcees, so you and I both valued this chance so much. If we can really become emcee this year, just that on our resume would be enough to apply for TV host jobs. Not to mention the exposure from appearing on screen in front of millions... There’s no more comfortable path than this!”

“Although you’re Professor Trotzam’s research apprentice now, you don’t only want to be a mage who practices swordsmanship all day, right?”

“What’s wrong with being a swordsmage?” Ingritt said unhappily.

“Of course it’s good for you, Ingritt. One, you’re not social. Two, you don’t like the limelight. Being a swordsmage is indeed the most comfortable, happiest choice for you.” Iris put on Sonya’s eye makeup. “But Sonya, you and I are not so simple.

“Dazzling, the focus of all eyes, fawned over and cheered... First becoming famous in school, then acting in shows, releasing albums...” Iris’s mouth also curled up slightly. “Becoming like Datura Rose, the brightest star in the sky.”

Sonya blurted out, “How did you know Datura Rose is my favorite?”

Iris retorted, “Who doesn’t like Datura Rose?”

Datura Rose Leyna, the most famous actress in the Starfields. She started acting in shows since her teens, almost every one becoming a classic, like 'The Queen's Return', 'Gorgeous Rebellion', 'Don't Apologize to Strangers', and other shows that are still heavily re-run every year. She's won the 'Holy Grail for Best Actress' five times so far, lauded as the 'Number One Beauty Under the Stars'.

Not only that, she was also a powerful mage. The news last year that she'd entered the Saint domain at three wings caused cheers across Cailleach.

Some rich nobles even extravagantly spent a fortune to hire mages to launch fireworks into the Cailleach sky for three consecutive days. During those days, whenever the Cailleach residents stepped outside and looked up, they could see the words "Congratulations to Datura Rose on entering the Saint domain."

For Sonya, Datura Rose was undoubtedly her most beautiful aspiration in childhood.

As a little girl, her only entertainment outside of studying was watching the Meteor Channel. When she saw Datura Rose's dazzling performance in shows, saw Datura Rose go on stage to accept awards, saw Datura Rose singing on stage, it gave her unlimited motivation.

Back then, she didn't even dare hope that she could become like her idol. But she knew that if she didn't work hard at learning, she wouldn't even have a chance of getting close to the limelight.

Iris was right. Sonya did not want to just be a swordsmage.

Power was important, but it wasn't everything to her, not even her goal – just a tool.

Although no longer a child, Sonya's desires were still so simple: she wanted to step into the limelight, she wanted to be a movie star, she wanted to sing, she wanted to dazzle, she wanted to enjoy the envy and admiration of countless strangers...

She also wanted to become someone else's aspiration.

Sonya took a deep breath. "Thank you, Iris."

"You've gotten a lot more direct recently, it's kind of disgusting," Iris laughed.

"But why are you persuading me like this?" Sonya asked. "Seeing me about to miss this chance, shouldn't you be gloating in secret, then go tell our other classmates to mock me?"

Ingritt's mouth twitched slightly. Adele snorted, then covered her mouth to muffle her laughter. Iris was a little embarrassed and pursed her lips. "I didn't... Didn't you also mock me openly and secretly after winning the selection?"

Suddenly going into rehashing old accounts, Iris quickly took stock of her ammunition, ready to pull out even older cases to shut Sonya up the moment she retorted—

“Because I can only interact with you as an equal by demeaning you.”

Stunned by her own words, even Sonya was shocked into silence. The dorm instantly fell into an awkward quiet.

Iris was also rendered speechless for a time by Sonya’s words, subconsciously blurting out what she’d prepared to say: “You, you also seduced my admirers...”

“Because I wanted your attention. I hoped you would look at me, I wanted to keep competing with you. I’d be very lonely if you went and fell in love.”

Iris listened dumbfounded.

“I’m sorry, I...” She didn’t even know why she was apologizing. “Then why were you against me when we first enrolled? I wanted to be friends with you too. If you hadn’t rejected my goodwill repeatedly, I wouldn’t have...”

“Because you were from a noble family, grew up rich with a carefree childhood. While I was a country bumpkin from a small town, I had nothing. I envied you to the point of inferiority. Your goodwill felt like charity to me then, so to protect the little dignity I had left, stubbornness was my only defense mechanism.”

By now, Sonya was utterly defeated.

This was too awkward. Even bedwetting as a kid wasn’t this awkward.

She no longer had a place in Swordflower College. She now hated that she couldn’t immediately shoulder a train and escape back home.

This absolutely wasn’t the truth. The Observer was controlling her mouth!

It didn’t count, this absolutely didn’t count!

After a long silence, Iris suddenly said, “Alright, let’s change clothes. No time to eat, we’ll head straight to the party venue.”

Sonya was pulled out of the dorm. As they went downstairs, Iris suddenly moved closer and whispered to her.

“I will watch over you.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 96: Ashe Heath Must Die

Backstage at the Starfall Hall, Sonya looked over the cue cards rehearsing her lines for later, but she couldn't help glancing towards the back door, only to be stopped by Iris.

"The restroom isn't this way!"

"I think taking a warning would be better for me!"

"Didn't you make up your mind just now? Why are you backing out again?"

"Because I realized I'm not as confident as I imagined. I'm scared!"

Just then, a handsome young man in a dark blue suit walked over to greet Sonya, "Miss Therave, good evening. Can I help you with anything?"

"Mr. Cage, good evening." Sonya quickly greeted, "You came at the right time. I want you to stop my roommate Iris because she's preventing me from running away."

This young man was Sonya's co-host, Acenuth Cage, a second year windmage, known as the 'sword grass' of the second grade. His handsome looks even made the female students form a fan club for him voluntarily.

If it wasn't for Felix's undercover crackdown, he would undoubtedly be the public enemy of all male students on campus.

"...I'm afraid I can't join in the ladies' game as a gentleman."

Acenuth smiled and said, "Professor Lithrom told me to remind you there are ten minutes left before the event starts. Please take care of your personal issues quickly and get ready behind the curtains. This is our first time working together. If I make any mistakes, please bear with me Miss Therave. I hope we can become friends after tonight."

Sonya shook her head, "Don't worry, I will definitely make big news that you can't smooth over. I hope you won't hate me to death after tonight."

The other party was stunned for a moment, "Miss Therave, you really have...quite the sense of humor. I'll wait for you then."

After Acenuth left, Sonya pleaded, "Let me go, Iris. I'm really scared. My heart is pounding like crazy. I'm sure I'll cause big trouble!"

"No way!" Iris shook her head repeatedly, "What about your aspirations? Don't you want to become the next Dahlia? Are you willing to just be a swordsmaster from now on?"

"I understand all the reasoning, and I know I'll regret it after I leave, but I still want to go!"

As the two tangled, Ingritt and Adele came in through the back door. Adele excitedly said as soon as she entered, "A star fell halfway in the sky outside, go take a look!"

Seeing Sonya who looked like she was about to cry, Ingritt asked, "What's wrong with her again?"

Iris helplessly said, "She's getting cold feet and wants to run away again."

"How strange. The Sonya I know is a swordsmaster who dares to challenge Felix and Leone," Ingritt thought for a moment and suddenly clapped her hands, "I got it. Sonya is the impulsive type who performs better the more nervous she gets. Now we just need to push her on stage."

As the number one fan who witnessed Sonya's rise all the way, her words were unanimously approved. So Sonya was pulled to the preparation area behind the curtains where Professor Lithrom and others in charge of the event were waiting.

Seeing Sonya arrive, Lithrom nodded slightly and turned to the staff, "Get ready to raise the curtains, let's begin."

At this point, Sonya had no way to back out.

She took a deep breath, smoothed out the wrinkles on her dress, and glanced at Acenuth. She said, "Later, you try to take the spotlight by yourself as much as possible. Don't interact with me too much. Remember my advice – the more I talk, the more likely something will happen."

This was the first time Acenuth had heard such a request.

He was also the MC last year. His partner at the time tried every means to steal his thunder – interrupting, ad-libbing, competing for attention. Acenuth was worried that it might be her again this year, but instead it was a first-year junior.

His greatest expectation of Sonya was just some basic cooperation. He didn't expect Sonya to voluntarily give way. It made him feel quite strange – in principle, every MC of the event wanted to become the League's MC. So they had to demonstrate their

abilities as much as possible at the event for the professors to recognize and recommend them.

Could it be that Sonya simply came to be an MC for fun? Or did she just accompany her friend to the audition and ended up being selected herself, so she wasn't enthusiastic?

Various thoughts flashed through Acenuth's mind, but he nodded slightly, "I will try my best to meet your requirements."

Lithrom said, "The curtains will open in ten seconds, everyone get in position. The stage is in your hands now, remember to turn on the pickups."

Acenuth walked onto the stage first. Seeing the stage she had long awaited, Sonya's heart suddenly calmed down.

"Viewer, are you there?"

Sonya knew there would be no response, but for some reason, she suddenly felt full of courage. Her brows relaxed, the corners of her mouth curled up slightly, and her eyes brimmed with laughter.

Viewer, are you fighting alone too?

If I really mess up, you have to compensate me properly!

"Doo doo loo~"

With the orchestra's tune, the lights came on and the curtains opened.

Facing the eyes of students and teachers from both schools, Sonya fully got into character.

"Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. I'm your host for tonight's event, Acenuth Cage."

"And I'm your host, Sonya Therave."

Shattered Lake Prison, Ashe's dormitory.

The white-haired hunter Gerard sat on the edge of the bed, holding a book he borrowed from the Talent Library – Introduction to Simulated Lightning Spells, 3rd Edition – clearly a textbook Ashe couldn't get through after starting college.

After reading for a while, Gerard rubbed his eyes and turned to look at Ashe, who was also reading while sitting against the headboard.

However, unlike him, Ashe was reading a comic book titled I'm Sorry for Saying I Like MILFs.

It was said to be a popular romantic comic in Caimon City that even Emma would read during her spare time.

The comic was about to be adapted into a TV drama. The actor playing the male lead Ron was actually from the same research institute as Gerard – except the other guy was a universally beloved movie star, while he was the feared Blood Mad Hunter that made coffins open by themselves when he appeared.

Noticing Gerard's gaze, Ashe raised his eyebrows, "Want to take a look? I highly recommend this comic. Its depiction of human emotions and relationships transcends race and time. But it's best to read alone in bed, otherwise you'll sometimes twist in bed feeling sweet, and sometimes get stomach cramps feeling sad."

"I thought you were just pretending for my benefit." Gerard said, "It's hard to imagine you reading romance comics."

"What's my image in your eyes then?"

"Probably a madman constantly thinking about how to overthrow the Blood Moon, I thought you'd be reading books like Crowds and Power, How to Cause a Virtual Storm with Bare Hands, Criminal Law – things that aid your career."

"I already said I have amnesia. I'm not some cult leader." Ashe sighed, "Now I just want to face the ocean, spring breeze, and live a peaceful life."

"Interesting." Gerard smiled, "You don't seem afraid of me. I thought you wouldn't dare to return to your dorm tonight and would hide in someone else's room instead."

"Why should I be afraid? You won't do anything to me anyway."

"That's not true. I have no restrictions, no prohibited actions at all. In other words, I can take your head anytime I want." Gerard reached for the longsword leaning against the bed.

"Then I have even less to fear." Ashe was very calm, "Since you can make a move anytime, and the prison isn't big, I can't escape if you really want to harm me. Staying in my own dorm at least allows me to die with some dignity."

"Moreover, I don't believe you will take action against me. I'm just a death row convict pursued by the Blood Moon Tribunal now, struggling to survive every day. You gain nothing by killing me, so I can't think of a reason you must kill me."

Gerard touched the hilt of the sword, then let go.

“Indeed, that is also the right approach for scum – slaughter cannot create value. Rather than swiftly and decisively killing you all, it’s better to let you rot and be maggot-ridden in this prison, entertaining those citizens who are disturbed and frightened by you like clowns until you die in the most unsightly way, squeezing out your value to compensate for the sins you committed.”

“To be honest, I quite agree with this approach.” Ashe criticized, “It would be even better if I wasn’t a permanent resident here.”

“But you seem very relaxed.” Gerard’s pupils flashed a bloody light, “This isn’t my first time here either – some people I just caught not long ago, they became very unstable, hysterical, remorseful, begging for mercy...all kinds of states, but this kind of natural ease like yours, this is the first time I’ve seen it.”

“Could it be that you already have a way to escape from this prison?”

Ashe held Gerard’s gaze. “Yes, I’m waiting for you to realize you caught the wrong person and let me out in good conscience.”

Gerard laughed loudly, took out a bottle of wine from his arms and drank a mouthful. “I did feel like I might’ve caught the wrong person, but hearing you say that puts me at ease.”

“Huh?”

“I didn’t expect that you really do have a way to break out!”

Clang!

In the instant Gerard slashed his sword at him, Ashe almost used Self-Harm Miracle to take out his belly sword and fight desperately with Gerard. But he endured the urge – even if he used Self-Harm Miracle to lift the chip’s restrictions, with his Single-Wing Silver strength, Gerard could crush him effortlessly with hands and feet tied!

The blade kissed Ashe’s neck, leaving a shallow cut.

Gerard’s nose twitched, and the crimson in his pupils grew deeper.

“...What makes you draw that conclusion?” Ashe asked.

“Intuition.” Gerard said lightly, “And I guessed your escape method too.”

Ashe’s heart thumped rapidly – don’t tell me! They hadn’t even taken action yet and were already seen through?

Was this the strength of the Blood Mad Hunters' Commander, a Three-Wing Saint mage?

Or was there a mole?

"You must be planning to have the Four Pillars rescue you, right?"

Ashe's eyes widened, his mouth opened slightly, with an expression of utter disbelief, like seeing someone fake an accident by falling down 10 meters away from a car.

After a brief silence, he said with difficulty, "I didn't study law, but I think criminal litigation here should follow 'presumed innocent' right? Even if you want to wrongfully charge me, at least give some evidence so I can die content, instead of convicting me based on your guesswork!"

"Commander Gerard, do you have to make things difficult for an insignificant prisoner like me when you're so busy?"

"Because I came specifically for you, Ashe Heath."

Ashe was stunned.

Gerard said, "Someone told me you'll try to escape. He hopes I can stop your actions and eliminate this disaster at its root...He even called in a huge favor just to get me to come to Shattered Lake."

"Killing prisoners is a grave crime. Apart from a handful of people in Caimon City, no one can be exempt from this crime, and I'm one of them."

That ubiquitous name almost instantly jumped out in Ashe's mind. A chill swept through Ashe's whole body, the killing intent from the blade made him feel as if he had fallen into an ice cellar.

But he still asked, "Who was it?"

"Sylin Dole." Gerard said solemnly, "He said the remnants of the Four Pillars heretical cult must not continue existing in this world."

"For stopping the Four Pillars, for the glory of the Blood Moon, Ashe Heath must die."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 97: Can't Hold It In Anymore

Swordflower College, Starfall Hall.

“.....To vigorously promote the positive spirit of adventure, foster a healthy competitive environment, and facilitate friendly exchanges between Swordflower College and Trinity College, we now hand over the stage to the outstanding students of both schools to engage in a friendly match under the watchful eyes of the stars.”

As Sonya's voice rang out, the domed ceiling of the hall rumbled open. The inside of the dome was lined with mirrors that cleverly reflected the starlight like spotlights into the hall, bathing everyone in a faint veil of stardust that was even more dazzling than the indoor lighting from earlier.

In the Starchild Realm, all important events had to be conducted under the starry sky. If the day with its blazing sun was 'work time', then the starry night was 'play time'. Of course, ordinary people could hardly keep up with such a taxing schedule – only sorcerers who could rest in the Virtual World had the luxury of such revelry.

Moreover, starlight was more than just beautiful to look at. It represented the blessing of the Starchild Archon. Therefore, sorcerers who entered the Virtual World, battled, studied, and trained at night would receive additional benefits, however small, that were still better than nothing.

“Now, before the stars withdraw their light, let us invite Professor Orleon from Trinity College and Professor Nidhogg from Swordflower College to share their thoughts on the friendly match,” Assunu said.

A school social event would never feature the attendance of legendary-tier sorcerers, for their time was far too precious to waste on such trivial matters. Thus, Trinity College had sent their representative, Weaponmaster Orleon, while Swordflower College had dispatched Rhythm Swordsaint Nidhogg.

Nidhogg glanced at the Trinity College students and said flatly, “Leone, make it quick later. I'm in a hurry to get to the Virtual World and have no interest in lingering at a boring event like this.”

The burly, hairless Orleon let out a cold snort. His body was etched with all sorts of tattooed patterns. Though Sonya could not decipher their meaning previously, her battles against thunder mages in the Virtual World had taught her that Orleon's tattoos were likely amplifiers for lightning spells.

Yet despite his gruff appearance, Orleon spoke with unexpected courtesy. “I hope tonight's friendly match allows the outstanding students of both schools to gain

something. I look forward to the performance of Swordflower's students, but I also believe in the capabilities of mine own. I plan on taking a research apprentice this year, so if you don't do your best, that spot may just go to one of Swordflower's students!"

The Trinity College students nodded lightly at Orleon, their expressions nonchalant. Clearly, they did not think much of Swordflower College.

"Haha, the two professors are really sparking things up! Not only has Professor Orleon put up the incentive of a research apprenticeship, but to think the Weaponmaster hasn't taken on a new apprentice in five years. The ones he trained himself all advanced to Two-Winged before graduation, so tonight's friendly match will surely be riveting!"

Assunu smoothly redirected the two professors' words, rounding things off so seamlessly that no one could find fault. He glanced at the dome that would unfold in a few more seconds and casually turned to his co-host. "What do you think, Therave?"

Sonya, who had been maintaining a professional smile, could no longer keep a straight face. She looked at Assunu with utter horror in her eyes.

Weren't we supposed to interact as little as possible, and let me not make a fool of myself since you wanted the spotlight?

Assunu could hardly be blamed, of course. He thought Sonya was just being polite earlier, and it would look bad if he hogged the stage alone. The two hosts were meant to bounce off each other to liven up the atmosphere – he couldn't possibly leave Sonya standing dumbly aside.

Moreover, he had already taken over the conversation and said all the proper things. Getting Sonya to chime in for a bit shouldn't be asking too much, right?

Soon, Assunu would realize just how much he had overstepped – tremendously so. If he could compare it to the currently popular drama, *Love Beyond Time*, it would be 'I wish I could run back five seconds and clamp my mouth shut'.

"I think Professor Nidhogg is a person of high emotional intelligence."

"Oh? Why do you say so?"

"Because despite saying such low EQ things here, offending both Trinity's professors and students, and making us event organizers feel irritated, it shows we're all beneath him to warrant the use of EQ. Therefore, the people he does employ EQ with must be of very high standing. So he's clearly a person of high EQ."

Sonya went on fluently, "Perhaps it's only at events with the principals present that we'd get to witness Professor Nidhogg's high EQ side. So in summary, Professor Nidhogg's use of language is rather rotten, just like his lack of grace."

Silence.

Apart from the sounds of the dome opening, barely a murmur could be heard in the hall. Despite not being a public event, attendance was far from paltry. One-third of the professors and outstanding students from each grade were gathered.

They gaped wordlessly at Sonya on stage, though no one dared to specifically turn their heads to see Nidhogg's reaction in the furthest corner.

Behind the stage, Iris and the others who were sneaking peeks were also stunned speechless. They had already guessed Sonya's poor performance tonight, but still did not expect her to do something like this.

Even Assunu was momentarily taken aback, his mind turning to mush as he failed to conjure up a clever quip to follow Sonya's words.

"Hahaha!"

Orleon's thunderous laughter rang out as he applauded. "Well said! Swordflower College is truly brimming with talent!"

"Trinity College is no pushover either," Sonya replied. "With an esteemed professor like you who's full of platitudes, Trinity has really struck gold. The excellent matching system of Cailleach cannot be praised enough for bringing together exemplary individuals like Professor Orleon and Professor Nidhogg."

"How am I full of platitudes?"

"Just now, you said you'd take on a research apprentice from Swordflower if we beat your students. Isn't that just lip service? Your previous three apprentices were all Trinity's best and brightest. You're clearly just paying us lip service with no intention of actually taking on a student from another school."

"I meant every word!"

"Then give us a written oath! Put it down in binding words!"

Some students looking to stir up trouble also shouted, "Yeah, write it down!"

The Trinity College students immediately retorted, "On what basis should he write it down just because you say so?"

Seeing the event rapidly deteriorating into a marketplace squabble, Assunu suddenly realized this was perhaps the greatest challenge he had faced as a host.

He decisively yelled, “Let’s now welcome Lorein Zell from Swordflower College’s Swordsmanship Department and Riggan Carroll from Trinity College for the first duel of the friendly match!”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 98: An Uninvited Guest

As Asunu spoke, he quickly pulled Sonya to sit down at the commentary booth nearby.

Sonya obediently kept her mouth shut. As long as no one asked her any questions, she could control herself from speaking up.

At that moment, she felt both worried and relieved – worried because she had offended two professors in a row, but relieved because the ones she had offended were ‘Rhythm Swordsaint’ Nidhogg – Trotzam had always been at odds with Nidhogg, so Trotzam would surely protect his little student.

As for ‘Weapon Master’ Aurelion, it was even simpler – as long as Sonya didn’t go to Trinity College, how could Aurelion cause her trouble across schools? The only problem was her path as a host and her dream of becoming a star, which would likely end here...

At that time, the two contestants had already walked onto the stage. Lorein was the senior who had bullied Sonya earlier, a relative of Sylvia’s.

Although his strength was inferior to Leone’s, Lorein was still a member of the Swordflower Competition team, with absolutely formidable capabilities. Back then, he had been more than a match for Sonya and Felix together.

“Lorein, I heard you’ve already fallen to the point of bullying first-year freshmen.” Li Gang took out a sinister-looking longbow: “Taking out your temper on your juniors when you haven’t made any progress yourself, Swordflower College sure has great academic ethics.”

“Li Gang, don’t forget who snapped your bowstring last time.” Lorein gripped his sword with one hand, firing back.

“I also haven’t forgotten whose ass I shot an arrow into.”

Asunu lowered his head to look at the materials and said, “The two contestants have competed against each other in last year’s league as well, so they must have made more progress after a year. Miss Therave, what do you think?”

Asunu was not repeating his mistake here, but the script called for Sonya to introduce the spirit beasts and past records of Lorein and Li Gang here. Therefore, he chose to trust Sonya one more time.

But he forgot that the script here said ‘please introduce the two young mages’, rather than ‘what do you think’.

Faced with Sonya’s helpless gaze, Asunu knew he had made a mistake again.

“I think they’re both wasting everyone’s time trash talking each other, why not just start fighting and let everyone have some fun?”

The corner of Lorein’s mouth twitched as he decisively struck first, kicking off and charging forward in a straight line.

Li Gang calmly sidestepped, conjuring a silvery magic arrow from his hand onto the bowstring in a flash, instantly switching offense and defense!

“The Sword Miracle Flowing Star Thrust, beautiful! But contestant Carroll’s movements didn’t slow down one bit either. As we all know, archery has always been a group combat art, so his willingness to rely on archery in a one-on-one match shows Carroll is highly adept at close-quarters combat. Contestant Zi will have to be extra vigilant.”

“Ouch, the Flash Sidestep Arrow is Carroll’s specialty miracle, shooting out a heavy and powerful arrow in the instant of evasion. Contestant Zi’s defense spirits have all been forced back!”

“A stunning preemptive strike! What a pity, Carroll neutralized the offensive with one arrow and widened the distance again!”

After providing continuous commentary for a while, Asunu couldn’t help but feel a little thirsty. Before drinking water, he reflexively asked, “What do you make of the current situation?”

Mercifully, this was purely Asunu’s professional reflex – when drinking water, he had to get someone else to fill in to make up for the gap.

“Lorein loses more than he wins, he’s a speed type player, while his opponent is an archer adept at protracted battles and keeping his distance. But Li Gang lacks instant explosive miracles. As long as Lorein dares to sacrifice an arm to block an attack, he’ll have a chance to turn the tables.”

“But Lorein seems very confident in his backup. He should still have a high powered miracle up his sleeve. But with his current level of swordsmanship, the miracle he uses probably can’t be faster than Li Gang’s reaction.”

No sooner had she finished speaking than many turned to look at Sonya in astonishment – including Nidhogg, Aurelion, Li Gang and Lorein on stage!

Lorein’s eyes flickered as he suddenly charged forward quickly, drawing a cross in front of him with his long sword!

Arcane power converged into form, the huge cross-shaped sword qi covered nearly the entire stage, like a guillotine sweeping toward Li Gang!

“That’s your trump card? That’s it?”

Li Gang sneered and sidestepped with a smooth step, actually passing straight through the cross sword qi completely unharmed!

At the same time, he drew his bow and fired an arrow at the charging Lorein! However, Lorein did not evade or block this time, but stuck out his hand to block the silvery magic arrow, trading a minor injury for reduced distance!

Li Gang was a little flustered and quickly retreated, firing three consecutive arrows. The three arrows exploded almost simultaneously like meteors falling, shrieking as they cut through the air, clearly explosive arrows that could cleave a person in two!

But Lorein was going all out, not evading at all and desperately urging his defense spirits. He used his left hand to block all three arrows!

Clang!

When the two came to a stop, the spectators saw Lorein’s left hand riddled with bloody holes, the entire hand twisted and deformed as if it would snap in two with the blow of the wind.

But the tip of Lorein’s sword was pressed against Li Gang’s neck!

In just a few seconds, Li Gang had gone from advantage to defeat!

Asunu loudly announced, “The first friendly match, winner Lorein Zi!”

The medical staff quickly took the winner Lorein backstage for treatment, while the loser Li Gang didn’t have a single injury and naturally didn’t need any treatment either. The latter still seemed to have a hard time accepting his defeat, standing on the stage tasting this unspeakable humiliation.

“Next up on stage will be...”

“Hey, you!”

Li Gang suddenly interrupted Asunu’s words, pointing at Sonya and scolding, “All you do is spout nonsense from the audience, but I don’t see you participating in any competitions. I hate people like you the most – ”

“Li Gang!” Aurelion’s face darkened as he angrily stopped his disgraceful student.

“If not for her spouting nonsense and messing with my mind earlier, I wouldn’t have lost at all!”

Li Gang looked completely unsatisfied. “I hate it the most when others make comments while I’m fighting. If you’re so capable, come up here and fight me too! Ultimately it’s just -”

“Alright, let’s go.”

“See, I knew people like her...” Huh?”

Li Gang was slightly taken aback.

“Let’s have a match, I won’t lose anyway.” Sonya stood up from the commentator’s booth. “I really want to beat up losers like you who blame everything but themselves when they lose.”

“Won’t lose? Just with your capabilities?” Li Gang sneered coldly, “I didn’t see you last year, you’re a first year right? How much arcane power can you even gather, as much as a feather?”

As he spoke, Li Gang flicked his wrist and summoned a full half of the Silver Wings on his back!

Although not fully unfurled yet, it just lacked a few feathers. Li Gang was a second year after all, he had two more years until graduation, and could fully advance to two wings and enter the Temporal Lands before graduating!

Asunu hurriedly held Sonya back, “Miss Therave, there’s no need to-”

In the next moment, even more complete Silver Wings unfolded before his eyes.

That dazzling silvery radiance, brighter than the night sky full of stars, deeply attracted everyone’s gaze!

Fully unfurled Silver Wings!

Sonya, a first year who had just become a mage not long ago, had already officially reached one wing!?

“Want to compete in arcane power? I was just looking for a chance to show off.”

Sonya gently caressed her Silver Wings and arrogantly said, “You should feel honored to become the stepping stone for my glory.”

“Next, use your defeat to pave the way for my triumph!”

By this point, Sonya no longer knew whether these arrogant words were forced out by the summoning ceremony, or willingly spoken truths.

She only knew that this feeling of complete disregard felt really awesome!

As he watched Sonya walk over to the stage, Li Gang inexplicably took a step back.

At this tense and strange moment, everyone suddenly felt a stir in their minds and looked up together.

They saw above the dome, under the night sky, the starlight suspended in midair suddenly fluctuated with arcane power. Then a person fell out from the starlight, landing right in the middle of the Starfall Auditorium, in front of Sonya.

The moment he landed, the man jumped up, noticed there were many people around, and decisively took the nearest woman hostage to try and flee –

!

Sensing the thick killing intent from the other party, Sonya directly used her hand as a sword to force the uninvited guest back with a “Wicked Light Slash”. The uninvited guest was shocked in his heart, how was this random girl he grabbed a mage too?

He immediately gave up on taking a hostage and tried to rely on his speed to rush out of the crowd. As a dual earth-wind mage who was once famed, wielding the miracle “Earth Raft”, he could easily escape even when surrounded by hundreds -!

But at that moment, two hands suddenly landed on his shoulders, holding him firmly in place.

“Your neck, hands, feet all have starlight shackles.” Aurelion said.

Looking down, the uninvited guest discovered that his neck and limbs were somehow shackled with circular dark blue rings that looked like heavy manacles, though he felt no weight at all.

“This means you’re an invader from the outer domains. The Starchild Territories has marked you as an invasive species, using ‘Starlight Shackles’ to prevent you from teleporting.” Nidhogg looked up at the portal in the dome that looked like starlight.

“Interesting, right above Swordflower College is unexpectedly a portal leading to the outer domains? Tell me, which domain are you from? Do you understand our language?”

Only then did the uninvited guest realize he was surrounded by mages.

And he had secretly activated his miracle earlier, yet it was completely ineffective. His whole body was also suppressed and unable to move, meaning the two mages holding him from behind were at least three wing Saint Domain mages, directly using their Domains to negate his spirit beasts!

Sensing danger, a screen popped up before the uninvited guest’s eyes, flashing a string of red warnings: “Life endangered detected, activating self-destruct mode!”

“Hmm? Can’t let you die so easily.”

The red information suddenly became scrambled beyond recognition, and the screen even disappeared with a snap – even the body chip was forcibly suppressed!

The uninvited guest smiled bitterly. To prevent him from revealing the location of the virtual world portal and domain secrets, not just his chip, but his blood, bones, flesh, soul and even memories were all engraved with more than one miracle. Disabling just the chip only prolonged his life by a few seconds.

“Hmm? An evil curse that even the Saint Domain can’t purify? Nidhogg, can you stop him from committing suicide?”

“I can, by killing him first.”

The uninvited guest felt his body dissolving, blood boiling, skull singing, eyeballs escaping. The intense pain engulfed his senses like a tide. Before completely losing consciousness, he felt deeply desperate at his misfortune, but the corners of his mouth revealed a malicious smile.

Because he knew his misfortune would shatter the happiness of others.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 99: Observer?

The social gathering was suddenly terminated, and all the students were rushed back to their dormitories. A towering white spire erected from the ground, and the surrounding area was cordoned off as a military restricted zone.

The students had no idea what the intruder meant, only seeing him turned into a puddle of mashed potatoes and packaged into a jar by the professors to be taken away. It was almost foreseeable that the mashed potatoes in the cafeteria would be hard to sell in the next few days.

Sonya and her three roommates stood on the balcony of their dormitory, looking at the giant spire in the distance that almost obscured the night sky. They were a little dumbfounded for a moment – to be honest, although they knew and had witnessed the power of sorcerers, the tranquility and comfort of Cailleach made them permeate the might of sorcerers into their daily lives, so they had long become immune to it.

For example, controlling the weather, preventing earthquakes, regenerating severed limbs, inducing crop growth... These miracles have even become the daily work of common professions in the “College Student Employment Survey Form”.

When you are bathed in the glory of miracles every minute and every second, you naturally take it for granted.

As for the sorcerer wars and miracle scenes in the movies, although they were very exciting to watch, they always gave people a sense of unreality.

Are they really that powerful?

Even if they are that powerful, what does it have to do with me?

At this moment, however, the sorcerer apprentices of Swordflower College finally got a glimpse of the might of sorcerers.

Just now, in just a few minutes, a towering white spire hundreds of meters high was erected from the ground before their eyes. They watched as the vast Stardust Hall was directly covered by the white spire, with soil and gravel stacking up like building blocks, and the top of the white spire reached the stars suspended in mid-air at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Not in a day, not in an hour, but in minutes!

The majestic buildings that ordinary people would take years or even decades to build, the sorcerers completed in the time it took to drink a cup of tea!

“Was it the work of a legendary sorcerer?” Iris murmured, “I don’t remember which legendary sorcerer specializes in earth magic...”

“Any legendary sorcerer from Saint Sanctum can already transcend and convert arts at this point, using one’s own art to manifest another is commonplace,” Ingrid commented. “For example, the ‘Wind Erosion Art’ of the wind-type sorcerer ‘Wind Erosion Yadan’ is a miracle that utilizes wind spirits to exert earthen might and sculpt enormous structures with storms. ”

“Not to mention the arts, even those casually practiced by legendary sorcerers, with the aid of four-winged arcane power and four-winged spirits, can exert might beyond our imagination. The intruder seemed to be held in high regard, with others coming from other schools and even the nobility. With so many sorcerers gathered, constructing a white spire is probably effortless for them.”

“I noticed the turbulence in the virtual world earlier!” Adele yelled, “If I had reported it in time, wouldn’t I have gotten a school reward? Like exempting me from homework and graduate thesis?”

“The school will reward you by allowing you to retake failed courses for free,” Iris poked Adele on the forehead, “You failed two courses last semester. If you fail two more this semester, let’s see how your schedule looks next year.”

“Don’t worry, I recently learned an amazing cheating method. I won’t fail anymore in the future!”

“Are you serious? Cheating right under the professors’ noses? Are you actually a hidden gold-rank sorcerer? Is your arcane lineage ‘Binge Watcher’?”

“Hmph, just you wait and see.”

“Speaking of which,” Ingrid looked at Sonya, “Sonya, how did you suddenly manifest the Silver Wings? Counting back and forth, you’ve only been in the virtual world for less than ten days!”

Iris and Adele also glanced at Sonya furtively. They were curious about this as well, but their relationship with Sonya wasn’t good enough to pry into such matters, so they had been waiting for Ingrid to bring up the topic.

It was just too astonishing after all.

Everyone knew that Sonya only started training in swordsmanship on the evening of April 12th, summoning the resonating sword spirit during the fight with Felix in the training hall, thus being hailed as ‘the number one sword talent of the water-type’. She was taken in as a research apprentice by Professor Trotzam, who came after hearing the news, the next day.

Then she first entered the virtual world only on the night of the 13th, and today was the 21st.

Only eight days!

From a sorcerer apprentice without even virtual wings, to an official silver-rank sorcerer who manifested Silver Wings, it only took Sonya eight days!

This speed was simply too horrifying – it should be known that Rig Carroll, who was just showing off on stage earlier, was considered a genius of Trinity College merely because he had condensed most of the Silver Wings by his second year.

And Professor Nidhogg's beloved apprentice, the 'Orange Dancer' Leone, who manifested the Silver Wings by her third year, was regarded as having the posture of a Swordsaint!

Even the most gifted young sorcerers need one or two years to navigate the sea of knowledge and condense arcane power. Yet Sonya accomplished this process in just eight days!

If it wasn't for the limitations of realms, with arcane lineages having to advance to the gold rank first before sorcerers could obtain the second pair of wings, Iris even suspected that Sonya could have become a gold-rank sorcerer before them.

To be honest, if it wasn't for someone suddenly falling from the sky, Sonya would have undoubtedly been the absolute protagonist tonight; if the school hadn't announced martial law and all students had to stay in the dorms, their dorm would definitely have been trampled by countless people now.

How on earth did she navigate the sea of knowledge in eight days and manifest the Silver Wings?

Sonya was a little scared in retrospect as well.

She didn't actually intend to expose herself so quickly. But when Rig asked a question like 'Do you have a single feather of condensed arcane power?', under the constraints of the ritual, she had no choice but to summon the Silver Wings to prove herself – the Sonya now definitely did not admit that she had any intention to show off back then.

Her arcane power was naturally due to her and the Observer having been using the 'Maelstrom Secret' to create maelstroms these two days.

Although the maelstroms created this way had a relatively short range and were difficult to make, in three nights the Observer could find three or four knowledge creatures, and the two of them had created several maelstroms, both manifesting the Silver Wings.

This was supposed to be a good thing, but Sonya had become a sorcerer in too short a time, once exposed, it would appear too frightening. She was also unsure if the school would covet the 'Maelstrom Secret'. If this was just simple knowledge, she would have contributed it and the school would have rewarded her with a candy. Search* The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

But the 'Maelstrom Secret' was a hidden poison. The more people knew about it, the more deeply poisoned the knowers became. Now every time Sonya drank water, she felt as nauseous as drinking spoiled water. She was unwilling to share this secret which would increase the difficulty of drinking water for herself.

"Because I encountered a maelstrom." Sonya controlled the amount of truthful information she revealed.

The others made sounds of sudden realization and didn't continue to ask further, with envy and jealousy showing on their faces.

Perhaps they thought Sonya had encountered an ultra long-distance maelstrom and then condensed the Silver Wings in one go. They didn't think in the direction that Sonya had encountered multiple maelstroms – who would guess that someone would win the jackpot continuously?

Bang!

Suddenly a sound akin to a mirror shattering rang out from the sky. Looking up, they saw a woman in azure blue robes flying towards the white spire. Then roaring sounds came from the spire, even blossoming a halo of rainbow ripples – a battle had evidently erupted!

"The female sorcerer who just flew to the spire, wasn't that... Her Holiness the Saintess of the Church?" Adele exclaimed in surprise, "I think I saw her last year when I participated in the grand festival..."

Iris asked, "Adele, are you religious?"

"No, but noble families in Cailleach definitely have to participate in various festivals and celebrations," Adele looked at the decadent glow at the top of the spire, "Nothing happened just now... Could Her Holiness have started fighting with the other professors?"

The others couldn't get a word in at all. Their understanding of the Church was even less than Adele's. In the Starland, the Church was a very contradictory existence. On one hand, it was undoubtedly the sole national religion, with no other beliefs existing, responsible for hosting various celebrations and even requiring the Pope's blessing for the Empress's coronation.

But at the same time, the Church was also very low-profile, with almost no missionary activities, and even artistic works about the Church like movies and operas were few and far between, with virtually no believers.

Even they, as female college students, only knew that the Church worshipped the Starchild Archon, but had even forgotten the full name of the Church.

Was it the Starchild Church or the Star Church?

“Time to shower,” Adele yawned.

Sonya suddenly remembered something and checked her Miracle Ring, discovering that it was already 11:30 pm!

In the past, she would have entered the virtual world by 11 pm!

Without bothering to remove her make-up or shower, Sonya lay in bed, searching for the Gate of Truth within the consciousness of the resonating sword spirit – with the school under curfew tonight, she naturally couldn’t go to the meditation building, but as an official silver-rank sorcerer now, even without the aid of the meditation building, she could easily locate the Gate of Truth!

Closing her eyes... Gate of Truth... sinking into consciousness... entering the virtual world!

The same entry process as usual, but before Sonya opened her eyes, she could already feel the cold seawater surrounding her – how nauseating, just like the disgusting feeling of being watched by others with mocking eyes when studying at home as a child.

Opening her eyes, what entered her sight wasn’t the familiar small boat and the familiar stranger, but the eternally unchanging white fog, and the deep, dark Sea of Knowledge.

Glancing around, isolated and alone, the silence around her was frightening. Disregarding the nausea, Sonya swam around for a bit, but her eyes saw only unchanging scenery.

An indescribable unease welled up in Sonya’s heart.

“Observer?”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 100: Giving the Rich Old Lady Some Face

“If hurt enough, then use a hand to neatly slit open...”

Igora let out a long sigh after staying up all night, jumping out of bed ready to head out, but he stopped when he reached the door.

“Why am I in such a hurry? Wouldn’t it be even better if he died?”

Igora shook his head and went back to the bathroom to take a bath as usual. But this time he didn’t have the usual comfort and relaxation during his bath. He hurriedly dried himself after soaking for a while, then went to brush his teeth to activate his divination spirit.

However, the prerequisite for resonating with the divination spirit is to keep a natural calm state of mind, and Igora was in a complete mess right now. He didn’t have any hope for it. But somehow, the divination spirit still activated, leaving a line of words in the toothpaste foam on the mirror:

“Don’t be too surprised.”

Surprised about what?

Could Ashe really be dead?

A chill went through Igora’s heart. Seeing how concerned Gerard was about Ashe yesterday, he realized that the hunter captain had come for that whimsical cult leader.

Although transporting prisoners and assisting the prison in arranging the Blood Moon Tribunal were also part of a hunter’s job, it was by no means necessary for the law enforcement captain to be present. With Gerard’s status, he could have easily refused work he wasn’t interested in, so the fact he came to Shattered Lake must mean someone had aroused his interest!

If that was all, it would be fine, Ashe could just sacrifice some skin. But Igora also accidentally found out that people like Gerard had legal immunity!

In the Blood Moon Kingdom, the law is the will of God, rules are the desires of God, and cannot be violated or defied! As long as you are proven guilty of a crime, whether you are the permanent secretary, the mayor of Caimon, a wealthy merchant, you must be tried according to the law, with no room for negotiation!

To this day, Igora still couldn't forget watching the elegant man on the light screen with an indifferent expression being torn to shreds by the executioner thirteen years ago at the annual nationwide Blood Moon Grand Trial he saw at the orphanage!

That man was the legendary mage 'Silent Performer' Teres Goldo! A legend in the Blood Moon Kingdom for nearly a hundred years! A mage with four wings fully spread, almost reaching the realm of divinity!

However, even such a powerful person, as the price for violating the law, still had to endure the punishment of the trial's iron hammer!

It was also from that day that Igora completely determined his own development path.

In the Blood Moon Kingdom, true strength lies in discerning the rules, utilizing the rules, and controlling the rules. Otherwise, no matter how strong your abilities, you are still just a slightly stronger ant in front of the laws instituted by the gods.

But in his many years as an 'insurance agent', Igora accidentally learned that some people had legal immunity – even if they committed illegal acts, the law would not punish them. On the contrary, the parliament and church still had to protect them and control public opinion to quell the turmoil.

These people were extremely rare in number, and had to meet two criteria: first, they must be of the Sacred Bloodline or Moonshadow; second, they must hold important positions!

The former was easy to understand. The Sacred Bloodline and Moonshadow were the favored races of the Archlunar, and most privileges would fall to these two races, so no one would be dissatisfied – if you don't like it, take the exam! Any race could transform into the Sacred Bloodline or Moonshadow by passing the assessment, and the research institutes and churches recruited new members every year.

The latter 'important position', however, was somewhat questionable, because in the eyes of most ordinary people, the mayors of the administrative halls and members of parliament were the important positions, but that was not the case in reality.

The three most important institutions in the Blood Moon Kingdom were the 'Heresy Court' with law enforcement powers, the 'War Zones' responsible for suppressing the Abyss all over, and the 'Beloved Church' that oversees all orphanages, maternity hospitals, and is responsible for population statistics.

The bishops of the church, commanders of the war zones, and captains of the hunter squads were the three most important positions.

Among them, the church bishops must be of the Moonshadow, the commanders of the war zones could only be held by the Sacred Bloodline, while the captains of the hunter

squads were open to both races. So it was these three types of people who had legal immunity!

Gerard Wessminster was a member of the privileged class who could ignore the law!

In other words, even if Gerard and Ashe went into the bedroom together, and only Gerard came out, Gerard would not be punished at all. He could even pretend nothing had happened.

However, many people in the prison thought Gerard was probably just catching up with Ashe, at most engaging in some friendly sparring – the one-sided kind for Ashe – and then it would be over.

After all, Ashe was on death row in prison, Gerard had no reason to tarnish his reputation over this condemned man. To put it bluntly, killing Ashe would only dirty Gerard's hands.

Igora had thought so too, but halfway through the night he suddenly realized a problem.

The crux of the matter wasn't whether Gerard was willing, but whether he could – why did Gerard ask to stay with Ashe? He was judging whether Ashe had any value to him for committing a crime!

At that time, Igora felt that Ashe was done for. With Ashe's low EQ, undeveloped brain, and infantile facial expression management, Gerard might kill him just from looking displeased.

But wasn't this great? With Ashe dead, he didn't need to fulfill Ashe's wish anymore...

Just as Igora was convincing himself while walking into the cafeteria, he saw an unimaginable scene: Ashe and Gerard were eating breakfast face to face, even chatting and laughing.

It seemed Ashe had told a really lame joke, and the arrogant, cold-blooded white-haired hunter actually burst out laughing, with the decibel levels even exceeding the 'Public Space Management Regulations'. A death row inmate would definitely have been muted by the chip for that.

"Ah, Igora, over here!" Ashe spotted Igora at a glance and waved at him.

Don't act like you've got such good eyesight at other times... Igora, who wanted to observe the situation from the side, was forced to reluctantly bring his breakfast over. "Good morning you two, did you sleep well last night?"

"Yes, very well." Gerard said, "The lodging environment here is better than my home, though I haven't slept for many years. Luckily Ashe was here so I wasn't bored."

“Oh?” Igora raised his eyebrows.

“I was up late playing with Gerard last night,” Ashe shrugged. “Haven’t had such a good time in a long while.”

Playing? Igora and those nearby had subtle expressions.

“If you want, you can stay another night. I’ll give you a chance to make a comeback. But you need to change your impatient habits. I didn’t even go all out last night and you had already finished yourself off.”

The expressions of the nearby death row inmates grew even more bizarre, and the way they looked at Gerard changed as well – Gerard was actually no match for Ashe?

Tsk tsk, ‘Heretic’ Ashe was surprisingly terrifying!

They knew Ashe was brought back by Gerard himself, but after just one night, Gerard had been conquered by Ashe like this!

No wonder he could become a saint favored by the Four Pillars, no wonder he could become the only one in the past century to form a cult in the Blood Moon Kingdom!

As expected of Ashe Heath, easily accomplishing what we cannot!

Imperceptibly, ‘Heretic’ Ashe had already become the revered king of death row inmates in Shattered Lake Prison – though still a death row inmate.

Igora directly dragged Ashe to the Sea View Tower rooftop. The transport ship carrying the Blood Mad Hunters had just set sail, breaking through the surging waters of Shattered Lake and sailing north. Many early rising fin sharks were very active, greeting the hull of the ship with their teeth, the scales glittering brightly as sunlight hit them.

“What were you playing with him last night?”

Ashe was slightly taken aback – that’s your first question?

“What else could we play? Of course it was cards.”

“Cards?” Igora was confused for a moment. “What card game?”

As a highly developed fantasy society, the Blood Moon Kingdom naturally also had playing cards, though there were some differences in the details, but largely similar. Ashe found they didn’t have the ‘Blackjack’ 21-point game here, so he modified the rules a bit to teach Gerard, and the two played Blackjack all night.

Although Gerard learned it very quickly, his playing style was unexpectedly aggressive, and he often accidentally busted. So Ashe abused him all night.

Igora's eyes lit up when he heard about this game: "Not a bad game. If the casinos knew about it, it would definitely become a wildly popular gambling game... But didn't Gerard intend to do anything to you? I thought he came specifically for you."

Ashe looked at Igora: "You're worried about me?"

"Of course, you still owe me a wish." Igora said calmly: "If you die who can I get payment from? In this world, only I lend to others, no one can owe me."

"Indeed, no matter how lonely a person is, there will always be someone missing them – such as the tax department and creditors." Ashe quipped, then continued, "It was Professor Sylin who asked him to come kill me."

"What?" Igora was shocked: "Sylin actually... Then how did you get away with it? If Gerard wanted to kill you, no one in Shattered Lake Prison could protect you!"

Ashe proudly said: "Of course it was thanks to my sincere gaze, kind heart, and eloquent persuasion!"

"Don't joke around, I'm being serious."

"I'm not joking! I really reasoned with him, touched his heart, and then he gave up killing me and played cards with me all night instead."

Igora looked at Ashe for a good while, confirming he wasn't lying. He could no longer keep a straight face.

A three-winged Sacred Bloodline mage who had lived over a hundred years was actually easily persuaded by Ashe?

Unless you're also a telepath, Ashe? Otherwise it's hard to explain how you grasped a hypnotic technique to control Sanctum powerhouses.

Or could this be the might of the Four Pillars? Allowing Ashe to unknowingly alter the will of others?

Igora watched the transport ship that was about to disappear over the horizon, and suddenly recalled something: "You said Gerard played Blackjack with you all night, and he lost more than he won?"

Ashe shrugged: "Yeah, I didn't expect Gerard to be so weak."

Igora wanted to say something, but held it in.

In his opinion, although Blackjack had ever-changing gameplay, for a three-winged Sanctum mage, that bit of computational power was negligible. Theoretically, Gerard could rely on his memory and calculation abilities to grasp all the cards of both sides, and even calculate his optimal decision.

Even if it was his first time, he should have quickly mastered it, not lose more than he won.

But maybe Ashe was just really good at Blackjack, Igora thought.

On the transport ship, a group of Blood Mad Hunters were playing cards.

“Ah-ha.” Gerard flipped over the hole card, “Just 21, I win, 5 silver coins from each.”

“No way, Captain you can’t play!” one hunter said, “You’re cheating!”

“You guys washed and dealt the cards, I didn’t use any spirits, how could I cheat?” the white-haired hunter played innocent.

The hunter couldn’t help but curse, “Your memory and computational abilities are stronger than ours. From the moment we got our cards you analyzed all the situations already. How could we possibly win? You’re simply crushing us with your Sanctum abilities!”

“Alright alright, if you don’t want to play we won’t play.” Gerard whistled and walked over to the railing, gazing through the glass at Shattered Lake Prison gradually disappearing from sight.

A thin beastman hunter walked over. Unlike most hunters, he was thin, short, at first glance looking more like a goblin.

Yet like Gerard, he had crimson ruby eyes.

“Captain, I’m very curious,” he leaned on the railing and asked, “What exactly did Ashe Heath do to make you spare him?”

Gerard laughed. “How do you know I came for Heath?”

“It’s not your first time doing this.” Bas said. “The captain of law enforcement is often the one who breaks the law the most. I know who was behind Councilor Will’s assassination, Captain. Every time you want to do something, the whole Heresy Court has to clean up after you. It’s not even troublesome to go through the procedures...”

“But this is the duty the Archlunar has bestowed upon you, there must be meaning in it.”

“So I’m curious, because you have so many reasons to execute Ashe Heath, just being the leader of the Four Pillars Cult is enough for you to take action. And you must have obtained some intelligence that made you feel Heath was still dangerous, which is why you specifically came to Shattered Lake, right?”

Gerard leisurely said, “As expected, it’s just more comfortable using our own people, highly observant and smart. Compared to you, Emma is really useless...”

Bas raised his eyebrows: “Captain, you just violated regulations against gender discrimination, racial discrimination, and more in one sentence, even provoking conflict between the two lunar races. If others heard that, the Caimon media wouldn’t need any other news this month, just condemning you would fill their pages.”

Gerard just smiled and changed the topic. “As for Ashe Heath... you’re very right, he gave me far too many reasons to take action, like him reading the romance comics I hate most. ”

“So what did he do to make Captain reconsider?”

“He didn’t do anything, or rather, nothing he did swayed me. I spared him to give someone face.”

Bas was taken aback. “There’s still someone who needs you to give them face?”

“Of course.”

Gerard looked towards Shattered Lake Prison, about to vanish from sight, and recalled the crow uniform hidden under Ashe’s bed in his cell, as well as the sweet tangy smell of Ashe’s blood.

“I smelled the aura of colorless source blood.”

“As fellow alumni from the four great research institutes, I dare not snatch the long awaited offering of the new race.”

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

