THE DARK KING

BOOK 02

Ancient Xi

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The Dark King

(黑暗王者)

by

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(古羲)

Synopsis

Disaster outbreaks which ends the civilization we know.

Sleeping in the cold storage for three hundred years Dudian wakes up into a new “world”.

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Chapter 101 - Emergency

In the blink of an eye, another two weeks had gone by.

Because of repeated archery training, Dudian had rapidly grown in terms of control and accuracy of his shots. Almost every arrow could hit the target while seven out of ten arrows would nail the heart of the target. For an ordinary person to achieve this result, at least three to five years of hard training were needed. But because of Dudian's hunter physique, it was completed in about two months.

In addition to precision, every arrow shot by him penetrated the target. The deadliness of the arrows had improved significantly, but his aligned shooting hasn't had the slightest progress. When the young instructor was aware of his progress in aligning shooting, he had gone crazy.

"Do you think that just because you have magic marks you are fit to be a hunter? Your performance outside the giant wall will be nothing but a bit better than some of the scavengers. You would only be able to kill low-level monsters!" The young instructor angrily announced, " Since you are lazy and can't even learn aligned shoot from tomorrow on your basic archery tasks would increase a lot!"

Dudian thought: "Is this what he means by hellish punishment?" He didn't think that the youth will just increase his daily task of basic archery practice. His heart was in joy and it was revealed a little in his face. His 'indifferent' look made the young instructor go crazy with anger.

Thus, the young instructor raised Dudian's daily number of arrows to be shot to 2200 in the next month! In his view, it was beyond the physical limits of Dudian, he would overload and break him at some point. He thought that Dudian wouldn't be able to reach the tasks given by him and won't be able to eat dinner at the appointed time.

So he thought that Dudian will fall into a vicious circle. Because according to the young instructor, Dudian would have to overwork himself to reach the daily tasks and at some point, his willpower wouldn't be enough to continue on.

It was the purpose of the young instructor. Actually, because of the interests of the consortium, the style of the punishment was a bit childish in comparison to Tobu's punishments.

Dudian's archery has long reached the level of two thousand eight hundred arrows so he had already passed the 'high standard' of the young instructor. That's why he continued to immerse himself to get insights about archery.

–

The world outside of the giant wall. Mellon Foundation. Area no. 1.

In comparison to the other areas under the control of Mellon consortium, you won't be able to see buildings, metal wreckage, and others in area no 1. It was an extremely open area just like a

vast wilderness. Occasionally a trace of the collapsed highways could be seen. Everything was dilapidated and covered in moss and dust. There was an indication that at some point in history, it was an urban area.

Only, you wouldn't be able to see a complete building in the area.

Gravel and blood was everywhere. The rain had washed the blood into every corner of the crevice. After it had dried up naturally and wonderful patterns colored in blood red had branded the earth and structures around.

At the moment, near the ruin of a wall, five shadows appeared. They were quiet as they checked the street through the broken remnants of the wall. On the street, there were two, half a foot deep, dents in the ground. Next, to the dents, there was a lump of dark dirt which exuded a strong pungent odor. After a closer look, they saw some remnants of bones as well as corroded metal in the dark dirt.

One of the five quietly stepped forward and picked up a stone and lightly poked it at the dirt. He went back and whispered: "It hasn't dried up yet, most likely it hasn't been here for longer than two hours."

"Chase."

One of them ordered.

Five people of them quickly and quietly began to catch up with the huge dents along the ground.

Fifteen minutes later, one of them suddenly made an anxious gesture and signaled them to stop.

The man spoke in low but dignified tone: “I smell it. It’s about eight kilometers away from us.”

“Well, you prepare an ambush in the back and the four of us will take it on.” The leader’s eye shone in excitement.

The previous man nodded, but his face suddenly changed as he said:”No! Fast, hide -”

puff!

Claws penetrate from the ground where they were standing and pierced the vests of a couple of them.

...

In the castle at the Hunter headquarters.

A black crow flew in through the window and dropped an envelope which fell onto the desktop.

A maid was serving the afternoon tea to the man behind the desk. He saw the red mark on the left corner of the envelope and quickly opened it.

“A ‘black weaver’ have appeared in area no. 1 and killed three hunters?” His face changed as he read through the contents of the intelligence. “Sixth team was tracking a ‘mountain lion’ while they were sneak attacked by a ‘black weaver’. Only the captain and another member escaped. They are seriously injured. ”

He got another paper and wrote a few things on it. As soon as he finished the letter, he put it into an envelope and hang on the black crow’s feet. He touched the crow as he said: “To Glenn.”

The black crow twitched and shook off its wings as it flew from the window.

...

The hunter’s training ground.

Dudian was training as usual. His precision was getting more accurate. Even he wanted to find some moving target to practice.

It was almost noon when the young instructor all of sudden quickly came to the training ground to find Dudian. He handed him an envelope: “This is an order from the consortium. There is an emergency situation outside the giant wall. There is a temporary lack of three hunters and you have the super small

ability from a juranzhi so consortium wants you to go with the team to outside and implement the urgent task. Hurry to prepare!”

Dudian could not help but stop as he was stunned, “But I’m still in my training period.”

“This is an emergency call. As long as you are implementing other tasks outside the giant wall, you have to put off all the work at hand and respond to the consortium’s call!” The young instructor spoke very fast: “Your hunter badge has been ordered and will be ready by the time we reach the place. Quickly stop so that you don’t consume any physical strength. Let’s go as someone will come to pick you up at the wall.”

“That quick?” Dudian also quickly put down the bow, no longer wasting energy, “Aren’t there any other hunters who are resting now?”

“Other hunters either recuperate or are injured. If there was anyone else available the headquarters would not send have you to this dangerous place. ” Young instructor urged: “Quick!”

Chapter 102 - ‘Black Weaver’

“What is the urgent task about? Is it very dangerous?” Dudian could not help but ask.

The young instructor replied: “I heard there is a rare monster which appeared. There is a bit of a danger, but the team will be led by Glenn. She is one of the two strongest hunters of the consortium. By the way, you will be only responsible for tracking the smell. They will protect you as long as you don’t fall behind.”

“Rare monster?” Dudian thought of the Juranzhi that he had killed. Is that new monster the same as that beast? He continued: “Is it alright if I go to the residential district?”

“Of course not!” The young instructor continued to walk: ” It is very urgent. We will be going to the castle’s hall for them to pick you up. The others should have arrived by now.” He grabbed Dudian’s hand and began to run without giving any further explanations.

Dudian was anxious as everything happened very fast. He couldn’t figure out how to get the bombs as they were a big part of his self-defense. He was concerned about his own safety, because he wasn’t sure he could protect himself with bare hands and his new archery skills.

Both of them went across the river and came to the other side of the territory. The castle was colored in black. There was a gloomy atmosphere which surrounded it.

The young instructor brought Dudian to the castle: “Go faster, they are waiting for you inside, I’ll get some dry food for you!”

Dudian’s heart sank. He turned around and took a deep breath as he went into the castle.

The guards at the door opened the doors as they saw Dudian coming over.

There were six figures in the dimly lit room inside the castle. Four men and two women were chatting when the door opened. They looked over.

“Who is this little guy?” Asked one of them.

Another youth replied: “I heard he was a scavenger and by some luck got his hands on some magic marks.”

There was a woman in her early twenties which had white skin. She looked beautiful. She was wearing a set of tight-fitting black hunter armor. She glanced at Dudian and commanded: “Immediately put on your armor. We are leaving!”

Dudian felt that the woman was familiar. He remembered that when he had just become a scavenger he was invited to a party held by an aristocrat. He had seen two hunters back then and the woman was one of them. Presumably, she and the other youth were the top two strongest hunters of the consortium. No wonder,

the nobility were taking the initiative to talk to them and their attitude was extremely friendly.

“Yes,” Dudian answered. There were piles of black armor sets stacked on the chair. He took them and found one consistent with his height.

In addition to armor, there was a black bow.

Fully armed, Dudian said to the woman: “I’m ready.”

The woman nodded slightly as she saw Dudian’s efficiency and turned towards the others: ” ‘Black weaver’ has appeared. We got to do everything we can to catch it. Letting it slip away is not an option. Am I clear?”

“Yes!” The other five stood at attention.

Glenn nodded and waved: “Let’s begin!”

The front door of the hall opened. They went outside to see a dozen or so black horses which had simple helmets and armor on them to prevent radiation and small monsters from biting them.

Although the radiation and monsters within the giant wall couldn’t be compared to the ones outside, but it was still extremely dangerous. The hunters were not responsible for cleaning the area inside the giant wall because it falls under the Holy Church and army’s jurisdiction.

All of them rolled up and launched.

Dudian saw that instructor hasn't brought any dry food so he gave up on him. He got onto the horse and seven of them immediately left the area towards the giant wall.

After passing out of the commercial district they went into the radiation zone.

Occasionally they met beasts that were affected by the radiation. There were pythons coiled in the roadside or small group of scattered wolves. The radiation had affected them in the wilderness, so their bodies had slight mutations. Some parts had a strange growth, which was unusual for normal animals.

These hungry beasts were about to rush at them, but Glenn did nothing but snorted. Hungry beasts were scared and scattered quickly, as if they had faced a dangerous foe.

Dudian was not surprised as he knew that it was the result of Glenn's magic marks. Human's can't intimidate beasts. Especially hungry beasts who would attack at first sight. Hunters were like monsters dressed in human skin so for a normal monster from the giant wall to prey no them was nothing but a joke!

Soon, everyone came to the giant wall.

"You came, the passage has been opened to you." A middle-aged

man wearing Mellon consortium clothing stood before the giant wall.

Glenn nodded to him and dismounted. She was the first to enter the underground passage.

As soon as they entered the underground passage Glenn and the other five instantly stopped and began to pray to the goddess depicted on the wall. Because of the emergency the prayer was symbolic and took a moment or so. Then they quickly walked along the passage.

Guardian looked at the pictures of the goddesses but didn't pray. He followed after the team.

They reached to the other side of the giant wall.

Dudian found out that the entrance, which they used this time was different from the previous one which he had used. It should be another passage controlled by the consortium. At this time when they went out, it was not plain area, but there were trees which were more than 20 meters high. The trees looked like poplar but without branches and leaves.

Glenn went into the forest.

The others followed, keeping Dudian at the center of the team.

Dudian suddenly felt the gap between himself and other hunters.

They could easily keep up with Glenn's footsteps while he needs to give extra effort or else he would have fallen behind.

"It seems there are physical differences even among the hunters." Dudian thought as he did his best to follow them: "However, it's been two months that I've been officially named as a hunter. I haven't got enough 'blessings'. I still have more than 200 cold crystals in the area no 9."

After passing the forest and the giant trees they saw a broken highway covered in moss.

"On the bridge," said Glenn as she quickly jumped onto the highway.

Dudian's mouth twitched at sight and followed after.

"We are going to enter area no 1." Glenn looked back at Dudian: " In about a minute we will enter the area. You have to protect yourself and don't take my words lightly. It is one of the 20 areas under the command of our Mellon consortium. However, it is the most dangerous after the forbidden area. There are lots of level 10 or higher beasts in here. This time our aim is to catch 'black weaver'. "

Chapter 103 - Instant Cut

“A level 26 beast?” Dudian looked at her in a horrified manner.

Although he has spent most of his time training archery but in his spare time, he studied the beasts that roamed outside the giant wall. The Juranzhi that he had killed was at the larval stage and was a level 9 beast. The undeads are ordinary level 9 existences. The rats that they had fought against belonged to level 3 and less.

However, this time it turned out that they were going after a level 26 existence?

The pores of his body shrank and a chill gushed through his heart while thinking about what kind of a terrorizing existence a level 26 beast was. The first thing that came to his mind was to escape! However, he saw the determined look in Glenn’s eyes. There was no turning back. Although he was panicking, but he couldn’t do anything but try to calm down.

He could do one thing and that was to think of ways to insure his life.

His brain thought quickly, although he has not met the monster he felt an unprecedented crisis.

“What is this monster? What is its special ability?” Dudian asked.

Monsters such as that one are equipped with some special genetic

mutation.

"You do not need to know," said the other youth indifferently, "You are responsible for tracking its location by its smell. We don't need your help and the only thing you will do is protecting yourself."

Glenn took out a piece of a black debris from her little purse and handed it to Dudian: "This is the carapace of the black weaver which was brought to us. Is it possible that you can locate it using the odor? By the way, what's the range of your smell sensitivity?"

Dudian took the palm-sized shell. It seemed like something that you could find on the back of a snail. It was smooth and extremely hard. The sticky silky material that was inside of it had dried up, but it still exuded a thick smell. He looked back at Glenn: "If it's a strong smell then I can detect from 20 or so miles. But for lighter smells, the range gets down to 10 miles or so."

Glenn and the other five couldn't help but look at Dudian with a trace of surprise in their eyes. Such a sense of smell could take him to top 5 in the consortium's 'smell tracking' list because of his capacity. Dudian was only a newcomer so he would go through physical enhancement and naturally, the scope of his detection abilities would increase too.

"Yes," Glenn nodded and said, "That's up to you."

Dudian was relieved as they didn't object to him. The actual range of his sense of smell was thirty to forty miles depending on

the thickness of smell. The main reason that he concealed his actual range was that he had offended the ‘bloody swordsman’ Linda. So he was not willing to put all the cards out as not to be plotted against in the future. There would be no room to fight back if something like that occurred.

“Do you smell it right now?” Glenn asked Dudian.

Dudian sniffed a few times and shook his head: “I can’t right now. There are smells of other monsters that disturb my sensitivity.”

“We don’t need others. Focus on ‘black weaver’ only. ” Glenn was depressed: “Keep up with me.” She walked along the broken highway to explore.

Dudian and others followed.

Four or five miles later, Glenn suddenly stopped. She pointed to few dents close by to a small concave pool: “These are the footprints of mountain lions They are the favorite food of ‘black weavers.'” At this point, she looked back at Dudian: ” Don’t forget it smell. If you can find the mountain lions, then you should also notify me.”

Dudian nodded.

They began to track the mountain lions along its footprints.

It didn't take long before Dudian said: "There are three monsters ahead."

Glenn looked at the short youth on the left and said: "Go check out!"

The youth nodded and his color began to pale. In a matter of seconds, he disappeared out of thin air!

Dudian's pupil contracted as he was stunned.

However, Dudian found out that the youth's smell was still next to them. He saw that as the smell moved ahead light seemed to be distorted at those areas. It seemed as if a transparent humanoid was moving. Dudian asked the youth on his left.: "He is?"

"His magic marks ability is called 'color'. He is one of the most effective scouts in our consortium." The youth casually replied.

Dudian's heart was full of surprise. A magic mark with such capacity In comparison to his super sense of smell, it seemed a lot more special. But if his speculation was right and he was able to directly absorb cold crystals, then his ability was very powerful in comparison to the others.

It didn't take long before the youth rapidly returned. His figure was revealed as he reported to Glenn: "Three crocodile wolves"

Glenn nodded slightly and said, "Kill." Then she went straight in

the direction that Dudian had shown.

Dudian had heard about ‘crocodile wolves’ before. It should belong to the level 13 monsters. It was an extremely horrifying existence for him. If he had met them alone, then the result would be certain death. Even if an intermediate hunters encountered them and were a bit careless then would be killed for sure.

The crowd followed after Glenn along the ruins of broken streets and quickly approached the position of the three ‘crocodile wolves.’

Dudian looked and saw the three large ‘crocodile wolves.’ Each one of them was about three meters long. Their bodies were similar to a wolf’s but had the head of a crocodile. Its mouth was outlined as a convex. However, it had sharp canine teeth. Its tongue was falling out of its mouth as if it was a dog.

It was a breathtaking sight for Dudian.

Whoosh!

Glenn’s figure which was leading them in front didn’t pause but instead rushed out. Afterimages of her frame were reflected as if a gray blurred figure was moving at an unimaginable speed. Dudian felt her smell fade and appear in another location and gradually fade again to reappear in another location.

He saw Glenn quickly approach the three ‘crocodile wolves’ and

appear in their field of vision in a matter of seconds. The crocodile wolves also reacted and began to roar. But Glenn sprang out without minding their actions.

Whoosh!

Glenn's body leapt from the rubble as if she was a ghost-like existence and had reached the first crocodile wolf. The moment she landed before the first crocodile wolf she moved towards the second one. He wasn't aware how and when Glenn attacked the first crocodile wolf but he was able to see her vicious attack towards the second crocodile wolf's head.

The next moment her figure flashed sideways and appeared in front of the third crocodile wolf. The monster was able to detect her presence, but it was too late.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

At this time, all three of the crocodile wolves fall down. Blood was spewing out from the dagger wound in between their chin and necks. It didn't take long before the ground was colored in blood red.

Dudian was stunned.

She had killed all three of them using only 1 move to attack each crocodile wolf. The skin on their necks was deeply cut, the blood arteries and flesh were clearly visible.

Chapter 104 - Movement

Dudian noted straps were covering both of her slender thighs. There were two knives sheathed by the cover. Both of them were about few centimeters longer than usual knives. Their tips were slightly bent and looked like a sickle. At the moment, blood dripped from their tips. It was the blood of a crocodile wolf.

“Assassin!” Dudian suddenly thought of Glenn’s occupation. In the past few months, he had heard about two famous senior hunters from the Mellon consortium. According to news that he had heard one of them was a warrior while the other was a scout. Glenn was the scout. But she had advanced twice and became a murderous and deadly assassin.

Just like her nickname – Ghost Assassin!

Every time someone advanced, their nicknames would have some kind of relation to their magic mark ability. Similarly, Glenn’s magic mark’s ability was called ‘ghost eye’. It had originated from an extremely terrible beast. Glenn had an extremely good vision, flexible body and knew how to hide her breath which helped her to get close to her prey quietly. She was a predator. Like a snake, she could hide in the shadows and wait for the prey to reach her grasp.

Before her smell suddenly disappeared, which was mostly because of the magic mark’s ability.

Dudian was shocked as three crocodile wolves were assessed as level 13 beasts. Their power was much higher than the juranzhi

that he had killed. But in the hands of the woman they were beheaded immediately. Dudian couldn't visually keep up with her movement speed. Moreover, her actions proved that she had rich experience in beast hunting.

It was a fatal wound and the place where the knives cut were at the weakest points!

Glenn waved, indicating everyone to keep up.

The other five hunters who saw her skill were speechless as they looked at each other in awe. After all, they would have to work in a perfect match with each other to kill those three crocodile wolves. Moreover, a single error would lead to their death. The gap between them and the top hunters was huge!

"The smell of blood will attract other monsters, but the 'black weaver' is timid by nature. It will not easily come out. Continue to chase! " Glenn whispered as she leads the way in the front.

The other five quickly caught up.

Dudian looked at the three corpses on the ground and could not help but say: "Their bodies... aren't we going to...?"

"Kiddo, the crocodile wolf's body value is not high. Its body fat is too small and the radiation on its hair is way too much. It's not worth to collect anything from it. We will waste nothing but time." The youth at the end patiently replied to Dudian. They have

put away the contempt towards Dudian because of the scope of his sensitivity towards smells.

Dudian increased his speed to keep up with the team.

They went after the footprints of the ‘mountain lion’. They would catch up and occasionally the footprints would disappear. But because of Dudian’s sensitivity to smell, they would capture its location and move towards it. The benefits of tracking through odors were a point of envy for the other hunters.

Along the way, the crowd met with a few waves of monsters. They didn’t have to act as Glenn personally solved the problems easily. However, when they meet a level ‘nineteen’ poisonous lizard Glenn chose to detour instead of fighting it. Although with their team of seven hunters, they could cope up with the monster, but it was likely that the fight would cause greater movements. As a result, other monsters may be attracted or they may scare away the ‘black weaver’.

In addition to that strong lizard, the crowd also met an unnamed beast. According to Glenn if they killed it and brought its body back to the giant wall they could get extra rewards. She had told them that it was a new kind of a beast.

Glenn didn’t want to give up on hunting the black weaver so they continue to pursue the ‘mountain lion’.

“Rest for a while.”

Because of the continuous rapid movement all of them had exerted their physical condition. Glenn's continuous fights had also consumed a lot of strength. It was almost noon when they stopped. She said to the crowd: "Eat something, as we may not have a chance afterward."

All of them listened to her orders at once. They sat down to rest and took out some dry food and water from their backpacks.

Dudian had come in a hurry so he had nothing. He was looking at other people enjoying their lunch.

"Take it," Glenn glanced at him as she pulled out a ration of dry food from her backpack and gave it to Dudian, "If you can find it, I will owe you a favor."

Dudian took the dry food. He was grateful, but surprised at the same time: "Owe me? Why would you owe me? Aren't we performing the task on orders of the consortium?"

"It's the consortium's order, but it's for me. I'll need it to advance." Glenn didn't cover it up and said: "It's same as helping the consortium in a sense. The thing is if we capture or kill it, I have the right to make the first choice. Unless I gave up on it, the consortium will assign one of the other eight intermediate hunters to evolve using it. But this black weaver's tracing ability is my favorite."

Dudian thought that he didn't see such conditions of the contract. Most of the intermediate level hunters have such clauses

in their contracts. Their privileges and priorities are much higher than someone at the primary (entry) level. Moreover, even in the case that he caught the monster alone, he would have to submit it to the consortium rather than using it to evolve. The previous juranzhi that he killed was already out of reach for primary hunters and he was lucky to get the worms out of it.

"You are too polite. Of course, I will do what I have to do." Dudian was sucking up. (Translator: the Actual translation was: Dudian politely said.)

Glenn shook her head: "I don't like to feel that I owe someone else. I take it as a transaction. Later, as long as you need my help and if it's within the range of my capabilities, I will help you out once. Of course, the premise is that we are successful at hunting the black weaver."

Dudian saw she was direct so he nodded and replied, but he wasn't speaking in a polite tone anymore: "I know, I will try my best."

"Well," said Glenn and nodded. She turned to look at the vast expanse of ruins in the distance.

Dudian quickly ate the dry food. Although Glenn promised him to help out in the future, but he didn't take her word too seriously. Of course, she would help but it would be proportional to his involvement in this hunting, which was limited.

Suddenly, Dudian's nose twitched. He stood up and said: "I found

the mountain lion."

Others were quietly eating their food and were immersed in their own thoughts. However, when they heard Dudian's words, they immediately put away the dry food and stood up. "Where?"

Dudian pointed to the left: "Twenty or so miles away that way."

"Go!" Glenn made a quick decision and ran in the direction pointed by Dudian.

The crowd quickly followed.

Chapter 105 - Dudian's Idea

The group quickly came to a low-lying land mass before the desolate and broken streets that were covered in moss and vegetation. Dudian could vaguely see the architectural outline of the buildings, but the top parts had already collapsed. The walls on the first floors that had survived were wrapped, covered and reinforced with piles of gravel and concrete.

Glenn suddenly stopped and checked the place. She raised her hand and signaled. : "Gatt, go and check out!"

The hunter called Gatt was the scout with a 'color' ability. He nodded and his body color rapidly became transparent. His black armor disappeared together with him.

Dudian was still surprised even though it was the second time that he was observing Gatt. He whispered: "Is his ability so strong that it can affect the armor?"

"Of course not. The consortium specifically made an armor for him from the skin of a 'magic lizard' which resonates with his ability" The youth next to replied.

He realized that if Gatt was against him, he could still track him down using his sense of smell. Even if he had no sense of smell, if he could sprinkle some dust or paint on him, Gatt could be easily identified. However, it was not an ability that could be taken lightly.

After all, even the strongest person can not stay alerted at all times.

moments later, Gatt returned and revealed his figure. He made the report: “It is indeed a mountain lion. It has hunted a prey and is eating it right now.”

Glenn nodded, “The number of mountain lions is so scarce that the ‘black weaver’ will certainly come after it. We have to be quiet and don’t get too close to it.” Then she took out a bottle from inside her backpack. She poured a bit into her palm and gently swayed it into her tight armor. Her faint fragrance was covered.

Others have long experienced it so, without any explanation, they took the same light yellow vial from their backpacks and began to smear their whole bodies. Suddenly, their smell faded away.

Glenn threw the bottle to Dudian and said: “Cast it. It is called undead powder which can cover up your smell. But pay attention so that it doesn’t touch your skin or else you will be infected.”

Dudian took it and began to smear on his body. He knew that role of this vial was the same as when they had used undead’s blood to cover their body odors from juranzhi’s pursuit. The undead’s blood was much more effective, but this one was eased to wipe away while undeads blood was troublesome to clean.

All seven of the coated with undead powder and began to exude the smell of undeads.

Glenn glanced at the team of six and said: “Luis took another two and go in the other direction. Pay attention that you won’t be exposed. Contact us with signals.”

“Yes,” the brown-haired young man named Luis nodded. With the other two youths, he quietly went away from the ruins to another place.

Dudian saw their posture and could not help but ask: “so this is it?

“Only that,” murmured Glenn.

“What if the black weaver does not come?”

“Let’s wait and see.” Glenn glanced at him, and said, “Hunting is about patience. It’s hungry. It will come after the mountain lion one way or the other. ”

Dudian thought patience was right, but it was too stupid and inefficient: “I’ve got an idea, but I don’t know if it will work. ”

“Eh?” Glenn and the other three looked at him in doubt and surprise: “I thought it’s your first time to hunt. Rookie, what’s your idea?”

Dudian looked at Glenn and said: “area no1 is too large.

Moreover, it's too quiet so waiting for the black weaver is nothing but wasting time. Perhaps black weaver is also distressed to find food at the moment. Since a mountain lion is its favorite food, then I think mountain lion also should have a few tricks to circumvent its natural enemies. So it will do its best to avoid the area where black weaver will appear. That's why the odds of waiting for black weaver until it is small. However, if we could take the initiative mountain lion will bring the black weaver to us."

Glenn was surprised as she heard Dudian talk. Actually, what he said was not unreasonable. Every creature has instincts to avoid their natural enemies. Mountain lions also have strong and keen intuition.

"What you say sounds easy, but is difficult to do. If we killed the mountain lion we can use its blood smell to lure the black weaver but that one is extremely cunning. A dead mountain lion would not catch its interest." Glenn shook her head.

Dudian replied: "Of course we are not going to kill it. We are going to injure it. These monsters are not much different from normal beasts. I mean, we can use methods to frighten it and cause it to panic and run around. So that it moves into a larger area. That way the probability of getting the attention of the black weaver should be higher."

Glenn and the other three looked at each other.

"Ah yes, this is a good idea!" Gatt could not help but pat Dudian's head.

The other man and woman were surprised at Dudian's perspective.

Glenn looked at Dudian deeply and turned to Gatt: "Tell those three to come back."

Gatt nodded and disappeared.

Dudian hesitated: "Although this approach is efficient, but there is a drawback."

"I know." Glenn nodded as she walked by the sidewalk: "No need to be worried. If we meet any monster lower than level 25 I'll be able to contain it. We won't let this lion die unless it brings black weaver to us."

Dudian was relieved as she took this point into account. Because if such a situation occurred, it would be taken as his mistake.

Soon Gatt came back with the other three. Luis looked at Dudian and said to Glenn: "Isn't it bold?"

"Just do it," said Glenn as she pointed to the archer youth standing behind Luis: "Shoot it."

There was another hunter who could track the beasts. But he didn't use smell to track but used ultrasonic hearing instead.

Dudian and Glenn's previous talks have long been heard by him. He slightly nodded in approval.

The archer went towards some rubble and got on top of it. He pulled the string and let the arrow fly out.

"Roar!" The sound of pain echoed out in the silent ruins.

Followed by a hoof's hopping sound, the 'mountain lion' ran away.

Glenn and Dudian quickly caught up with the mountain lion's previous location. The remains of half a monster's corpse and organs were scattered all over the ground.

They immediately chased after the mountain lion.

Chapter 106 - Lured Out

Dudian finally saw the appearance of the mountain lion while they chased after it from close by. It was three to four meters tall. Its body was strongly built. However, it had three forelimb joints. Instead of walking like a usual lion, it clung to the ground like a spider and quickly crawled.

The arrow that had hit its body was given the mountain lion severe pain.

Dudian and others had smeared undead powder onto their bodies so they were not afraid of revealing their whereabouts. They were not getting too close to it, but following about hundred meters away.

“In front.” Dudian was running while sensing the smells of other predators within the range. If any beasts came into the range of twenty miles he would be alerted about their position.

“What’s its position?”

“Eleven o’clock.”

Glenn raised her hand and made a gesture.

Gatt who was running with them disappeared the moment Glenn waved her hand.

A moment later, Gatt appeared: “It’s only a ‘dead blood beast’.”

“Do not bother with it,” Glenn replied.

When the mountain lion gets tired of running and wanted to stop, the archer would pull the bowstring and make a few shots. Precise arrows made the mountain lion move instead of staying in a fixed position.

Occasionally few level seven and eight monsters tried to attack their group. Because of the vial used by them most of the monsters identified them as an undead. Most of the beasts had no interest in eating an undead, but some beasts under level 10 preferred to eat an undead once in a while.

However, because of Dudian’s sense of smell and the other hunter’s hearing these hidden monsters were always found early and shot on the spot. Most of the time, Glenn was performing as she resolved the fighting in a matter of few seconds and easily beheading them.

Although the mountain lion was cruel, simply because of suffering from sudden attacks. Once in a while it would run around to attack the undead that followed it. It wanted to vent its anger by killing the undead, however, this reaction of mountain lion was already expected by Glenn and Dudian. Members of the team would scatter around to avoid the mountain lion. The plan was still in progress.

In about two hours, the group also consumed most of their

stamina so they didn't stimulate the mountain lion. As it stopped to rest, they too found a place to rest.

"Wouldn't such movements would scare away the black weaver?" A youth drinking water asked.

"Would you be scared of your food?"

The young man almost choked.

Dudian took the bottle of water given by Glenn. He thought that her mouth has touched the bottle while drinking and his heart didn't feel very comfortable with it. So he used his hand to quietly wipe the bottle and then emptied the water.

Glenn, who observed this scene, sneered, but didn't say anything.

As Dudian finished the bottle of water and was about to lean on a wall to rest, his body pores shrank. A strange smell of stench was approaching from about thirty miles away.

It was the same smell as he sensed from the carapace given to him at the beginning!

It had finally appeared!

Dudian was delighted as they would be able to complete the

mission earlier than usual. He would be able to back to training as soon as possible. In this perilous area no 1 anything may happen as there were no limit to scary and terrorizing mutations that he saw.

He didn't immediately say anything but quietly waited.

Soon, when black weaver's smell was close to twenty-five miles or so, the smell suddenly faded away. It was as if its body disappeared.

Dudian was startled a bit in doubt.

"What?" Glenn looked to him.

Dudian saw her looking at him, but said: "Nothing."

Glenn didn't say anything, instead sat down to take a rest. Her eyes fell on the body of the mountain lion, which was crouched far away.

A few minutes later Dudian smelled the previous black weaver appear again! However, the location of appearance was eight miles away. The smell was very light. It seemed that black weaver was desperate to restraint, its stench as not to scare away the mountain lion. If it was not so close, he wouldn't be able to smell.

"It's approaching..... Good speed... it's fast... very quick!" Dudian mind spoke out to Glenn: "It appeared around seven miles from here. No, maybe even closer!"

Glenn and the other five were shocked. Gatt anxiously said: “Didn’t you say that your detection range is twenty miles?”

Dudian frowned: “It’s twenty miles, but most probably the black weaver had used some kind of method to hide its smell. It suddenly appeared seven or eight miles away!”

“Get ready! Quick!” Glenn quickly said: “The Black Weaver likes to sneak attack from underground. It’s good that Dean can smell it. Gatt you protect Dean at all times!”

Gatt and the other four reacted immediately. They also thought about the previous team of three hunters were killed by black weaver’s sneak attack. They knew that its abilities were beyond their imagination.

All of them pulled out their weapons in alert.

Glenn stared at the distant mountain lion: “Kill it at all costs! It’s best not to make any mistakes at the last second.”

“Yes.” Gatt whose face slightly changed immediately replied.

At this time, Dudian sensed the black weaver’s smell again. He hurriedly said: “Four o’clock direction. It’s about to appear! About two miles or so”

Glenn’s fingers stroking the black daggers in her legs. She said in a low tone: “Get ready!”

The mountain lion, as if aware of something, stopped and turned around. It roared as if trying to intimidate. Puff! Suddenly a sharp black claw burst out from under the ground and grabbed its body and pulled it.

Thump!

It’s liver, other organs, even the intestine and other blood vessels fell out. A lot of blood washed out.

“ARGHH!” The mountain lion angrily roared and twisted its limbs in struggle. But it was like mountain lion was hedged in a cage so its struggles didn’t amount to anything.

One after another, two or three meters long, sharp thorns burst out of the ground and flew towards the mountain lion’s body.

Whoosh!

A ghost-like shadow went past.

It was Glenn.

In the next moment she was close to the mountain lion’s body. Dudian didn’t see when but she had pulled out her daggers. A

silver reflection flashed in the air and one of the sharp black thorns suddenly was cut. A light green liquid, which seemed like black weaver's blood, gurgled.

Chapter 107 - Hunt

“Squeak–”

A subtle scream echoed out from beneath the soil under the mountain lion’s foot. The thorny spike rapidly shrank and fled into the soil, leaving a few big holes in it.

“Want to run?” Glenn lifted her eyebrows. She didn’t expect that an existence of level twenty-six would not have a little bit of backbone and was ready to escape at the slightest injury. She responded quickly. She bent her body and stabbed the dagger along one of the holes in the soil.

A sudden cry echoed as the dagger had stabbed into something, but soon the sound disappeared.

“Get out!” Glenn screamed in anger. Both of her daggers stabbed into the ground as if they were rotating. They quickly dug a pit.

The other three quickly arrived. One of them was a knight. The knight raised his spear and hit one of the holes. The spear didn’t enter half the way, when it paused as if it seemed to stab something.

The other two moved closer after observing this.

Blue veins bulged from the young knight’s arms as he clenched his teeth. Suddenly he raised the spear and a black thorny spike

was raised along with it.

A cry echoed and with a mighty force, the spear was drawn into the ground.

The knight hesitated.

The swordsman who was beside the knight quickly turned back and screamed: “Hide…”

From the soil behind the knight, a scorpion’s tail like spike bursts out and attacked the knight.

puff!

The spike was broken as a Glenn appeared behind the knight. The daggers in her hands were dyed in green blood. She quickly put the daggers onto the strap on her leggings. Glenn grabbed the spike and began to struggle to try to pull it out.

Cold sweat oozed down his spine as he saw the spike behind him. In anger he hit the spear towards the spikes that were exposed.

Another scream echoed as four or five black thorny spikes shot out of the ground. There was almost no time to respond.

The swordsman youth seemed to have anticipated the black weaver’s attack ahead of time as he was the first to reach it and

parried it with his sword.

However the other youth was not so lucky. His reaction time was a bit slower so one of the black thorny spikes pierced his thigh. The flexible hunting armor didn't give much resistance as it was instantly punctured. The spike went from the front of his thigh and poked out from the back.

The youth screamed bitterly in horror.

He attacked with the knife but the blade was not sharp enough to cut through the black spike as the shiny black shell covering its surface was extremely tough.

The spike swang, pulling the youth's thighs. His facial features were distorted in stress as sweat was pouring out. He attacked with the knife quite a few times, but only a few white marks were left on the spike.

Dudian and Gatt were horrified as they observed the scene from the distance. Glenn seemed to cut the black spikes easily.

Whoosh!

Suddenly, an arrow was shot!

Bang! It hit the black spike but was skidded and deviated from it.

Dudian knew that the previous archer youth made the shot from the rear. However, the black spikes were mainly oval and partially flat. Its surface was smooth and tough.

Dudian secretly thought in his heart that if some hair-sized spikes were placed on tip of the arrow it may play a great role in penetration.

The knight bounced and turned around to help the youth with the knife. He hit its joint and was able to cut it off!

However, the power of the hit by the spear passed through the black spike onto the youth's thigh. The pain of severe tearing made his body tremble. His hands were tightly holding his thigh, squeezing it out. The main reason was to avoid the blood stain his wound.

Glenn's body shook as she was jumping right and left to avoid the black spikes while struggling to pull this part of the black spike.

From time to time, a sharp cry full of pain and anxiety echoed from the soil.

In this breathtaking tug of war, the dying mountain lion roared in anger and rushed towards Glenn.

Glenn and the others were caught in bitter battle with the black weaver and didn't expect to suffer an attack from the mountain lion. The swordsman was quick to swiftly use his sword to hit the

mountain lion.

The mountain lion's head violently collided with the youth's sword. Bang! Although his parry played an effect in stopping the mountain lion's attack but the difference in power between two sides was too large. The swordsman was knocked out.

He hastened to stabilize his body, but didn't have enough time to stand up. Black spikes pierced through from his exposed spine and poked out from his chest!

"No!" The knight screamed in anger. He waved the long spear and rushed past.

Glenn heard the sounds and looked back. Her face changed as her body slightly bent. Subtle changes appeared on her slender legs near her knees. Something seemed to protrude from them as her legs shape changed at the same time. Her strength was enhanced as she made more effort to pull the black spike.

The spike, however, began to faintly tear open the joints.

Squeak...

The ground opened as a black giant suddenly flew out from the land.

Glenn was struggling to pull back the black weaver's body. However, as if the opponent suddenly loosened the rope, she lost

power and involuntarily receded backwards. The spike which she was holding on to was one of the legs of the black giant. Instead of backing up, the black weaver rushed towards her.

The black spikes from the multi-legged black weaver outflanked her and seemed that as if it wanted to embrace Glenn.

Glenn hadn’t expected and taken into account such a situation. Moreover, as she saw the swordsman killed in such a way, her heart was full of anger. She hadn’t expected that the black weaver would be so insidious. It seems that it deliberately waited for this moment.

As she saw the black giant flying towards her, her face changed. She twisted her body in a hurry. Her feet suddenly made a maneuver and her body twisted into an incredible posture to avoid the black weaver.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! At the same time, four continues arrows were shot.

The arrows were shot onto the back of the black weaver. The Huge force pushed its body a little bit and black weaver’s follow-up attack was interrupted.

Chapter 108 - Cage Fight

The group saw the Black Weaver emerging out from the ground. It looked like a giant spider of two meters high and five meters long. There were eight black spike-like legs located on its belly. Each leg had three joints which made the spiky legs very flexible. There were two arms in front which looked like crab claws. It was clear that both arms had terrible destructive power.

The hard black shell covered various parts of Black Weaver's body. There was no hair. Its abdomen was extremely bloated just like a spider belly. At the end of its body, there was a tail which was extremely similar to a scorpion's.

Dudian was panicking in fear just from the brutal appearance of the Black Weaver. He knew that it wasn't going to be a simple prey and couldn't help but worry for Glenn.

"Squeak–"

The Black Weaver cried sharply as it was full of impatience and anger. Four of its legs were broken. One of them was an old injury, however, the rest was caused by Glenn's team. The Black Weaver was supporting its body by four legs while it stared at Glenn.

Glenn was relieved as she saw the Black Weaver coming out to fight them instead of running away. Her blood was boiling as her killing intent rose through the roof. Her arms flashed and the daggers on her leggings were pulled out, like a magnet sucking metal. The action was so fast that normal eyes couldn't detect it.

She stared at the Black Weaver while holding a dagger in each hand. She began to move step by step.

She was good at assassinations. But this time they were not able to pinpoint its position as the Black Weaver was moving underground. That's why she could only seize the role of a warrior and fight it head-on.

Two thin, scarlet eyes stared at Glenn as transparent mucus was dripping from black weaver's chin. In a moment, using its four strong legs it moved towards Glenn once again.

If you compared Glenn and the Black Weaver's body. You can clearly see that the sizes were completely disproportionate. Glenn, without the slightest fear, moved towards black weaver. Her actions were so fast that there were blurry afterimages as she rapidly took off towards black weaver's flank.

The Black Weaver had flopped forward, but its body wasn't able to react in time for Glenn's attack on his side. However, its head suddenly turned left and the white filament was ejected from its mouth.

Glenn's face slightly changed as her body quickly rotate to change the direction of her attack and escape at the same time.

She avoided the transparent filamentous object thrown at her and once again approached the Black Weaver. This time the daggers were aimed at black weaver's sharp hind legs.

Dudian's eyes shone as he watched the duel. Glenn had avoided the previous white silk by a hair's width. Moreover, she was able to adjust her position and counter-attack at the same time.

Puff! The Black Weaver's leg were broken as it fell down.

"Squeak–"

Extremely harsh screams echoed out from the Black Weaver. Its noise was similar to the sound when nails scratched glass.

Actually, the Black Weaver's screams had affected Dudian and he felt a bit dizzy because of the noise.

Glenn was not affected by the sound attack. She once again rushed to the ground as not to give the Black Weaver space to breath.

The Black Weaver didn't try to stand up as its body fell to the ground. Instead, it began to sweep its tail.

Glenn felt the slight wind and moved sideways to avoid the tail. Once again the distance between her and the Black Weaver was opened.

It takes a lot to describe, but everything happened in a matter of two or three seconds.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

The archer was continuously shooting arrows. One arrow hit close to the Black Weaver's eye. If it was half a centimeter upwards the arrow would have pierced its eye.

Half a centimeter of the deviation in archery would have different results as the difference between day and night. Accurate shots are very important in archery.

Dudian and Gatt who were watching from the side felt disappointed when they saw the arrow fail to hit the Black Weaver's eye.

The next moment, the knight and the other youth with the knife together with the Glenn began to disperse into three different directions and surround the Black Weaver.

The black Weaver would constantly issue sharp shouts to intimidate them while lying on the ground and looking around.

The knight and the other knife-wielding youth knew that they didn't have a chance against the Black Weaver. They understood that their fighting abilities were lower than the Black Weaver's so their aim was to support Glenn. The main issue at hand was not to let Glenn get wounded or to fall into a desperate crisis.

Glenn gasped. She was not in a hurry anymore.

However, the Black Weaver was impatient. Its legs were cut off so blood was gradually oozing out. If it continued to wait, it would get weaker as time passed. It looked around waiting for a helpful moment to attack.

For some time everything was still.

It didn’t take long before with an uneasy twist black weaver rushed towards the knight.

The knight’s face changed as he hurried back and waved the spear in warning.

However, as the Black Weaver jumped, its claw-like front arms caught the spear and with an easy pinch destroyed it.

As it attacked the knight, Glenn also found the opportunity to attack it from another direction.

Feeling her approach, the Black Weaver turned around to attack with its claws. It felt like the previous attack on the knight was only a pretext.

The knight’s heart was relieved, but he didn’t give up and hastily waved the broken spear to harass the black weaver. His main aim was to scatter black weaver’s attention so that it couldn’t concentrate.

The shape of Glenn's two calves was curved, unlike a normal human's straight leg. Because of this, her speed had reached an unimaginable speed.

Puff!

As the knight and the other youth were harassing the Black Weaver, she took the chance and attacked. Her sharp daggers pierced the black weaver. She rapidly took them out and stabbed the second time. As a result, capillary and veins in black weaver's body were crushed, resulting in a significant degree of bleeding.

The black weaver screamed and turned to bite, but Glenn had already retreated.

The knight and the other youth, who felt that their harassment had given result, were full of joy as they continued to harass the black weaver.

Glenn looked at the wound on the Black Weaver's neck. If they could drag it long enough, then it would bleed to dead.

Chapter 109

Blood was flowing out from the Black Weaver's neck. It felt a sharp pain and physical exertion. It panicked and wanted to escape.

Glenn and the knight were experienced, veteran hunters. They were not planning to give the Black Weaver any opportunity to rush out of the encirclement. Once the Black Weaver tried to break out of the formation they would force it back.

After repeated conflict, its physical strength was getting weaker. Its actions had become increasingly slow. Even a knight could easily escape its collision.

Glenn also used the opportunity to attack it while the others were harassing it from the other sides.

Glenn used her sharp knives to the Black Weaver's belly.

However, the Black Weaver, which acted slow up to this moment reacted rapidly and spewed white filament back at Glenn.

This wire-like material was thrown very fast. Additionally, Glenn was not expecting the attack. Suddenly, her hands and feet were wrapped with it. At the same time, the white silk seemed to have a strong corrosive effect. Parts of her armor were corroding visible to the eye.

The reversal of the battle had caught all of them in surprise. Glenn quickly rolled back to avoid the possible percussion of the Black Weaver.

However, the Black Weaver seemed to have gone crazy as it continued to pursue her.

Glenn was horrified as she hastened to find a place to hide.

At this time, the knight and the distant archer began to try their best to agitate the Black Weaver so that it would stop attacking Glenn and turn towards them.

Regardless of their attacks, the Black Weaver was focused on catching up with the Glenn. At the moment, Glenn's upper body was covered in white silk. The surface of the armor was slowly corroding.

Glenn didn't have time to clean up the white silk from her upper body as the Black Weaver was about to catch up with her. She could only avoid in panic. He no longer hesitated as he looked at Gatt and said: "We have to help her!"

Gatt was stunned and didn't have enough time to react to what Dudian said. He pulled the bow from his back and ran forward. The other archer was in a position more than two hundred meters away. However, his effective range was 100 meters at best and he was used to stationary targets.

Fortunately, the Black Weaver was so focused on killing Glenn that it had forgotten them and was ignoring the knight and the other knife-wielding hunter. Dudian immediately pulled the bowstring and aimed at the Black Weaver's head as he reached the 100-meter distance.

At this moment, he immediately realized the difference between shooting moving targets and static targets. The Black Weaver's head was constantly shaking. So it was very difficult for him to aim. He felt irritated in his heart. He deeply inhaled as he looked at the Black Weaver. Its head was continually moving up and down but gradually Dudian was able to find a somewhat familiar track. The Black Weaver's body construction made it so that it didn't have much of a range to move its head.

Whoosh!

Dudian loosened his grip on the string and the arrow shot out!

Bang! The arrow hit the hard shell close to the Black Weaver's mouth only leaving a small dent and then falling onto the ground.

Dudian didn't lose his heart, but quickly took another arrow, aimed and shot!

Bang! This shot also hit the hard shell on black weaver's head. It didn't cause the slightest injury neither did it attracted the Black Weaver's attention.

Glenn was forced into a corner by the Black Weaver. Because of the black weaver's large body hitting on to the wall, rubble collapsed all around them, causing great obstacles for it. However, Glenn's feet stumbled and fell down. Her face turned ugly as she didn't have any chance to avoid the Black Weaver.

The Black Weaver screamed and rushed past all obstacles to bite her.

Glenn hastened to hold her daggers. She was staring at the joints on the bottom of the Black Weaver's head. It was going to be a deadly gamble, but it was her only chance of survival. She must fight for her own life!

In this moment of life and death, Dudian narrowed his eyes. His heart was not anxious, but extraordinarily ethereal. Instinctively the black weaver's next move emerged in Dudian's mind. His finger loosened and the arrows shot past.

Puff!

Puff!

Two consecutive hits resulted in blood spattering around.

Dudian quickly checked. The arrows were inserted into the Black Weaver's head. Next, he thought about Glenn's safety. His heart was tightened. He waited for the other two hunters to check the beast. If the Black Weaver had spare capacity to fight, then he was

going to withdraw!

The knight and the other youth carefully went forward. They saw a large amount of blood flowing out of black weaver's head. Suddenly, black weaver's body arched and both of them were frightened. Yet, it was Glenn, whose body was covered in black weaver's blood that crawled out from under it. Her body armor was stained with blood and the rancid smell.

Seeing this, everyone was relieved.

Glenn cut off the white silk from her body. Her body was dyed with blood, but there was an unprecedented happy smile on her face. It was because of the blood bath, she would be able to evolve her magic marks.

Dudian looked at her bloody looking body. He suddenly thought that Glenn should have absorbed the parasitic magic worms through the blood of the Black Weaver. The new magic worms would occupy the previous position of the magic marks and will replace the previous magic mark's ability!

During hunter training, Dudian also learned that everyone can only master one magic mark!

In case, more than one parasitic worm reached the same body, they will try to kill each other. One mountain could not contain two tigers. Only one parasitic worm could stay alive and the others had to die. There was a small chance that all the parasitic worms would evenly match and die together!

Moreover, once the parasitic worm enters the body, it soon dies, turning into a magic mark. If there is another new parasitic worm that enters the body, it will eat up the remains of the previous dead worms. It will die again to give a birth to a new magic mark.

This made Dudian very curious. Why would parasitic worms survive in beast's body, but die after entering humans? Yet, he didn't deeply think about the problem. Most probably it is one of the puzzles that Holy Church and major consortiums were eager to solve.

"At last," said the knight. He poked at the Black Weaver's body and was relieved to see it dead. He said to Glenn: "Are you all right?"

Glenn smiled: "Never been so good!" she thought of something and came towards the archer who was in the distance: "I have to thank you for the arrows. It shot into its eyes and only then its body deviated creating a chance for me to kill it."

The archer was embarrassed: "It wasn't me who shot the arrow, but Dean". Before, he would call Dudian simply 'little guy'. But after observing his calm actions, the archer didn't want to underestimate him anymore.

"Dean?" Glenn was surprised, turned around and looked at the Dudian and Gatt. She saw Dudian with a bow in his hand as he dawned over. She remembered that Dudian was also an archer. She couldn't help but exclaimed: "You have been promoted from

scavenger to a hunter. Yet, your shooting style can be compared to a professional regular archer!”

Dudian knew that the last shot was a result of his luck. There was a big gap between him and the archer youth. : “Just luck. It’s good enough that I was able to help you.”

Glenn laughed. “You’ve helped me a lot. This time I really want to thank you.”

Dudian smiled but didn’t reply. He was too modest which Dudian himself felt rather hypocritical.

Chapter 110

“Did you absorb. its magic marks?” Gatt rushed over. He checked the blood covering Glenn’s body as he asked the question.

In addition to Dudian, the eyes of the rest of the team were on Glenn. They enviously looked at her. Although they knew this thing would not fall into their hands were excited at the scene.

“Well,” Glenn nodded slightly: “This time I have to thank all of you for your help. I got my hands on what I wanted.”

All of them acted polite and modest. They were happy in their hearts. It has to be noted that if a senior hunter favored them, then their future in the consortium would be bright.

Dudian looked at the dead swordsman: “Are we going to take back his corpse or we are going to bury it on spot?”

Glenn looked back and sighed: “His body has been infected, it’s only in a ‘suspended animation’ state. Evil is going to consume his soul and once again he will rise as an undead. We will incinerate him.”

The other hunters’ face expressions turned miserable as they looked down at dead swordsman. This was the only discomfort of this trip.

“I will take back his sword!” The knight reached near the corps

and picked the sword. He said in a low tone: “We have been on the same team for last three tasks. I didn’t expect this one will separate us forever.”

Gatt came forward and patted his shoulder and stayed silent without uttering a word.

It’s very difficult to understand the meaning of life. For ordinary people, it was very common to take life and death as a normal occurrence. But for hunters, it was something that they had to be accustomed to as the time passed.

The knife-wielding youth and the knight went around to find combustible materials. They piled paper, wood, and clothing on the dead swordsman’s body. With the help of a fire sickle, they ignited the fire to incinerate the swordsman. Crimson red flames were reflected on everyone’s face as they watched his body burn to ashes.

As the fire extinguished the only thing left of him were ashes and leftover bones. Glenn approached and buried them on the spot.

After dealing with the swordsman’s body Glenn stood up and walked to the Black Weaver’s body.

The knife-wielding hunter came forward to help Glenn. Both of them were skilled at dissecting beasts. The knives sliced through the mucosa and the hard shell of the beast was stripped off.

It was a rare opportunity to learn the anatomy of the beast so Dudian came up to watch them. Although he had learned the ways to dissect some common beasts while in the scavenger training camp, but a complete dissection of various useful parts of a monster's body with such a complex structure was a very difficult task.

Blood began to flow everywhere and a pungent smell floated around as the various internal organs rolled down to the ground.

Dudian quietly watched.

It didn't take long before hard shell, head, spiked limbs and the other parts of the giant Back Weaver were dismembered respectively. Dudian saw Glenn cut open the Black Weaver's head. She pulled out white soft cotton from the groove in the jaw bone. From the expression on her face, it should be some valuable and useful material.

"Strange. It turned empty out in here! Did it.?" The knife-wielding hunter's face turned ugly as he cut open the black weaver's belly.

Glenn looked past as she heard the words. There was nothing in the stomach in addition to internal organs. The place behind the stomach was empty, flat.

Dudian was puzzled as he heard the hunter talk but from their dialogue, he knew that they were talking about the ovary.

“Did it spawn before coming to hunt?” Glenn was speculating but shook her head and continued: “No that’s impossible. The young eggs have a low survival rate. It would be very difficult for them to hatch out. Even if they hatch out, parasitic worms would be very weak and can’t form the magic marks.”

The knife-wielding youth was disappointed and continued to collect the other useful parts.

Dudian saw that he took out a mass of yellow liquid from its stomach. He found it odd and asked: “What is this?”

“It’s fat.” The knife-wielding hunter looked at Dudian. He was more modest towards Dudian as he thought of Glenn’s praise for Dudian: “It’s excellent material to fuel the oil lamp. Nobility love to use it.”

Dudian dawned over to check it closely as he didn’t expect that people were willing to use stuff like this to fuel lamps.

It didn’t take long before the giant Black Weaver’s body was completely decomposed. All of its valuable parts were neatly piled together while the rest of its internal organs, flesh and blood were scattered over the ground. It was done so to prevent other monsters to come to eat the leftovers. Glenn used the fire to incinerate the scattered worthless parts.

The air was filled with a strange pungent smell. It felt like the meat soaked in blood was getting cooked.

Dudian covered his nose. But he suddenly smelled the Black Weaver's odor. He concentrated more and more on this odor as it seemed to be coming out from the soil.

Dudian was surprised as he sniffed more to detect the location where the odor was spreading from. Few meters away from the initial place where they had killed the black weaver, there was flat but fluffy soil. He remembers the conversation between the knife-wielding youth and Glenn: "Is that.?"

At this time, the archer youth suddenly said: "As the hunt for Black Weaver is over, I wan to go to other areas and check if I can find something rare. After all this adrenaline, I'm feeling a bit itchy. Maybe I'll be a bit lucky? Ha? "

Glenn was filling everything in a large storage bag as she looked up at him and said: "It's alright but I have just absorbed the magic marks. I'm feeling a bit weakened and will have to return to the giant wall to rest. If you want to, you can go, but I have to remind you that it is going to be dangerous!"

"It's alright. I heard that there are teams in area no 6 trying to complete some tasks. I will join and co-operate with them while trying my luck!" The archer youth laughed.

Glenn thought about and said: "Alright, whatever you say."

Dudian thought of his own storage in area no 9 and immediately said: "I want to go to."

“You?” Glenn glanced at him and frowned: “Area no 6 is too dangerous. There will be many high-level beasts there so its not alright for you to leave.”

“I will go to the other areas,” said Dudian, “Undead may not amount to anything in their perspective, but I’ve been short on money lately.”

Glenn thought for a moment: “It’s ok. But the cold crystals are not much of a value. If you are that anxious for money I can lend you a bit as long as it’s not more than 100,000 gold coins.”

Dudian was staggered. One hundred thousand gold coins? It was an astronomical number. It was enough to buy a small town in the residential district!

“No, I don’t need that much. Moreover, I want to earn it myself.” Dudian replied.

Glenn saw his determination: “Alright, I’ll escort you back.”

Dudian nodded as he didn’t dare to run around alone in this area.

Chapter 111 - Eggs Of The Black Weaver

Soon, Glenn had loaded all the parts of the Black Weaver into a large storage bag. It was enormously big in comparison to her small thin body but she easily picked it up.

Dudian hesitated for a moment when he saw Glenn ready to leave. Nevertheless, he said: “There seems to be something there.” He pointed towards the ground. Although it was speculation of his own but taking into account his ability he decided to go forward with it.

“Oh?” Glenn looked surprised: “You smell something!?”

“In the soil,” replied Dudian.

Everyone had full confidence in Dudian’s sense of smell after the previous accurate tracking. All of them took out their weapons so that they would be ready in case of emergency. Glenn winked at the knight and the latter as if understanding her message went over to the place where Dudian had pointed to.

He began to poke the ground. The team members saw round white objects in the sand after the knight dug about thirty centimeters pit. Glenn and the others’ eyes lit up: “The Black Weaver’s eggs!”

There were eight Black Weaver eggs found inside the pit.

Dudian saw that his guess was correct. He was both happy and sorry in his heart. Unfortunately, his strength was too weak or he could leave the team and sneak back to take them. However, this area was too dangerous and even the intermediate silver hunters were afraid to roam alone. Although he has a super sense of smell and can detect the monsters in advance but there were beasts who had means to hide their own smell and quietly reach their prey. This kind of monsters wasn't uncommon in this area.

He had reconsidered this option because he didn't want to take the risk. After all, God may not always bless him with luck.

Glenn looked at the black weaver's eggs in her hands.: "There are eight of them so there is an opportunity for one of them to survive. I can absorb this later to enhance the rate and strength of my magic marks."

The knight was also quite happy.

However, Dudian suddenly noticed the archer that was standing next to him. Although he was laughing and congratulating Glenn but his expression was blunt. Moreover, because of the gap in height between both of them, Dudian could easily see that his palm was clenched into a fist. His thumb slid because of the force. Dudian suddenly understood as he wryly smiled in his heart.

"When the Black Weaver was fighting and dealing with us didn't have the opportunity to secretly hide its eggs," Glenn recalled the previous battle. She sighed as she looks at Dudian: "Fortunately you are careful in your observation or else we would miss the eight immature eggs."

Dudian smiled but stayed silent. He was helplessly thinking that though it was unintentional. He seems to have offended the archer youth. The latter had the ultrasonic hearing ability so he should also hear the sound emitted from the buried Black Weaver's eggs. That was why he proposed to go to area no 6 for a hunt. Obviously, it was an excuse and he was clearly waiting for the team to leave. He later would secretly go back to take the eggs.

But the archer's plan was unsuccessful and exposed in front of Glenn and the other knight. After all, they were not stupid and could understand everything but didn't expose their anger.

"I have gained another enemy ... ..." Dudian looked up at the young archer's eyes. He was surprised to see that he was still smiling. But Dudian still felt that he had to remember the archer's appearance. In case he meets him outside the giant wall in the future, he would have to stay as far as possible from him. Or else he would be a target of secret revenge and will be trapped in a situation beyond redemption.

"It's all Dean's credit that we could accidentally find the eight immature eggs." Glenn looked at Dudian for a moment and said: "In accordance with the consortium's prices this rare monster egg costs 1000 gold coins. However, everything depends on the survival rate, so the value can turn upside down."

"I'll give them to the consortium to allocate the prices. But the total price of four of the eggs would belong to Dean as he was the one to find it. It would be four thousand gold coins. The rest of you will get one thousand gold coins compensation each. As the eggs

are immature, I'll give them to the consortium to help me cultivate them."

Glenn smiled as she saw that neither the knight nor the others objected her distribution.

Dudian was surprised as he saw Glenn give him a lot of shares while distribution. He didn't expect half of the value to be distributed to him. Moreover, he would gain her good will.

"We got to thank Dean's nose this time!" the knight laughed out loud.

Gatt also smiled and patted Dudian's shoulder, said: "Good one."

Dudian smiled as he exchanged polite words with the others.

Glenn puts away the eight young eggs and the crowd retreated along the same route.

Along the way, Dudian's sense of smell and the archer's ultrasonic hearing helped them to avoid many monsters. However, they still encountered a few beasts. Moreover, one of them had ambushed them and attacked, but fortunately, because of Glenn's fast and quick response, it was killed.

Through the battles, Dudian gradually came to understand Glenn's battle strength. She could easily cope with the monsters up to level 20. However, she was having problems with monsters

above the level 20. For example, if she alone encountered the Black Weaver, which was a level 26 beast, her life would be threatened.

After all, without Dudian's advance notice of the Black Weaver's position, it would have quietly lurker over to attack and Glenn wouldn't be able to detect its presence in time.

Glenn escorted the team out of the area no 1. They came to the forest with giant trees next to the highway. They continued to escort Dudian until the area no 7 which was swept clean.

Area no. 7 has already being swept clean by the hunters while Dudian was still a scavenger. Now it has been cleaned through. Even if there are occasional monsters left, but with his strength, he could avoid and escape them. Unless, if his luck was bad he could meet the most dangerous beasts of area no 7.

As they entered area no 7, Glenn and the others left leaving Dudian alone.

Dudian had seen Scott's map and remember pieces and bits, but he still asked Glenn about the routes. Area no. 7 was not far away from area no. 9. He was heavily armed so he went hunting in area no 7 before leaving for area no 9.

In area no 7, Dudian saw lots of undead roaming around. Glenn and the others informed him that the undead was the last to be cleaned out. Unless they are in the hunter team's way they will be killed. Generally, hunters would not take the initiative to look for them.

Each time a new area is cleaned, the first to search and killed would be monsters with parasitic worms. Because they would be the most dangerous beasts of the area.

Beasts with parasitic monsters would be much more powerful than ordinary monsters.

If they hunted undead then some monster would flee to other areas. Especially as they could go to areas under the other consortiums command. It was equivalent to donating the ‘cream’ of the crop to the other consortiums.

Dudian didn’t panic when he saw the aimlessly roaming undead. He was full of joy. He found a building and reached to the higher ground. He began to throw stones to make vibrations and attract the undead from other areas.

Chapter 112 - Encountering The Enemy

Hunting level four ordinary was a primary hunter's favorite compared to hunting other beasts. Undead chase on instinct. It's enough to use simple traps to kill them, unlike other monsters which have cultivated a beast-like sense of survival. Even the 'bone rats' knew how to avoid a dangerous situation and were pretty difficult to capture using traps.

However, it had to be noted that ordinary undead would evolve into a skeleton after going through another mutation. After heavily consuming they would reach a new level, all of its capabilities would leap up and upgrade. It would reach a level where it could directly fight head on with an intermediate silver ranked hunter. Moreover, it would have a sense of consciousness and would not be easily killed by external forces.

Dudian had previously seen a skeleton's corpse in area no. 1. He could easily distinguish this one as ordinary undead and that's why he dared to hunt them using traps.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Arrows flew out. His effective range was 100 meters and was the height of a twenty-four-story building. Normally, the normal height of the majority of residential buildings was around four to five meters between each floor.

Dudian was standing on the twentieth floor right now, about 80 meters from the ground level. The roof was dangerous to stand on

as the concrete was crumbling because of serious corrosion. He used stones to attract the undead into his effective range.

Arrows accurately hit the undead. He was able to capture their movement trajectories efficiently after the high-intense experience with the Black Weaver. Dudian felt a lot looser shooting the undead in comparison to the Black Weaver. It was much easier to predict their actions.

The arrow would hit the undead on its head and nail it to the ground.

Occasionally he would hit the undead's shoulder or the arrow would pierce its face. The force of a shot would be enough to stumble its body onto the ground, but an undead would feel no pain. So most of the time they would stand up to run towards the direction of the sound.

Dudian would continuously pull the string and shoot the arrows.

The arrows in Dudian's quiver ran out as he went to pull another arrow from the back and couldn't grab onto any. He had a wry smile on his face because of joy. He went to the other side of the building and began to throw stones to attract the gathered undead to another location.

The stones fell into the neighboring streets. The sound of falling stones echoed out loudly inside the silent ruins. An undead's ear was particularly keen so they immediately gathered to move towards the source of the sound.

Dudian quickly went down the stairs while he smeared undead powder all over his body. He reached the ground floor and went over to the pile of corpses. He cut their heads or fracture their necks. He took seven or eight heads and carried them back into the building. He squatted in a corner and began to cut open the heads. He found cold crystals inside them and began to collect them.

As he finished with this batch, Dudian ran outside to collect more heads and brought them back to dissect them in the corner.

In about three rounds, he had collected all the heads of the undead and the arrows that he had shot before were recovered too.

However, after this, he didn't continue to hunt but went back to the roof of the building. He took out one of the cold crystals and sliced his finger. The hot blood dropped onto the crystal. It seemed like ice had encountered the hot water. The location where the blood dropped, the crystal began to melt, turning into a transparent silver liquid.

Dudian continued to observe.

He stopped dropping blood to check how the cold crystal would end up. Over the time, the temperature of the blood cooled down however it didn't freeze back into the cold crystal.

Dudian was relieved, but he thought that just this one experiment was not enough. He returned downstairs and collected the blood of undead. The blood of an undead couldn't melt the

crystal. Instead, when it dropped on to the crystal it was frozen immediately, changing to a shape of a dark red tear.

Dudian was assured after this: “After absorbing the magic marks my blood had changed. Cold crystals can’t erode my blood. It means that I should be able to directly absorb the cold crystals.”

He clutched the cold crystal as he wanted to directly absorb it. However, there still was a trace of hesitation in his heart. Although he knew that according to his speculation his body would be able to absorb it, but as a human, he was afraid of the unknown. Moreover, he knew that one experiment was not enough to prove that the results would be stable. He was uncertain about the side effects that could pop up after a long period of absorption of cold crystals.

He thought more about the topic and eventually gave up on the impulse to immediately absorb the cold crystal. After all, he only has one life so he had to be cautious not to lose it.

He put back the cold crystal into the bag and grabbed his bow and arrows to continue to hunt the undead. He planned to continue with the experiments and slowly study the secret of cold crystals, to be able to maximize its effects.

Time was passing fast.

In a blink of an eye, two days went by. Dudian had hunted down close to 600 undead in area no. 7. It was equal to 600 gold coins. Occasionally he met some large monster which he had seen before.

He couldn’t identify their level so he bypassed and avoided them.

“I will turn half of these cold crystals in while I’ll keep the rest. Maybe in the future, I’m going to build a secret base outside the giant wall?” Dudian made plans while checking around the surroundings.

suddenly–

A familiar smell drifted into his nose.

A woman’s figure emerged in his mind.: “It’s her!”, Dudian whispered.

He would never forget this smell which belonged to ‘bloody swordsman’ Linda.

“Thirty miles or so… Is she hunting in area no. 7?” Dudian’s eyes flashed. He thought that area no. 7 was the focus of the consortium. They wanted to thoroughly clean this area. So it was not surprising that Linda ended up in here.

The first time both of them had met in the scavenger headquarters and he had stayed alive and narrowly escaped death. The idea of killing her flashed in his mind, but at the same time, a voice secretly spoke: “It was only a verbal conflict which would not rise to the point of killing each other. A long time had gone by, perhaps she has forgotten you as meets lots of people daily.”

However, another idea emerged: “We are outside the giant wall. Even if you kill her, no one will know. The law of the wall does not protect anyone here. Even if people found out, there would be no way to convict you. Kill her! Kill her so you want to have unnecessary trouble in the future. Although she is a silver level hunter, but how can she protect herself if she can’t the enemy!”

“Murder… It’s too harsh.”

“Kill! Kill! No one will see.”

The two different voices echoed out in his mind as Dudian pondered over the matter. At first, he was not aware, but later he had learned the identity of the hunter he had killed. He was called Brian and was THE woman’s younger brother. He put away the hesitation in his heart as he spoke in determined tone: “She won’t let it go! I’m in my training period so there is no way for her to deal with me. However, after the training period, she will try everything within her capabilities to kill me!”

“She has to die!”

The softness in his heart faded away as he looked at the scratches on his right hand.

He hesitated for a moment, but later on, he took out the bag of cold crystal from his backpack. He pierced his hand and clung the cold crystal.

Coldness entered his body through his palm and moved along his arm.

“Even if I ambushed her, it would be very difficult to kill with my current strength. I hope my speculation about cold crystal is right. Nevertheless, I can’t absorb too much.” Dudian’s lips moved as he whispered. The feeling he got from the cold crystal gradually disappeared, but his nervousness in his heart increased.

After a moment, he took out the second cold crystal and continued to absorb it. He stopped as he felt discomfort in his body.

“It is a heaven sent opportunity and my only chance to fight back!” Dudian thought: “After the training is over, I’ll have to carry out the mission. She will be the one hunting while I will be the prey. If I can seize this opportunity.” He prayed in his heart. He prayed for success. It was going to be a risky move. But if he didn’t grasp onto it, then the situation will be much more difficult after he finishes the training.

It was best to firmly grasp the opportunity. Otherwise, he would have to passively fight back against Linda’s attacks in the future.

Chapter 113 - Ambush

Area no. 7. A ruined street.

More than twenty corpses of undead were lying on the ground. Their heads were decapitated and bodies exuded stench. Smell originating from the corpses had attracted many bloodthirsty flies. They were fluttering and hovering around the corpses taking bites once in a while.

A few streets away from them, five figures were sitting next to a stone pile. They had dry food in their hands as they were enjoying day's lunch. No smell radiating from the surrounding could interfere with their meal.

"If we can hunt down the clawed dino-lizard, then we will be able to complete the task." Linda was scanning the map while eating the dry food. She was thinking about the favorite habitat of the monster.

Gale who was sitting next to her laughed: "If we count our loot from area no. 3 then with the completion of this task. Captain you will accumulate enough points to buy a drop of 'Angel's blood' so that your magic mark can go through a metamorphosis again. You are going to be the third senior hunter in our consortium."

"It all depends on luck. " Linda looked indifferent and unexcited.

"I believe that you will certainly be successful." Dark skinned girl complimented Linda.

The others also quickly said encouraging words as they had confidence in Linda.

“For the time being, Gale get ready. When we find the monster we will act according to the previous plan. You will pretend to be injured while I will summon people from the ‘black pavilion’ and say that we have encountered a rare beast. They will have to send someone with extraordinary tracking ability. ” Her face was cold as Linda closed the map.

Gale smiled: “No need to pretend. We will make a real injury instead. ”

“Will the consortium approve to send the kid out?” The dark skinned girl asked.

Linda indifferently smiled: “Of course! You do not understand the ways of the consortium. Now we have a great opportunity at hand. Almost all the hunters with tracking ability are either out in the wilderness or injured. The kid is a newcomer, however, he has a rare magic mark. But in the end, he doesn’t have ‘light physique’. No matter how much potential he has, at the end, he will die. That’s why the consortium is too lazy to spend resources on him. Why do you think they didn’t send him to hunter school?”

The dark skinned girl nodded in approval: “This way the consortium will transfer the little devil into our team. We can slowly torture him and the abandon his corpse somewhere. We will have to destroy the tracks that could lead to him. We just have

to bring back a magic mark taken from a rare monster and say that he died while hunting it. Even if the consortium will doubt us, there will be nothing to say."

The others smiled.

Linda's eyes squinted as she daydreamed. She has been concerned about Dudian for a long time and she couldn't wait to get her hands on him.

"Even if we don't leave any clues and no one can trace it back to us. I'm sure you know how the consortium handles such matters like infighting. We will be gradually marginalized. Moreover, they will send us to complete extremely dangerous tasks. " Gale had calm a personality so he analyzed everything thoroughly, including the smallest details.

"Of course," Linda lightly said.

They ate and chat. Soon all of them were full so Linda stood up and patted the dust off her body: "We have to look around the Red Lake area. We may find traces of the beast."

"Ok." All of them nodded in approval.

Linda lead them with the help of the map to the Red Lake.

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Dudian's body didn't feel any discomfort, instead, his visual and hearing have been enhanced. Especially his sense of smell. Previously he could sense Linda's approximate position. However, at the moment, he was able to narrow down the exact position about a kilometer away from her.

While quietly tracking the smell he had smeared a new layer of undead powder on his body to ensure that the others won't be aware of his existence.

Dudian had stopped after absorbing about a hundred crystals. His body temperature seemed to rise a lot so he immediately stopped and didn't continue to absorb the cold crystals. He was scared that he will end up as an addict and will crave for more cold crystals. Moreover, each of these crystals was the size of a table tennis ball. Even if they melted into liquid form their capacity was about several bottles which were not a small amount.

Even drinking a lot of water will make people uncomfortable lest the cold crystals.

Dudian felt that his body temperature gradually returned to normal after he stopped absorbing the cold crystals. He was relieved. Moreover, he found a place and hid the remaining cold crystals. He took out his bow and arrows and chased after the smell of Linda.

The distance between the two was getting closer. It seemed Linda was hunting along the way.

“In case I ambushed them, I have to shoot her from close range. But still, the hunters next to her will find and kill me.” Dudian was brainstorming ideas while trying to catch up with them. “I can’t rely solely on bows and arrows. Making traps is also required equipment. Only scouts are provided with the tools to make them. However, I can produce some rough traps. Although the scout would not fall for it but the rest. . ”

Many thoughts flashed through his head.

Some time passed.

In a blink of an eye, two days passed.

It was rainy season. The clouds had marginalized the sky making the light dimmer. Ruins of the city were desolate of life.

A heavy rain had just washed the streets. The smell of decayed was floating in the air.

Around Red Lake.

The weeds grew densely along the vast edge of the lake. The vessels used for sightseeing had long been rotten. Even the ships have long been wiped out leaving only decayed empty metal frames. The waves were gently shaking them. If they hit a bit harder most would be destroyed.

Linda squatted near a grass edge. She was observing the nearby surrounding. They have been here for two days. It was not long for a camp but not short either.

“The footprints were left many days ago. It should have gone far from here.” The dark skinned girl spoke as she had lost patience.

Linda replied: “Since it went through here, it will certainly come back.”

They could do nothing but hold their breath and wait. Suddenly, Gale sniffed and whispered. : “We are being tracked.”

“Where?” Killing intent flashed past in Linda’s eyes: “A beast? Another team?”

“No, only one person.” Gale frowned.

Chapter 114 - Bloody Hunter

“Only a single person?” The other one was puzzled.

Gale slightly nodded: “He should be smearing the undead powder to cover up his smell. For the past two days, I’ve been smelling an undead chasing behind us. I thought that it was a wandering aimlessly. Whoever it is he is walking straight behind us. Moreover, when the rain started he suddenly stopped. If it was really an undead, it would not take the rain into account. It means that the person chasing us was worried that the undead powder would be washed away by the rain so he was forced to stop.”.

Linda said: “Listening to you talking, I think this person is taking a very tender approach while tracking. It’s naive to think that powder alone can hide his trace. If he is chasing us in a straight line, then the tracking method he uses is judged by the smell. He knows how to cover up his smell by using the powder, but he doesn’t know that when tracking others he will be easily exposed. He also doesn’t know that we have Gale with us.”

The dark skinned girl said: “If he doesn’t have information about our team and still dares to follow us then isn’t he from another consortium? ”

Linda’s face was cold as she spoke: “Maybe it’s a rookie who strayed into our region. He isn’t aware that he is found. However, there is no reason to kill him. ”

“Instead of killing, it is better that we catch him and give him to

the consortium. It will be considered as a meritorious service." Gale said.

Linda got up and said: "Go and check. If he is pleasing to the eye, then leave him alone or else kill!"

"That clawed Dino-lizard.."

"Nick and Reid, you two stay here. If the beast comes up. Inform us using the smoke signals."

Linda gave instructions to the two and left with Gale and the dark skinned girl. They followed in the direction that Gale pointed to.

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A desolate street.

After heavy rains, the broken streets were covered with mud and potholes. Moss and vines were soaked in rainwater.

Dudian was in looking at the sky. Heavy dark clouds were coming towards his location, indicating that soon a heavy rain would pour.

He took out the arrows from his quiver and began to wipe them one by one.

Afterward, he took out some dry food and began to eat it slowly so that he could restore his body heat. The early rain season was not suitable for hunting. As the temperature was very cold, many large monsters still perched on their nests and slept. Only the most bloodthirsty ones would be lurking around looking for prey.

After eating, he picked up his bowl and filled it with rancid blood. He had found quite a few bowls in a house. Time and radiation had destroyed most of the things constructed by humans. However, there were still some think that were intact. All the bowls in front of him were filled with blood. From time to time small red blood, maggots would flutter around bowls to eat the blood.

Dudian stained the tips of his arrows with blood and let them dry.

Soon, all of his blood painted arrows were ready and put into his quiver.

“They are coming..” Dudian looked at the clouds in the sky. A faint thunder sound that he had seemed to resonate with his heart beat. His eyes squinted, looking at a distance on the street.

Three figures quickly approached and none of them leaked any odor. They felt like three silent stones.

Dudian put an arrow on his bow and pulled the string while he prostrated himself onto the ground. He was tightly staring at the head of the beautiful woman’s figure. He had locked onto her head,

waiting for her to enter into his range.

“Three hundred meters away..” Gale whispered quickly: “Nine o’clock. In front. He should be on alert after our odors disappeared. Now he is motionless. I think there might be an ambush.”

“Quickly kill him!” Linda said coldly.

“It’s a trap.” Gale said: “He probably is a scout or an archer. We have entered into his range. If he is an archer then the best chance for him to shoot us will be when we enter the high-rise, so be careful. If he is a scout, the trap is likely buried inside the high-rise.”

The dark skinned girl glanced around: “There should be no traps on the ground level. If there are then the traps are inside the high-rise.” She was a scout and had learned scouting skills such as pathfinding and making traps. Especially, making traps. She had absolute confidence as she spoke. Unless the other side was a mid-level scout and had learned more than she has. But that was impossible since the other side had been exposed.

“I will go in while you two go from left and right sides of the wall. ” Linda quickly made a choice. She knew that they were giving the other side more time to prepare as they dragged acting. She was going to catch the other side in surprise as he wouldn’t expect their arrival!

“Yes!” The two immediately said and went in separately.

Linda pulled her sword with one hand and deeply looked at the building. With a sudden forceful push, she rushed inside at full speed. She had her sword in front of her chest as she was confident that she would be able to stop any arrows that would come from the front.

A direct confrontation!

This was her fighting style. Although she was a woman, but her temper was fiercer than that of a male.

She knew that she was exposed to the enemy's line of sight. She quickly calculated the distance in her heart.

Two hundred and fifty meters, two hundred meters, one hundred and eighty meters...

When she was about one hundred and twenty meters from the high-rise, she still didn't see any kind of movement on top of the building. She couldn't help but wonder: "Is he resting on the roof? Didn't he realize that we are counterattacking?"

In addition to her doubts, there was a bit of inexplicable uneasiness in her heart. She was at a 100 meters distance from the high-rise, so the arrow had to be shot by now. The distance was closed to sixty meters.

Is the other side not an archer?

She felt perplexed as there was the faint feeling of anxiety in her heart. But she had reached the bottom of the building. She briefly hesitated, but still, her fingers clung to the wall and she began to climb up. The wall was corroded so couldn't carry her weight. That's why she relied on her speed to crawl up rapidly.

As she was about to climb onto the third floor, she felt a chill from the backside.

Her heart was aghast as she turned around.

Whoosh!

An arrow was shot as she turned. Puff! The sharp arrow pierced through her cheek into her mouth. A sudden pain hit her brain making her scream out loud!

Chapter 115 - It's Him!

Enemies from behind!

As she faced the pain, Linda’s instincts took over. She quickly thought of a number of responses as she held back her meaningless screaming. Linda quickly used one of her hands to raise her swords and tried to block the upcoming arrows while she released her other hand from the wall. Her body fell down.

Because of her body strength and skills, falling from a three-story building was not going to injure her.

After landing, Linda looked at the direction where the previous arrow was shot from. On the other side of the street, there was a building. But it was not as high as the building that she was climbing. Because of the height of the high-rise they had come to the initial decision that the enemy would have chosen the tallest building. Never would they imagine that it was part of an ambush.

Although she was in a hurry and took a glance for a moment. She noticed that the arrows originated from the roof of the building.

The enemy was on the roof!

She looked up to see a small figure on the roof near a rundown wall. He was holding a bow and arrow. Once again, he aimed and shot at her!

“How come. It’s him!”

Linda saw the face of the enemy. Her heart was horrified even forgetting the pain coming off from her face.

She would not think the rookie they were planning to get rid of would appear in front of her at this moment. Moreover, even in her wildest dreams, she wouldn’t think that the same rookie would come out to track, ambush and even almost kill her.

Whoosh!

The sound of an arrow awakened her as Linda used her sword to block it.

At this moment, her intermediate hunter’s physique and superb swordsmanship were manifested. Although Linda’s reaction was only half a beat late. It is still more than enough to hit and cut off the arrow. The broken arrow hit by the sword fell to the ground.

At this time, Dudian’s hand went backward to take out the third arrow and shot it as if not aiming at a target at all.

However, the speed of continuous shots caused her heart to shudder and her face turned ugly. Standing there was doing nothing but being a target for him to shoot at. She quickly turned around and hid inside a building.

Unexpectedly, as Linda entered the building her feet got caught

by something.

Ta! She reacted as if she was a goddess of lightning as her heel moved away from the area. However, when the soles of her feet were about to retract a rope was ejected from the collapsed area. It covered and trapped her feet. Moreover, it was a slip knot so as she pulled hard the tighter it got.

At the same time, a sudden force was ejected from the other end of the rope.

The next moment, Linda felt weightlessness as her body was pulled up. Her legs were pulled straight up, while her head was looking down to the ground.

She quickly used her sword to cut the rope and release her feet without panicking.

Only, when she cut off the rope the floor above also collapsed down.

She rolled away in a hurry to escape the upcoming concrete. Bang! She heard the stones hit her previous position. Dust was raised. She couldn't help but turn pale. However, after a moment Linda's anger was pushed to the limits. As a dignified intermediate silver level hunter, she almost died at the hands of a newcomer. If she hadn't cut off the rope in time, the stone rubble in front of her would have seriously injured her.

Additionally, there was an arrow stuck in her face. If a stone had hit the arrow, the pain coming from the wound would have reached the sky.

Dudian frowned when he saw the trap fail. There was a trace of fear and helplessness as he observed the physical powers and combat experience of an intermediate level hunter.

Linda had covered her face. Her chest slightly went up and down because of adrenaline. She stared at the high-rise where Dudian was located. However, she didn't dare to go out. Neither did she plan to go inside the current building as she was seriously injured at the moment and was scared of unexpected attacks. Shadows of fear had covered her heart so she decided to stand on the spot for the moment.

She believed that Gale and the dark skinned girl should have been aware of the situation. The other side was only one person while she had Gale and the other hunter with her so they would capture Dudian at the end!

However, Linda clearly saw that Dudian put away the bow, turned. and ran.

Run?

Do you want to run, just like that?

Your traps are useless and have run out of tricks. Now you want

to run?

Her body trembled because of anger. Face muscles twitched and affected the arrow wound. The pain that made her crazy was hitting her mind. But she resisted the impulse to catch up with Dudian. The first reason was that there was a trace of a worry at the bottom of her heart that it is another trap.

The second reason was that her injuries were too heavy at the moment. If she didn't pull out the arrow, then she had to use one of her hands to keep the arrow straight. Or else when running or moving the arrow would keep shaking and the pain that would result would be unbearable.

Moreover, she knew that the arrow was smeared and dyed with the poisoned blood. The familiar rancid smell belonged to an undead's blood.

She clenched her teeth as she pulled out the arrow bit by bit. The barb on the tip of the arrow took out flesh from her mouth as she pulled it out. Tears flowed down immediately. Although during her hunting career it was not a fatal injury that she had received, but definitely the most painful injury!

After the final pull, she took out the arrow and quickly grabbed the first aid kit from her backpack. She bandaged her face to avoid hidden dangers and other infections.

Gale and the dark skinned girl were surprised as they saw the serious face injury of Linda.

“Chase him! Quick! We must not let him run!” Linda said vaguely using the other side of her mouth.

Gale and the dark skinned girl took a quick glance as they rapidly went over to the building where Dudian was in.

“Damn it! He had applied the blood of rat to cover his smell!” Gale said as they were going into the building. But he stopped her from entering the high-rise and went around.

ëBone rats’ were very common small monsters and could be seen everywhere. But he would never think that the other side would use its blood to hide!

They had tracked the false target from the beginning! Most probably the purpose of the other side from the beginning was to make them feel traced!

Gale’s heart got colder as he thought of details.

As they were around the corner, Gale’s quickly said: “He’s fast. He ran away!”

The dark skinned girl wasn’t thinking about the meaning of his speech because she was vigilantly looking around so that they wouldn’t be ambushed by another trap.

“Damn it!”

Gale couldn’t help but curse after the chase. He said to the dark skinned girl: “He must have confined three ‘bone rats’ in advance somewhere around here. Now he has released all of them. His smell is mixed together with that of the rats while they are scattered and running in different directions. We have to chase separately!”

The dark skinned girl was startled.

Chapter 116 - Counterattack

“How can a mere rookie ambush us? Is he deliberately exposing his smell to you?”

Gale’s face was gloomy as he avoided the question asked by the dark skinned girl.

“Chasing separately is too dangerous.” The dark skinned girl saw that he didn’t answer so she continued in hesitation: “The other party had injured the captain. So even if we catch up, we may not be able to cope with him. Maybe he wants to break us up!?! ”

Gale thought for a bit, then said: “Perhaps there is a way to identify him. Even if he mixed his smell with the rats so that we can’t track him. However, the movement trajectory of rats is totally different from humans. Of course! The rats would be too lazy to run away. The one which is leaving should be him.”

He took a breath so that he could perceive the smells floating around to his greatest extent. Everything was clear to him now. The smell of rain, moss, stinking undead, a faint smell of decay and everything else was formed into a sensory map in his mind.

It took less than five seconds for him to open his eyes: “Follow me!” He rushed rapidly towards one direction.

The dark skinned girl was surprised: “Did you find him?”

“I’m not sure.”

Both of them soon came to an open square. There was a lot of water in front of it. There were scattered monster bones, decaying undead limbs, moss and tree branches.

Gale raised his hand pointing to a direction of a collapsed pile of rocks. But if you looked carefully, you would find that the place he was pointing to contained less moss and lacked rocks.

“He is hiding over there!” The dark skinned girl’s eyes lit up. It was something man-made. It was likely that he had prepared it in advance to set aside a place to escape to! However, she didn’t dare to jump in. If that person was really hiding there, then there had to be a trap or two.

She carefully got closer while surveying the surrounding terrain, as well as stone furnishings, to prevent an unexpected attack.

Gale followed behind her. He couldn’t do much at this point as his hands were tied. He could only count on the dark skinned girl to find the trap!

“There should be a cave! A smell is coming out from deep inside it! ” Gale whispered in a low tone. He was frowning and he was tense.

The dark skinned girl had a serious look as she heard Gale’s words. She carefully observed the surroundings. Since the injury

on Linda's face, they had identified the enemy as an archer. In that case, she was confident in close combat. Scouts were definitely better than archers and only worse than warriors and knights in close combat. Of course, she was thinking about an open and honest fight.

So, as long as she was careful not to give the enemy a chance to attack from the stone heap nothing would happen to them.

Both of them, one after another went over to the pile of rocks.

Dark clouds were rotating over their heads, it seemed rain was approaching!

"It's about forty meters inside." Gale used very low voice to whisper.

"There are no traps." The dark skinned girl frowned as she was nervous. The more she couldn't find a trace of a trap the more she felt terrible.

When both of them were about ten meters close to the pile of rocks.

The sound of splashing water echoed out. However, it didn't come from ahead but from behind!

Both of their body muscles tightened. They turned around at almost the same time.

Whoosh!

A silver arrow flew past and hit Gale's throat!

It instantly piercing through!

Gale's eyes went wide open as he clutched his throat. He issued a painful 'argh' sound and fell down.

The dark skinned girl's pupils tightened. She saw that at the square there was a dirty pool which they had dismissed. It was full of all kinds of rot, including undead limbs, rat bodies and so on. A figure had jumped out from inside. It was Dudian.

Hiding in the pool?

The dark skinned girl's heartbeat rapidly increased as her body trembled. She saw Dudian jump to the edge of the pool. He didn't escape, but took out arrows and went towards the girl.

She knew that the opposite party was an archer. Because of the distance, there were more than a hundred ways for him to kill her!

Her only chance was close combat!

She believed that the other party should not be an intermediate hunter. Otherwise, he wouldn't use plans to ambush them but

would go for a direct frontal battle as he could easily kill her and Gale. So as the opposite party was a primary hunter like her then she was not without the hope for victory!

Whoosh!

The second arrow shot onto Gale's face and his life ended that moment.

Dudian saw the girl was trying to approach him. His face slightly changed as he quickly turned around and run. Moreover, while running he rapidly shot a few arrows so that the girl couldn't catch up to him.

His heart was beating fast. Fortunately, for the last two months, he had practiced the basics of archery to the limit. His accuracy was good enough to kill the enemy from the first shot.

Whoosh!

Doudian ran to the rear of a tall building.

The dark skinned girl saw that the other party had dismissed everything and ran. She was about to release Gale's body to chase when she saw that the enemy was shooting arrows. She got scared and raised Gale's body to resist in a hurry. One of the arrows shot into Gale's chest.

She raised her head to see Dudian head back into a high-rise, but

she hesitated to follow after him.

Whether the previous time Linda was injured or Gale's tragic death, had made her not to be able to see the enemy. She was not sure that there won't be another ambush waiting for her at the back of the high-rise. Detecting traps took time so she couldn't get close to the building when there was an archer hiding inside.

What should I do?

She hesitated and was confused. Eventually, she dragged Gale's body and turned away from the square. She came to the edge and squatted. Later on, she took out a smoke signal from her backpack and found a red light flare. She lighted it to notify the others.

Dudian's heart was relieved. He saw that the other side didn't chase after him into the high-rise. However, he had regretted it, because he had set up traps inside in advance. Nevertheless, the traps that he made wouldn't be able to kill a normal primary hunter. After all, he had not systematically studied making traps but devised them purely on his own imagination.

"Fortunately, I'm alright." He leaned against the wall and began to breathe out. He saw the red smoke released from the square and knew that it was a signal. He was aware that he had killed the team member who had the ability to track people. Now they were blind and he could rely on his smell to track them and hide in the dark to attack at the first opportunity.

"She saw my appearance. Although she was angry, however, her

character seems like a selfish and cautious person. They shouldn’t be able to track me anymore as there is no way for them to trace me. Unfortunately, Linda’s magic marks are somehow related to blood. Most probably she can control her body’s blood. In that case, the undead blood smeared on the arrows shouldn’t infect her. ” Dudian’s eyes flashed as he made fast calculations.

Chapter 117 - Talent

Linda rapidly rushed over as she saw the red smoke signal in the sky.

She felt bad as the red smoke was meant to be only be used in an emergency situation. She saw that the dark skinned girl squatted down and staring at a broken tall building while rapidly preparing traps while Gale's body was lying in front of her.

Linda's heart sank when she saw the arrows stuck in Gale's face, throat, and chest. The dark skinned girl heard movements and turned around to see Linda coming towards her. She was relieved. However, she spoke in a hurry: "The enemy is in the small building. I don't know if he had run away through the back of the small building. Gale, Gale."

Linda bent over to see Gale's eyes wide open without any movement. She was silent for a moment before speaking in a low tone: "Weren't you both together? How did he do it?"

The dark skinned girl told about the previous incident minute by minute.

A strong killing intent flashed across Linda's eyes as she listened to the dark skinned girl talk about the details. Because of the anger, she clenched her fists while her cheek muscles tightened. The anger in her heart had overcome the pain coming from her cheek. However, she relaxed the muscles on her face to avoid the delay in the healing of the wound.

“Captain, do you know him?” The dark skinned girl couldn’t help but ask as she saw Linda’s actions.

“He is the new kid,” Linda answered.

“Him?” The dark skinned girl was shocked. Although she had heard of Dudian’s name before. She has never seen him before. It is hard to believe that this cunning and insidious boy was the lucky scavenger who got his hands on magic marks by chance.

“How come he is outside the giant wall? Moreover, Gale apparently sensed his smell floating out from under the rock. Is someone else helping him out?” The dark skinned girl couldn’t help but ask.

Linda coldly looked at her: “You don’t understand. He pretended that he used the pre-captured ‘bone rats’ to escape. His actual purpose was to lure you into an ambush. Fortunately, you weren’t stupid and didn’t separate to pursue him. Otherwise, he would have long caught you guys one by one.”

The dark skinned girl was shocked by Linda’s words and said: “But, Gale’s sense of smell couldn’t be wrong!”

“He used Gale!” Coldness flashed across Linda’s eyes: “The enemy most probably devised Gale’s reason to trace him here in advance. He had injured most of the ‘bone rats’ in advance. Most of them wouldn’t be able to run fast or too far. Gale had locked on to the fastest running ‘bone rat’. It was all a trap!”

“Moreover, the smell that Gale had felt floating from inside the hole should belong to the real ‘bone rats’ He didn’t cover his smell, but covered the smell of the ‘bone rats’ and waited until he got here. Later on, he should have wounded it and let it go inside the hole between the rocks. He lurked in the pond to cover his smell and that way had attacked you from behind!”

Although Linda hasn’t personally seen anything. The dark skinned girl was able to justify her analysis. Even so, the little devil’s mind was working extremely well!

She remembered the way Dudian jumped out of the pond, pulled the string of the bow and made the shots. Although they were calling him a ‘kid’ and referring him as an immature, however, that moment gave her different feelings.

“Captain, what do we do now? Continue to go after him?” The dark skinned girl said in hesitation.

Linda stared at the high-rise and whispered: “No, he will come back. We just need to sit back and wait.” Then she looked at Gale’s body and said: “We have to burn his body. The arrows were infected. At most in a half hour later he would turn into an undead.”

The dark skinned girl bit her lips as she whispered: “I know.”

Linda made a gesture and turned away to leave.

The dark skinned girl began to drag Gale's body and followed after her.

They found a small building and settled inside. The reason for electing such a small building was that they were worried a high-rise that could collapse after excessive rainfall. But also they were beware that Dudian may use high-rise terrain to attack them.

Dark clouds had gathered in the sky for a long time. Firstly thunders echoed while the brewing rain falls afterward.

Linda and dark skinned girl swept out an open space, found some combustible materials and incinerated Gale's body.

The rain was pouring heavily outside. The weather was cold. The dark skinned girl looked at Gale's burnt dark eyes and felt a bit of chill. There was a trace of sadness in her eyes.

After dispersing Gale's ashes, the dark skinned girl looked back at Linda. She was surprised to see her standing front of the window gazing at the rain. She didn't know what to think.

"Captain.." the dark skinned girl whispered: "Will he come back?"

"He will," Linda answered without looking back.

“Previously, we took the initiative to go after him, so he used the traps and ambushes. But now we are not going after him, so he shouldn’t look for us, right?” The dark skinned girl quietly spoke out what was going in her mind.

“He has to come.” Linda turned around and looked at her.: “He is smarter than we thought. Although I am not aware how he came out, the point is he didn’t escape after he met us. Instead, he went for a kill. It shows, he had expected that we would be trying to kill him and we were only waiting for his training period to end. This is his only opportunity to kill us. If he can’t kill us, he knows that it will be his death!”

The dark skinned girl was startled. : “But he is just a rookie. Although he was a scavenger, he had never been on a hunt. How come he such a big courage? Even without you, we are a team and number with outdone him. How he dares to go for a kill?”

“He proved that he is capable of doing so.” Linda looked at her: “Although he is a few years younger than you, his heart is decisive. He may have never been on a monster hunt, but. Perhaps this is where his talents lay.”

Her words caused dark skinned girl’s heart to shudder: “Fortunately, we are not going to give him the opportunity to grow up or else he would be a significant threat to us in the future.”

Linda looked out the window and observed the torrential rains: “He should be very anxious right now. The plan that he had laid out weren’t satisfied until the end. Now, the initiative is in our hands. He should be afraid of us going back alive. If he misses this

opportunity, then we will kill him after the training. So if you were him, what would you do now to kill us?”

The dark skinned girl was confused as she couldn’t come up with answers.

It was raining so hard as if a screen shrouded the sky

Chapter 118 - New Plan

“They left. They didn’t chase after me.” Dudian could tale from Linda and the other girl’s smell that they went away. Linda had seen his appearance so she shouldn’t stop at this point. So why?. Suddenly he thought of a possibility,: “The only archer in their ranks is dead. So if they continue to go after me blindly, then they will fall into my traps and die. Are they going to sit back and wait?”

He pondered a little and immediately understood Linda’s idea.

“She knows that I’m desperate to kill her. That’s why she is not in a hurry.” Dudian’s face sank, “If I allow them to get back to the wall, I’ll end up in a dangerous situation. She will rely on her identity of a silver level hunter, and I’ll end up deployed into their team. Once we come out of the giant wall, I won’t have the slightest chance to escape!”

“They should have set up few traps and are waiting for me. What can I do?”

Dudian frowned. The only chance is to wait until the other side believes that he has left and relaxed. Then he could ambush and attack them! However, the other side is a silver level hunter and not so easy to ambush the second time. Moreover, if the other two join them too, it will be a team of four. Even if he can kill one of them, the other three would immediately seize him. He had to disperse them.

Moreover, his range was only 100 meters, and the accuracy was not 100%. There was a possibility to make mistakes and errors while shooting.

Rumble ~!

Thunder roared illuminating the gray sky.

Dudian looked at the pouring rain and gradually restored his calm. Thunder echoed in his mind. “If I could use lighting. How good that would be!”, Dudian thought.

However to use lightning he had lacked the proper instruments. He wouldn’t be able to manufacture them too.

“Using lightning?

An idea flashed past Dudian’s mind. He was startled at first, but his eyes lightened up in excitement: “Of course! Why have I been so stupid until now? If I can’t kill them directly, why don’t I use external forces? I’ve been relying on my power to fight them. I’m so stupid! What’s the difference between ordinary brainless soldier and me? Ah, I’ve been stupid. Stupid!” He patted his head, but he was extremely excited.

...

In the rainy season, it rains quickly.

As the rain began to stop, the air was full of a damp smell.

The rain was scrubbing down the smell of rotten things and corpses all over the ruins.

In the blind of an eye, the sun had already set in the west and night came.

The doors and windows of the small flat had shrunk and dilapidated. The original window glass was smashed. The dark skinned girl had found enough wood and stone to block the gaps and tightly wrapped vines around them. There was a small fire in the middle of the room.

In addition to the two women, Linda also had used smoke signals to call back Nick and Reid who were near the Red Lake.

There were few reasons for convening them back, naturally facing Dudian alone by herself was not one of them. First, she took into account that both of them couldn’t face the clawed dino-lizard alone. It would be tough for them to kill it and most probably would end up as a snack for it. The second reason is that she was worried that Dudian wouldn’t attack Linda but instead turn around to attack Nick and Reid. He would catch them unprepared and kill them both. So she had called everyone to solve out Dudian once and for all. Afterward, they could go and complete the task.

She was not worried.

If Dudian were any other child, she would probably think that the other side would quit as they saw the attack fail. But because of the previous experience, she didn't intend to treat this newcomer as an average child. In the bottom of her heart, she didn't dare to have the slightest contempt.

"The little devil killed Gale..?" Nick asked as he looked at the mound in the corner of the room.

Reid couldn't believe it either as he asked the dark skinned girl: "Is it true? He is just a child. Not even 14 years old. How could he.?"

Linda glanced at him and spoke in a cold tone: "Don't look down upon him or you will be the next."

Reid looked at the gauze bandaged on her cheek. Linda's lips were trembling. The fact was placed in front of him, so he didn't say anything.

"Are we going to wait?" Nick couldn't help but ask.

Linda spoke coldly: "What? Do you lack patience?

"No, it's just we are wasting a lot of time" Nick replied.

Linda looked at him and said: "If you don't want to waste time

then go out, find him and kill him.”

Her words stifled Nick. She no longer spoke. His magic mark ability was auxiliary, so he wasn’t good with tracing and tracking.

“Don’t worry this kid doesn’t have ‘light physique.'” The longer he is on the outside of the giant wall, the more uncomfortable he will get. Especially, after some time his body will be so discomforted that even the magic marks wouldn’t be able to help him cope and resist the erosion of radiation!” The dark skinned girl spoke in a confident tone:” I have arranged quite a few traps around the place. The longer he delays, the solid our situation will be. Maybe we won’t even have to kill him personally, as one of my traps would handle him!”

Nick and Reid sighed at the same time. They couldn’t believe that a newcomer would force a team which had a silver ranked hunter into a retreat.

Linda got the idea after seeing both of their expressions but didn’t say anything. However, if they could trap Dudian, she would crush his body and suck out his blood!

In the blink of an eye, two days passed.

The last two days were calm. Dudian seemed to disappear.

Dark skinned girl, Nick, and Reid were convinced that Dudian had left, but Linda insisted that Dudian was hidden in the vicinity

waiting for the right opportunity.

After all, the other three as hunters knew the hunting process. Patience was crucial. The one who took the lead would be exposed and will become the prey while the other party would hunt.

They couldn’t do anything but wait.

Linda finished the dry food and touched the wound on her face. It has been three days, but the wound on her face has been healed. There were no scars and no pain left. Her magic marks played the main role in this regeneration. Her ability was to control the blood flow. She could speed up the healing process within her body. It was an incredibly important ability for hunters which spend time outside the giant wall. At least one-third of the hunters died outside because of receiving constant injuries and couldn’t healing them on time.

Moreover, by being able to heal her injuries rapidly also meant that Linda was, even more, bolder while containing the beasts. Even if she got injured, she could restore and heal the wound.

“Three days . .” Linda squinted her eyes. From her point of view, Dudian was qualified to be a hunter at least by his patience alone. He was able to endure not showing up in three days.

The dark skinned girl was eating dry food while leaning against the wall.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Suddenly the ground quivered.

Chapter 119 - Beast Wave

“What? What is happening?”

The four were looking at each other in surprise.

Linda, as if thinking of something, threw herself to the ground and put her ear onto it to listen. Her face became pale as she said: “Not good, it’s a beast wave.”

“What?!” the other three were shocked. The most terrible disaster outside the giant wall was when the monsters attacked in mass numbers simultaneously turning into a beast wave!

Even a small beast wave could easily swallow three to five hunting teams.

“Run!” Linda stood up and got out of the building.: ” We have to avoid the route where the monsters will come from!”

All of them ran out of the small flat. Because of rich hunting experience just by feeling the quiver under their foot, they could speculate where the source of the beast wave was. They followed Linda towards a different street.

Rumble !

The tremors got more intense as if the wave of monsters was

getting closer.

Boom!

Because of the vibration of the ground, a building nearby cracked and collapsed causing dust to fill the air and causing a great sound echoing afterward.

Linda didn’t refuse to turn around to check but kept running hard.

Whoosh!

An arrow was shot from a small building which was next to them.

This arrow was unexpected as they were in a panic and in a rush to escape. Moreover, they wouldn’t think that the enemy would ambush them from such a close distance. Although Linda reacted, her body was too slow to keep up with the arrow. Additionally, the target of the arrow not her but the dark skinned girl who was running behind Linda.

The dark skinned girl raised her dagger to block the oncoming arrow but as her arm was stretched half way out the arrow penetrated into her shoulder. Because she was caught in a sudden attack, her body couldn’t respond on time, and as if a sledgehammer hit her, she fell to the ground.

Nick and Reid took out their weapons and stood in front of her to protect while watching the direction from where the arrow was shot.

The girl gritted her teeth in pain but didn't utter a sound.

"Are you all right?" asked Linda.

Dark skinned girl hold her shoulder and reluctantly nodded her head.: "I'm fine."

"Don't stop! The beast wave is getting closer. Run!" Linda's heart was relieved when she saw that the injury was not fatal.

Nick helped the girl to stand up, but at the same moment, another arrow was shot. However, he was on alert and prepared for a sudden attack. He blocks the arrow using the dagger.

"He's hiding there!" Reid pointed to the location where the arrows were coming from.

Linda clenched her sword tightly as she stared at the small building about a hundred meters away from them. However, the trembling sound coming from the back was getting more intense with each passing second. Even if she went to the building and fight with Dudian, even if she killed him the beast wave would catch up to her.

The other one had taken this into account. : "That's why he is so

daring now.", Linda thought about the situation.

Her body was slightly trembling because of the anger but she eventually held back herself. Linda had seen many hunters die because of emotional actions. "Don't be worried about him. We should get out of here!"

Nick and Reid knew how critical the situation was. Moreover, they were afraid of the cunning and devious traps that Dudian had used before, so they were hesitant to go after the newbie. Who knows what kind of traps he had set up?

Dudian was observing them from the small building. As expected they didn't chase him but continued to escape. His mouth curled into a smile. He had seen and smelled the dark skinned girl lurking around putting traps all over the place. However, she hadn't set foot in this small building.

Therefore, he dared to come into the small building. He had a bag of sealed blood in his hand. Dudian quietly disappeared into the small building.

Run! Run!

Four of them quickly ran, jumping off the rubble of broken stones and acting the fastest they could.

However, after few minutes of rapid running the sound of quivering land was getting closer instead of loosening. Linda

jumped over a pile of rock and hastily looked back. Her pupils slightly contracted at sight.

She saw four meters tall monsters crawling at fast speed catching up to them. They were monsters which had the shape of a lion but skin of a human. They didn't have any hair on them. Moreover, each had seven or eight human-like arms.

"Damn, it's a herd of Brainpeckers!" Linda's face turned ugly.

Dark skinned girl and the other two looked back to check the monsters. All of the Brainpeckers were adult. Moreover, a primary hunter would not be able to cope with them. It was tough to run away from their hands as Brainpeckers were very fast.

"They've found us! We won't be able to lose them!" Nick's body trembled because of fear.

Linda bit her lips as she said: "Rona, they are tracking by sensing the smell of your blood. That kid intentionally hurt you so that the Brainpeckers could lead to us."

Rona's lips were white as she saw the Brainpeckers. She had thought of this possibility, but she still had a glimmer of hope in Linda. As a silver level hunter and team-member of old days, she thought that Linda would try to save her.

Rona looked at her, "I know."

“Thank you …” There was a complicated look on Linda’s face as she continued: “I will take care of your loved ones.”

“Thank you …” Rona had a grateful look on her face as her figure stopped and turned around. Her face was bitter as she saw the beasts coming over at her. There were so many desires that she hadn’t accomplished yet. Too many things which she hadn’t enjoyed yet. She could leave only with regret.

She raised her short dagger and sadly looked at oncoming beasts.

puff!

The first beast to reach her growled and raised three giant arms and swept out. Rona’s could not do much to delay them as she had turned into the first beast’s food in a matter of seconds.

Nick, Reid, and Linda had long run past the place.

However, they weren’t able to outrun the Brainpeckers. Nick turned to look back in surprise as he saw the herd of Brainpeckers didn’t stop after killing Rona but continued to chase.: “We can’t get away!”

“Run, we gotta cover our smell!” Linda didn’t look back as she more or less could imagine the scene.

By the time she rushed to the corner of the street, she had already pulled out the undead powder. She spilled it onto her body and

drilled to a dilapidated building through a hole.

Reid followed her close by and covered up his smell the same way. He went after her through the hole.

The Nick was the final to come up to the corner. But his leg stumbled and the undead powder on his hand crumbled. Although it was spilled onto his body, it was not enough to conceal him on time. Moreover, the Brainpeckers were already very close to him.

“Captain, save -” Nick cried in horror as his face had a desperate look.

His body had turned to pieces by the massive arms of the Brainpeckers. Blocking them with a weapon wasn’t useful at all.

Chapter 120 - Prayer

Brainpecker beasts seemed to search for other beings to vent their anger on as killing Nick wasn't enough.

Linda and Reid were secretly observing them through the gap in the wall of the building where they were hiding. Their hearts were nervous while they kept breathing slowly to decrease their heartbeats in fear that they could catch the attention of these bloodthirsty monsters.

"All right, all right……" Reid clutching the hilt of his dagger kept praying: "They won't find us, the Brainpeckers don't prey on undead. O, God of light, the Father, please bless your people. "

Roar! Roar!

The herd lost their target, so they kept wandering around the street in anger. The Brainpeckers' snake-like smooth tails were twisting on the ground while they kept looking right and left for a lead.

Linda and Reid were relieved as they saw the Brainpeckers didn't come into the building they were hiding in. However, they couldn't relax yet as the Brainpeckers were still roaming around. They were secretly praying in their hearts for the herd to leave as soon as possible.

In this tense moment when they were almost suffocating of fear, a sharp whistling sound echoed out as the arrow pierced into a

small building.

Linda and Reid almost jumped out of fear as they had ignored the newbie who was hiding in the dark.

“Damn!” Linda clenched her fingers into a fist as she heard the arrow hit the building. Nevertheless, she still retained a trace of reason and rapidly came up with a plan. If he wanted to lead the Brainpeckers into the building using arrows, then she was going to lead them back using a rock. She picked a stone, raised her hand and looked at the direction the arrow had come from.

Whoosh!

It didn’t take more than a moment for her to stand up and squat down but it was enough for her to throw the stone.

Bang! Crash! She saw that the stone she had thrown out had accurately hit the remains of a glass window. The sound is especially crisp!

The herd which had detected the sounds looked around and rushed over.

However, Linda was stunned because without exception all of the Brainpeckers were running towards the building where they were in!

“This..”

There was no time to think about details because of impact by the Brainbecker herd's attack this three-story building fell.

In response, they quickly jumped out of the window next to them and landed on the other side of the street. They rolled up to minimize the impact from the jump and stood up to run away.

Reid was late to jump so along with the collapse of the building some stones hit him. One of the stones hit his nose and the next moment he touched his nose, there was a bit of blood on his hand.

Brainpeckers locked onto him the moment blood oozed out of his nose and rushed over.

"No -" Reid panicked. He used his dagger to protect himself, but the next moment the Brainpeckers was already on him biting his upper body. While the next moment another Bainpecker was eating up his viscera. Blood was spewing out at a fast rate.

The other Brainpeckers that saw Linda roared and rushed after her instead of focusing on Reid.

Linda's face was pale as she clearly knew that even if the Brainpeckers surrounded fifteen silver level hunters, none would survive!

She discarded everything as she ran, including the backpack which had the precious monster materials from the previous hunt.

Roar! Roar!

The Brainpecker herd roared as they tried to catch up with her.

After they had left, a small figure appeared from the small building. It was Dudian. He looked at the collapsed small building. There was nothing left of Reid but traces of blood on the ground. He was feeling nauseous as it was the first time he witnessed monsters eating a human.

He retracted his eyes and looked at the arrow which he had shot before. The small bag of blood which he had tied on it had blown up because of the pressure.

He looked at the discarded backpack. All kind of smells belonging to different monsters exuded from it. It should contain all the valuable materials collected by the Linda.

Dudian picked up her backpack and found few pieces of remaining dry food. He began to chew them immediately as for the last three days he hadn't had any food as he was searching for the monsters.

While he was eating Dudian suddenly smelled the bleeding odor from Linda. He didn't think that she would be injured so soon. It seems he had done a good job by finding these beasts.

"Direct kill," Dudian whispered.

However, he suddenly smelled that Linda's smell was mixed with other smells. The scents that were almost covering her smell were rancid and our. He couldn't help but a think of the place where she had gone to.

The sewage network!

Dudian's eyes narrowed as he smelled that monsters stayed outside on the street and didn't go as their bodies were too large and were difficult for them to enter.

He didn't expect that so many beasts that he had lead to here would fail to kill Linda. An intermediate hunter's survival ability was amazing.

He didn't rush to catch up because from the smell he understood that Linda slowed down her speed in the sewer. It seems she was aware the monsters didn't chase her, so Linda had taken the opportunity to restore her strength.

"She is ready now, so using arrows to ambush her would be tough and inefficient! The previous diversion plan won't work too. It has been used once so she should not fall into it the second time" Dudian frowned as he knew the variables had changed again.

He had singled her out but taking the approach to attack would not work. ìIs this the end?î, Dudian murmured.

“If my archery skills were better then I could have killed her in an ambush. Right now my range is 100 meters which means that if I fail or she blocks the shot I’m going to be beheaded the next few seconds.” Dudian clenched his fist,” Even if I want to improve my skills it’s not something that could be done in an instant. Spiraling arrows are useless too as they are not fast enough.”

“If there were firearms..”

“However, it’s been three hundred years so the guns in the police station would not be in good condition. I would deep-fry myself.”

“Oh!?”

Dudian was startled, “Guns can not be used but I can use the bullets. Ah! I can use the gunpowder from them and create a bomb!”

He was excited as he thought of the possibility. The police had a special storage room for firearms. Most probably guns and bullets are maintained in that room. If it’s indoors then even after three hundred years, he should be able to find useful ones!

Dudian immediately took action as he went along the streets looking for a police station.

Chapter 121 - Fortress

The last time the sewers were repaired was at least three hundred years ago. It was dark and the air was rancid. From time to time iron cans would touch concrete echoed out low sounds.

Linda suppressed her breathing, inhaling and exhaling slowly. She tried to reduce motions too. Her eyes looked around in alert as the years of hunting experience had taught her that not only ‘bone rats’ but other monsters preferred to hide in the sewers.

Because of the darkness, her vision was limited. She could see the outline of things only within five meters of distance. If Dudian were here he would be surprised to find that all hunters did not share the vision in the darkness. It was one of the unique abilities that had come with his magic marks.

Linda’s ears were erect to detect the slightest and subtle movement around because of potential danger lurking in her surroundings.

Creak!

A ‘bone rat’ screaming echoed out from twenty meters away. It was an incredibly painful sound but soon was stopped. At the same time, water burst and sprayed into a wave.

Linda was not sure if it was a fight between rats for food or something else had attacked the rat. However, she didn’t leave as she knew that rats wouldn’t be a threat to her and if it was

something else, then the monster wasn't something dangerous as it fed on rats. As long as she was careful, nothing would go wrong.

She leaned against the side of the wall and gently walked in at a slow pace. She was vigilant and alert at all times as to avoid any beast that could leap out and drag her into the stream.

She had explored around a hundred meters or so when she found an opening in the corner. The light dimly shone and the rancid smell was dispersed.

Linda crawled out from the sewers along the rocky hole. She took a deep breath as the fresh air was blowing to her face. She looked around and saw that the Brainpeckers hadn't chased her. She was relieved as she quickly went to the nearby building.

As she closed to the building, Linda saw few undead roar and rush towards her. With a sudden twist, her body turned like a whirlwind, and the heads of undead were cut off from their bodies as if autumn leaves falling from a tree.

She found a stable place to sit. Her stomach gurgled and she thought of her luggage which she had discarded previously. Her face was gloomy as she thought about Dudian. Her heart burned with anger: "The kid should have sensed my smell and knows that I'm not dead. He will come after me. That's when he will face death!"

She thought of dead Nick, Rona and Reid. She couldn't help but clench her palm into a fist: "I will help you to avenge your death!

Afterward, I'll get your ashes buried in the Hunter Cemetery."

She gradually restrained her hatred to think calmly. "This little devil is bound to appear again. However, he will be back with new insidious ways. If he uses the monsters, then I'll hide in the sewer or I can move to the adjacent area no 9." But he won't be able to use The Brainpackers as they don't eat undead and he has smeared undead powder. Moreover, he was successful in leading them the first time, but it doesn't mean that he will be able to do so the second time."

"If he doesn't use monsters but traps alone. He isn't capable of making traps that could kill me. Previously, he killed Gale because of surprise attack and it was pure luck."

"Additionally, I can see that his effective range is a mere 100 meters!"

She had noticed that Dudian's range of attack with the bow was limited. Even if he wanted to improve his range, it couldn't be done in three or five days of training. Especially, Linda thought that his arrows should be limited so even if he trained the efficiency would be low.

"Hundred meters. If it's within hundred meters and he tried to attack me again, I'll need three to five second to catch up with him and behead for good! He should know that I was seriously injured because of the Brainpecker herd, so he will attack for sure!

There was a trace of remorse in her mind, but she changed her

mind, ” He can’t do anything unless he is foolish enough to believe that he can kill me with a single arrow. So I will wait for him to attack and when he comes out the initiative will be in my hands. He had used Gale’s sense of smell and blurred Gale’s judgment. But tactics such as that won’t work on me.”

While thinking of everything, a plan surfaced in her mind.

...

Whoosh!

Dudian rapidly ran through the street looking for a police station. Occasionally he would sense the smell of monsters and make a detour to avoid the beasts.

“I’ve been to a dozen or more streets. Isn’t there any police station in this area?” Dudian frowned. However, he soon found a place that had a high barrier of three or four meters high covering it. It was hundreds of meters long and the middle part had collapsed. He didn’t know whether it was work of corrosion from rain and radiation or was the baptism of war.

“A fortress?” Dudian was surprised.

Even though the wall was covered in vines, he still was impressed by the structure.

Three hundred years ago, after the outbreak of the disaster global

refuge cities were built as a defensive fortress to protect people. These fortifications were located in various parts of the city and were used as a second line of defense from the undead.

Dudian was silent for a moment but thought of a matter and quickly ran towards the fortress.

Near the fortress, there were traces of detonated bombs and a dense pile of bones. There was a skeleton which had a machine gun while his green military clothing had long lost its color.

The machine gun has become rusty and eroded because of rain. Although the machine gun itself is made from rust-proof steel, the nuclear radiation had affected the rain too. The other components of steel had long been damaged or deformed.

Dudian was surprised when he saw the machine gun. This defensive fortress should have lots of firearms!

He picked up the machine gun and gently broke it off. He was after the bullets. He quickly unscrewed the cap of the bullet. There was dark gunpowder inside, but it didn’t come out as moisture had increased and hardened it.

There was regret in his heart as he dropped this string of bullets and moved forward and went inside the fortress.

Along the way, he saw an accumulation of bones all around. There were small monsters which seemed had mutated from

snakes that moved through the bones. Once in a while, their tails from be exposed from the rib part of bones.

“A tank?” Dudian was impressed to see a tank. It was covered in moss and vines. However, its long barrel was still visible. It was rolled over, so it wasn’t difficult to imagine the intense fight that had broken by it.

Chapter 122 - Independent City-States

Dudian went closer to the tank. He looked up and down. The surface paint has been scratched off and the machine gun on top of it was covered with moss and thick dust. It seemed like a stone sculpture.

“Have the parts inside of it decayed?” Dudian was curious as he climbed the tank. He cleaned the dust covering the entrance shaft and jumped in.

Roar!

As he was falling, a hoarse roar echoed from behind.

However, Dudian had already sensed the smell and his dagger was in his hands ready for the situation. It reflexively pierced across the throat of the young undead wearing a torn green army uniform. The undead’s hair was brown while his eyes were green. From the appearance alone it could be seen that he was a foreigner.

“Gurgle ...” Sound of ragged breathing echoed as the undead died.

Dudian noticed the faded national emblem on top of the uniform. It belonged the United States of America. Some doubts emerged in his mind, but soon he thought of something ... independent city-states.

At the time of the disaster, the first to be destructed were capitalist Western empires. Moreover, a significant number of Western refugees were transported to Asia. To be correct to northern territories of Russia. At least tens of millions of westerners were sent to Russia because of mutual assistance and the law that made it possible to accept the refugees. Russia had the largest territory in Asia. Moreover, its population was very low in comparison to its territory size. That's why it was able to accommodate so many refugees.

The second reason was that Russia had a large number of air defense tunnels built formerly by the Soviet Union, which was also an excellent choice for shelter.

"Did my father bring the frozen storage to a city after I was frozen?" Dudian thought more and more about potential possibilities that led to the creation of the giant wall. "Was it the independent city states that created the giant wall? How could they build something like that with limited resources? These places were barren land. "

"Even if they could make the giant wall, it should be made in areas with abundant materials. The refugees were located in areas with poor raw materials and transportation would be time-consuming."

Dudian thought about the height of the giant wall. It was pretty much impossible to see its top. Another idea emerged out in his mind. "This giant wall . . was it built by humans?"

The more he thought about it, the more he felt that he knew very

little to nothing at all. A growl echoed from his belly. He immediately kicked the undead's body away and looked at the insides of the tank.

Dudian was disappointed to find that the tank had long been abandoned. At a single glance, he could see what kind of damage it had suffered in the last three hundred years.

Dudian continued to sneak into the fortress as he left the tank.

Using his sense of smell he tried to avoid the undead who were sleeping, in case he couldn't bypass them, he directly beheaded them.

"I did not expect that these undead would sleep." Dudian was perplexed.

Soon he came into the fortress. Inside was dimly lit, but it didn't effect his line of sight.

Roar!

An undead flipped out of the corner.

He used the dagger to pierce its face and nail it to the wall accurately.

After the absorption of hundreds of cold crystals, he felt that his

physique has been in no way inferior to other primary hunters. He found himself able to firmly keep up with the speed of the dark skinned girl and the other two hunters.

However, if it was face-to-face combat, then Dudian was not sure as he lacked the actual life-and-death experience that the rest of the hunters had.

However, after going through few battles, he knew that fighting was not simply a competition between speed, strength or other hard data of the sides. After all, no one will be stupid enough to face you barehanded while you wielded a knife.

Terrain, weather, mood and so many other factors affected the battle. Moreover, it could even cause the reversal of roles during the fight!

Dudian continued to go along the corridor and look for the storage facility where the arms were kept.

He opened a new room. Three undead were sleeping inside. They slightly raised their heads and gradually woke up.

Dudian didn't give them the opportunity to respond as he quickly approached and used the dagger to stab onto the first undead's skull. The second one was about to open its mouth to roar when Dudian's dagger cut it's head off.

However, the third was already completely awake as it roared

and used its claws to attack.

Dudian quickly bent over to escape its claws while at the same time quickly stabbed the dagger.

Puff! The undead's body trembled and fell.

Dudian took a slow breath. He felt cold sweat in his palm while there was excitement in his heart.

After killing the undead, Dudian looked around the room. He found that it was the command operations room. The undead that he had killed had golden stars on their shoulders. They should be major general level army officers.

His eyes were attracted by the map on the desktop. Although it had dust on it and mice had crawled and chewed it. Still, Dudian could get the rough outline and location. It was an old era map of the Asia.

"So, we are in territories of Russia. To be exact somewhere in Asia." Dudian suddenly thought that the areas that had been scavenged before should have had such fortresses too. Most probably scavengers have brought maps back with them. So there should be those who knew the real face of this world and how vast it was.

"The 'Temple of Elements' is responsible for pricing the things brought in by the scavengers. The Holy Church and Temple of Elements are linked inextricably. The Holy Church seems to be the ruler of the giant wall. Then what kind of relationship the military

of the giant wall has." Dudian pondered a bit," 'Temple of Elements' should have a lot of things. They should have mastered a lot of things by now. But most of the news aren't released. What is the reason? Is it because these things desecrate the faith?"

He frowned as he couldn't understand what was going on. In the old times, religion and state co-existed together so there shouldn't be a problem with faith.

He shook his head as he didn't want to ponder on the issue but instead turn away to continue to look for other places in the fortress.

Half an hour later, he finally found the room where the arsenal was kept.

"So much . ." Dudian looked at neatly stacked weapons, mines, grenades and other arms. This fortress was simply a great treasure!

Chapter 123 - Strike

Dudian checked the rows of weapons.

All of them were piled into rows according to classification. For example, gun-like weapons were put on a metal frame near the walls while the majority of rifles and submachine guns were placed afterwards. However, landmines were put onto the floor. The were double layered wood pads for isolation to prevent the moisture to affect the mines but after three hundred years of time lapse the wood had long been rotten.

Dudian wandered around the room and found that despite the indoor storage the corrosion was terrible because of the time. Survivors died but these arms had persevered. However, they were nothing put a pile of rotten iron as all of it had rusted and were not longer usable. The mines were covered in heavy dust. The elastic spring used in mines to detonate them had decayed and were damaged. The explosives that were inside them couldn’t be detonated.

Because of the precipitation the explosive inside were likely mineralized into hard mass.

Dudian didn’t regret anything as everything was within his expectations. He found some grenades, mines and two shells for rocket launchers. As he was about to dismantle them he smelled that Linda had met some kind of a monster. He knew that the other odor belonged to beast.

This odor had long been in his range. It had been moving slowly and accidentally had met with Linda.

“I don’t know the strength of this monster.” Dudian thought that if this beast could eat Linda, it would have save him from taking risk by confronting her.

He quickly dismantled the mines. The buckle metal holding it up was rotten so he was forced to break it apart. Moisture had intruded into this mine too.

“Yellow explosives?” Dudian noticed the color of explosives in the mines. He had collected information about yellow explosives while collecting information about the gun powder. It was kind of a gun powder which had gone through ‘evolution’. It was referred to as ‘TNT’. It had great power.

“Awesome!” Dudian was excited. Even if Linda was an intermediate hunter, but with this tnts she could be directly killed!

Dudian took out all the yellow explosives and scattered them on the ground. Later on he found few scraps of paper rolls.

Paper had been mixed with too much soil and dust so it was burning very slow. But it still burned till the end.

Dudian was passionately watch the scene.

Bang!

The explosion sounded without warning, and it made a very loud noise.

Dudian's eyes lit up. Although some of the explosives were wet but still were able to detonate. The power of explosion was much stronger than he had imagined.

He immediately returned to the place and continued to dismantle the mines. He poured yellow explosives out and gathered into a pile.

Moreover, he felt the smell of Linda and the monster while there was strong blood smell floating from them. One of them should be injured.

"Is it monster or her?" Dudian eyes flashed and his hands began to dismantle faster. All the yellow explosives accumulated to thirty pounds. However he went after all the mines but came to the metal frame. He grasped few bullets and began to twist their caps to open them. Inside there was semi-hardened gunpowder. He knocked the bullet onto the ground and took out some gunpowder.

He used the arrow to set aside the gunpowder.

More bullets were emptied as time passed.

The odor of monster and Linda had separated. The monster's odor was fixed to the same position while it was mixed with strong

bloody smell. It meant it was not moving and should be killed.

Dudian couldn't help but regret that the beast was not successful. However, the monster in area no 7 were all under the level 20. According to his estimates, as long as Linda wasn't facing them head on she could guarantee her own safety.

Suddenly, the bloody smell coming off form Linda began to gradually to fade away.

He immediately thought of the magic mark ability of Linda, control of blood!

"Was she hurt?" Dudian pondered a bit. Although she could promptly control the wound to stop bleeding but the smell of blood would leak out form the wounds which couldn't be covered. Unless, the wound was not dangerous one and it was quickly recovered or at least a layer covered onto it.

"She can control the blood so her speed of healing should be very fast. However, it will take a day or two to fully recover. This is a great opportunity!" Dudian's eyes shone as he rapidly collected the explosives.

At the same time as he collected the TNTs he locked onto Linda's smell. Once she left his range, he would rapidly try to catch up with her.

Linda's movement speed was not fast, as she stopped from time

to time to rest.

He thought that he was neglecting something important: “She knows that I can track her by smell. So, she is likely using this to trap me. If she was injured, she would not make so many stops. She would just find a place and stop directly. She wouldn’t move until the healing her wound.”

Thinking of the possibility he calmed down to ponder about the issue at hand: “If I was her, I would do my best to lure myself out. As long as, I’m exposed she will be able to catch and behead me! ”

“Well,” he said, as coldness flashed in his eyes, “Let’s play then!”

He opened his backpack and loaded all the yellow explosives and gunpowder that he had piled. It wouldn’t affect his movement.

He looked at arsenal for the last time. Alone on his own it would be very difficult to move the entire arsenal. However, soon or later the area no 7 will be cleaned of monsters and the scavengers will move it. Everything will be taken into the giant wall.

“Within the giant wall they use gunpowder only to dye stuff, including the tnt. They are treated as yellow dyes by the ‘Temple of Elements’. IS it because the explosives look like soil and no one would think of using fire to burn it? ” An idea emerged in his mind which seemed possible.

“However, it is possible they have already mastered the use of

explosives. Its just like in old days, they are labeled as dangerous goods and strictly controlled." Dudian thought about another possibility. After all, this was not the era of information and blocking the knowledge was very simple. Even in the old days, when computer, television and other tools were present but most were ignorant of science and technology.

In this era, the only way to pass information widely was use of newspapers.

However, because of aristocracy firm grasp of power, it was very difficult for newspapers to have room to play. So the things that they could report on were very limited.

"In any case, if there are explosives inside the giant wall then there have to records of them within the circle of alchemists. But in Rosyard's notes he didn't mention of such matter. No matter, I have to inquire when I go back." Dudian didn't think much about it anymore as he turned away to leave the fortress and begin his own hunt!

Chapter 124 - Explosion

In a small building on the street.

Linda was sitting in the shadows. She opened up a first aid kid and began to replace the gauze on her right arm and thigh. However, she was alert at all times as to prevent any sudden attack.

“I’ve done an excellent camouflage by getting hurt. I don’t believe that you won’t be fooled!” Linda thought in her heart. She had specifically stood close to the place where the beast with similar combat abilities to her was living. The purpose was to hurt herself using the beast and made it look as realistic as possible.

The seabird beast that she had chosen was a level seventeen monster. It was an amphibious beast. However, it could survive on land too. If it fought with monsters in the sea, the seabird could kill much higher level monsters as it was seabird home-ground. However, on land its combat effectiveness and advantages were limited. As long as Linda was careful enough, she could avoid being killed by the seabird.

She had gone all out against the beast to make it even more compelling to Dudian who was tracking her smell. Even if it was very hard for her to kill the beast, she had to face it head-on to convince Dudian. Afterward, she thought that Dudian would get enough courage to attack her.

Her right arm and thigh were still numb as she replaced the

gauze. The claws of seabird beast had paralytic toxins. She was lucky that she had control over her blood and could discard the toxins to a large extent. Otherwise, she wouldn't be able to use her right arm and leg for the rest of her life.

"After I catch you, I will impose all these pains a thousand times over on you!" There was a strong killing intent bubbling in her heart. It would burst out after she catches Dudian.

She controlled the amount of blood that flowed in her face so that she looked extremely pale. Especially, her lips looked like they had no color or life at all. She looked fragile as she slowly breathed and leaned against the wall. One of her hands was always on her sword's hilt, gripping it. However, with her weak appearance, she gave an aura as if her alertness would be futile.

Whoosh!

A rapid arrow shot through the window.

Its angle was diagonal, directed at her throat!

The original 'dying' Linda disappeared as her body suddenly rolled and stood up. She swung her sword in time to block the arrow. She locked onto her target ñ which was in a small building!

"You are going to die!"

She didn't hide her killing intent as she jumped out of a window

as if she was a cheetah.

However, as she got close to the small building, her eyelids twitched. A feeling gripped her heart. It was her hunting instinct or intuition which had developed inside her after years of life and death experience. She felt a trace of terror as she stopped.

She raised her head and looked at the window from where the arrow was shot. She couldn't see Dudian; it seemed that he had fled.

She wasn't in a hurry to chase him, so she carefully gazed around as she spoke: "Don't hide. I know you are inside. You have prepared a trap for an ambush, didn't you?"

There was no movement.

"You have done an excellent job by forbearing for so long. However, once you're exposed, there is no option for you but death! I'll kill you!" Linda spoke in a cold tone.: " Although I hate the reality that I'm facing right now, you should be prepared to attack me as I'm wounded. However, if another day passes."

Her heart was calming down as she talked. Her rationale was affected by her subjective assumption, but now she could clearly see more.

There was no movement at all.

Linda frowned, is it was just a meaningless worry? Did he run away?

“I know you are inside.” Linda didn’t give up on hope to agitate Dudian.: ” You are hiding inside trying to lure me in. It’s so simple to understand that there is a trap inside. But you shouldn’t forget that if I don’t kill you this time, I’ll have many other opportunities to kill you in future. After you finish the training period, you will be a dead man!”

Anger gushed out as she saw there was no response, but she tried to restrain herself. She sneered: “Let’s check who of us is more patient!” She then went back to her small building and sat down: “I don’t believe that he is not in a hurry. He wanted to kill me. This is how I will take the advantage and initiative into my hands. As long as he acts, he will be exposed!”

She was resting while she stared at the small building on the opposite side. Her heart was upset. Since when would a dignified silver level hunter like her need to be careful of a rookie?

After all, it was mind consuming and psychologically affecting for her to be aware and wait for the moment you will be sneak attacked.

She still held back the anxiety as she thought of other plans.

As the time passed, there was no movement from inside the opposite small building.

She thought: “We will see who will be killed in the end!”

In the blink of an eye, the day was replaced by night-time. She had become increasingly vigilant as night was the most suitable time for sneak attacks. Moreover, her vision was limited.

In the latter half of the night, she felt a trace of sleepiness. Even though she was a mid-level hunter, her mental fatigue had passed the limit. Moreover, the other side was relaxed all day long while she was alert all the time. If it continued like this for a few days more, she would be exhausted!

Suddenly, she understood Dudian’s intention!

If she were told that a newcomer tried to agitate and mentally consume a mid-level hunter, she wouldn’t believe it at all, but she was living the experience right now!

“No, I can’t be dispirited!” Linda came to the corridor on the first floor and found a gap in the corner and sat down. She leaned against the wall to relax as there was no angle from where an arrow could hit her.

Although she fell asleep but often would wake up if there was a sign of a slight movement as she was worried to be attacked by Dudian.

The night passed.

Linda woke up in the dawn. She didn't expect that Dudian wouldn't attack at some point during the night. Her mind was angry as she thought that even if there were traps made up by him but how lethal they could be?

She knew Dudian's performance to an alarming degree, so she tried to treat everything with caution. However, thinking about it, the other side was a child. He had never been hunting. Perhaps he had seen her during the night but couldn't get the courage to shoot?

She couldn't stop her emotions anymore.

"Damned little devil, let's see what kind of traps you have arranged!" She looked over to the small building and then decided to go after him.

As she entered the small building, a rotten smell blew into her. The surroundings were dimly lit. However, sunlight was shining through the cracks in the walls and windows. Her line of sight was not affected much. But she was still watching around carefully for traps.

Although she was not a scout after all as an experience silver level hunter, she had seen a lot of traps. She had seen scouts arranging a lot of traps, so she was knowledgeable about trap-making.

At the moment, on the roof of three-story building Dudian was standing against a wall.

Yesterday, after failed his surprise attack he didn't leave the small building. Nevertheless, all the explosives were inside the building. Once he left this building, he will be in more danger than in here. When Linda was calling out to him from downstairs, he thought a lot but at the end decided to control his emotions and stay silent.

Therefore, despite how many times Linda called out to him, he didn't answer. The purpose was to cause her to get angry and affect her judgment.

However, to his disappointment, Linda did not come.

From his perspective, the ambush had failed, and he was thinking about other new plans. But he would never expect that Linda would come here on her own!

"She still wants to confirm whether I'm here or have left. It seems it doesn't matter how good a hunter is. She may suppress her anger but can't resolve it. "A trace of excitement flash in his eyes as Dudian went over to prepare.

Linda passed the half-collapsed stairs and went to the second floor. She looked around but still didn't see any traps which didn't improve her mood. She felt as if she was played around.

Suddenly, she heard subtle 'hissing' sound as if dozens of snakes were near her.

“Is he using monsters?” Linda was startled, but her eyes lit up the next moment. “He’s still in here!”

She clenched the sword with her one hand as she was ready to go to the third floor. She took into account that there was a possible ambush. With her magic ability, she could restrain the toxic attacks of monsters. She wasn’t worried about not being able to escape.

She was halfway to the third floor.

Boom!

Suddenly an explosion occurred which drowned the small building.

From the first to the third floor, everything was blown up!

Chapter 125 - Honoring The Promise

An explosion sounded like a thunderbolt as various rocks splashed around.

The small building was razed to the ground, only leaving a few scattered rocks. The two buildings on its right and left side had also been exposed by its shock-wave and had collapsed half the way.

Smoke and dust were diffused into the air.

Bang!

A slate was pushed open from the small building close-by. Dudian climbed out and looked at the flattened building. He was shocked as he didn't think the destructive power of the yellow explosives would be so this astounding. Fortunately, he had ignited the explosives and left the building. Or else, this would be his grave.

He sniffed a bit and soon found the source of location from where Linda's bloody smell was emitted. It was coming from the bottom of the pile.

He shook off the dust and decided to go and check out if she was dead or alive. However, he suddenly stopped as he thought of the previous situation where her brother almost killed him. She couldn't be waiting inside so that when he moves away the rubble to be attacked at the last second.

He went away but returned after a while. He had brought some fabric and withered dry wood. He threw everything on the rubble and lit the torch. The dry timber and clothing began to burn up, and a steady fire was made.

In about 10 minutes the fire was extinguished.

Dudian looked at the rocks that were burned by the flames. He thought that if she were determined to forbear the pain, she would be able to stay alive. He left to the opposite side of the small building where he had put the bag with yellow explosives.

He brought two yellow explosives and put them onto the rubble. He rolled a paper and stuck it to explosives.

After he finished making everything he lit the paper and began to run away to wait for the combustion. The paper was slowly burning when he saw the explosives roll down as the clay and crust were moving.

Suddenly, the rocks were pushed away as a bloody figure jumped from inside out. She quickly grabbed the explosives and threw it towards Dudian.

Dudian immediately raised his hands and caught the explosives. Moreover, he pinched the paper to avoid the explosion. He knew that shell was not going to detonate.

However, he still threw them away. He looked at the dark and bloody figure. Linda was still alive.

Linda was in a disastrous state. Her left arm was completely fried while debris was embedded onto her body as the armor was not meant to protect her from an explosion. She was taking in big breaths while tightly staring at Dudian. There were fresh burn marks on her face. Apparently, it had happened when Dudian had burned the dry wood. Most probably some of them had fallen onto her face through the gap in rocks.

However, she had held back and didn't say anything.

Dudian saw her devil-like appearance. His heart was cold and patient. This was beyond his imagination. But it also let him realize how strong silver level hunters are.

Whoosh!

He rapidly pulled the string and shot his arrows.

At the moment, the distance between both of them were less than ten meters.

Linda saw Dudian throw away the stone shell. She was startled. Although she didn't know what this thing was it was familiar to the 'hissing' sound she had heard before. Why was the sound eliminated in his hands?

She tried to escape the arrows that were aimed at her but her legs were too seriously injured. One of the arrows hit her abdomen forcing her body to fly back and hit the ground.

As for her sword, she had lost it in the explosion and wasn't aware of its location.

Dudian quickly put the second arrow and pulled the string.

Puff!

The second shot hit her shoulder.

Dudian was relentless as he took the third arrow and aimed at her forehead!

Linda made a last ditch and quickly rolled sideways to avoid getting hit in the face.

Dudian frowned and used his hand to take another arrow from the quiver but it was empty.

Linda turned around and noticed the scene. There was a gloomy smile on his face: "Little devil if you want to kill me then you will die with me!" She grabbed onto the arrow that was stabbed in her abdomen and pulled it out in a single breath. She staggered as she stood up and took a deep breath as she rushed towards Dudian.

Dudian didn’t escape. Linda’s speed was so fast that he wouldn’t be able to run away. No matter how fast he runs he will be caught, so he stood still and waited for her while he stared directly at her eyes. When she was about three meters away from him, his hand suddenly lifted.

Whoosh!

A shadow left his palm.

Puff! Blood spattered off.

Linda who was running at full speed fell backward to the ground. A dagger had pierced her throat.

In such a short distance, the speed of a dagger was in no way inferior to the speed of an arrow. Linda couldn’t react in time because of her serious injuries. Unless, she was brought back to the giant wall, even if Dudian didn’t shot her she would die later on.

“Gurgle . .” blood bubbled out of Linda’s mouth. Her trachea was block so blood wasn’t able to circulate properly.

Dudian grabbed few stones and threw them at her.

Linda’s body trembled. Her body struggled as she moved her head to stare at him. Her mouth slightly opened but couldn’t utter anything.

Dudian's brows wrinkled as he got closer to her and said: "You and your brother are quite alike. He was also unwilling to die. Oh, did I forget to tell you? In fact, it was me who had killed your brother!"

Linda's eyes widened because of agitation. However, it affected the muscles of her throat. She coughed up a mouthful of blood. She was staring at her legs as she issued a 'hum' sound. Her body was too injured and was unable to stand up. Her arm stayed stiff in the air before falling.

Dudian looked carefully. It was not a lie. He picked a large stone and hit her head severely. She still didn't respond. He was relieved to see she was dead. He bent down and pulled out the dagger from her throat. However, for her not to turn into undead, he completely cut it off.

Afterward, he was assured of her death. His tightened body loosened up and he felt cold sweat soaking down his spine. He sat on the ground as he began to take big breaths.

After a while, his body was recovered. He incinerated Linda's body and destroyed her head.

Chapter 126 - Return

After dealing with Linda's body, he found her sword at the bottom of the stone pile. He went around to a nearby lake where a faintly visible shadow of a massive beast was swimming. He raised the sword and threw it as far as he could.

The corpse was destroyed, and the sword is lost to the depth of the lake.

Dudian patted his hands as he thought that even if the consortium sent a team to investigate and trace the clues nothing should get back to him. As the death of several others were done by Brainpeckers while he had only shot Gale. However, a few days ago he had smelled that the young girl incinerated Gale's body.

"Back to the wall . ." Dudian turned to leave. This time he had been for far too long outside the giant wall. He was soaked in a pool of rain water while he had ambushed Gale and Rona. He didn't know if there was anything infectious inside the water and he wasn't aware of the radiation content of the water pool.

However, mutations could occur if the body had accumulated more than 10% radiation content. In that case radiations, spots would appear on the human body as he had seen on people in bazaar and slums. Or maybe some parts of skin would change color, wrinkle, or age faster.

It would be severe, but sterilization was possible too.

Before leaving Dudian once again returned to the fortress that he had previously found. He selected usable mines, grenades, and firearms which had retained their condition and put them into his storage bag as he returned to area no 9.

Along the way, he relied on his sense of smell to avoid dangerous beasts. He didn't encounter any danger at all. Area no 7 was cleaned out of monsters. There were few bloodthirsty monsters which would come here from other areas that would be hunted by the hunter teams.

As he returned to area no 9, Dudian went to the place where he had previously hidden the bow and arrows of Brian. He found that none of them were noticed and taken. Moreover, there was additional two hundred cold crystal in here.

The cold crystals that were hidden in here for more than two months were still intact without any sign of melting.

Dudian was going to take the bow given to him by the consortium back to the giant wall. However, he was going to hide landmines and other things over here including about 100 cold crystal. With his present power killing undead was not difficult, so he wasn't worried about his stash being low.

After covering the storage location, Dudian went back to the giant wall passage which he had used while scavenging. It was close to area no 9.

Halfway through the rain began to pour.

Dudian immediately went into a dilapidated building to protect himself from rain. After rain had stopped he found some large leaves of plants and compiled them into a raincoat and put it on. It was enough to prevent the rain penetrating his clothes until he reached the giant wall.

Dudian soon finds the entrance to the underground passage of the giant wall. But the channel had a lock, and the layer of iron was very thick so it would be tough to break with brute force. He felt that even if Glenn were present, she wouldn't be able to open the gate.

Dudian sat next to the gate and waited till the next time the gate would be opened.

If any scavenger or hunter would return then, it meant that the gate would open and he would be able to enter too.

Dudian hoped that soon scavengers would either return or would be sent out so that he could get inside.

He wasn't idle while waiting for the gate to open. Dudian thought of spiral arrows which he could shoot. But he knew that to learn shooting spiral arrows was tough. It would improve the destructive and penetrative power, but its shooting trajectory was different from ordinary arrow shooting.

"Anyway, practicing spiral arrows would be much better than aligned shooting." Dudian decided.

The difference of destructive power between ordinary shots and spiral arrows was like the gap between an armor-piercing projectile and a bullet. There were two to three times of difference in force. Of course, if he could master spiral arrows and then superimpose them by using aligned shooting then it would be much more lethal.

However, mastering something like that wouldn't happen after three or five years of practice. Dudian didn't know how much time would be consumed to learn something like that.

Dudian decided to practice spiral arrow shooting. He felt that through hunting experience his accuracy would get better too.

He knew that he was a bit lucky when he had shot Gale.

However, even if he couldn't kill the dark skinned girl but was able to wound her whose was later destroyed by Brainpeckers.

So the point was that if there was no accuracy then even if he could shoot eight arrows at the same time, it was just meaningless.

Dudian took out his dagger and draws a circle on the wall. Although it was crooked, he wasn't planning to create an art form. Instead of sitting idle he was going to practice.

"First, I have to improve my range. The thing is I have to learn step by step. If my range were three or even five hundred meters

then to kill Linda, I would need to go through that much effort. Moreover, I could attract few Brainpeckers, and they would do the job in my stead."

Dudian lifted the bow and began to take arrows swiftly and shoot them.

"There is too too much deviation from the target," Dudian whispered. Although it is hard to expect the spiral arrows to shot on target from the first try he didn't expect such big deviation to occur. "Is the airflow impact too much?"

He began to analyze every shot and slowly practice.

Because of continuous archer, he didn't feel how the time passed.

Six days had gone by in the blink of an eye.

Dudian was practicing when the iron gate slowly pushed open.

Dudian was excited as his food supply had already finished. Last few days he was in a hungry state. If the door wouldn't open, then he was planning to find roots of grasses to fill his belly.

Peter was surprised and startled as he opened the iron gate.

"Dean?"

“What!”

“How come you are here? ”

Several familiar voices resounded from behind Peter. They were Mason, Zach, and Sham.

Dudian knew that Peter had brought them out for scavenging. Calculating his training time it was indeed the time they had to come out to perform tasks.

“I had come out to perform a task but unfortunately was separated from my team. So I came here.” Dudian laughed: “Fortunately, you guys had come, or I was going to starve to death!”

“Come on! You wouldn’t die that easy. ” Mason smiled.

Sham looked up and down at Dudian. : “What kind of monster were you guys hunting? You aren’t hurt, are you?”

Dudian nodded: “I’m alright.”

Peter asked. : “You were in training. How come they had sent you out to perform a task?”

Dudian looked at him.: “It was an urgent task, and the consortium was short of manpower, so they sent me.”

“But you are a rookie. How the consortium would do something so. .” Peter’s face had complex expression. He knew the even the primary hunters would die while hunting let alone a rookie. But he could understand the reason behind their decision as he sighed and thought in his heart. : “He doesn’t have ‘light physique’ so the consortium doesn’t put much of importance on him..”

Dudian roughly guessed his thoughts from his face. He was touched as he smiled and said: “Anyway, the task has been completed and there should be a lot of rewards. By the way, you three should be very careful while scavenging. I’ll be waiting for you guys for a treat!”

“We are going to choose the most luxurious place then!” Mason maliciously smiled.

Zach’s eyes also shone: “A hotel owned by aristocracy. ”

“We can’t waste Dean’s money!” Sham was a little angry: “We’re going to eat in Avi’s pub.”

“What!” Mason and Zach were surprised, “Are you his accountant?!”

“Alright, alright but you have to pay attention to your safety while scavenging.” Dudian made the promise.

Peter laughed: “This time they are going to scavenge at area no

13. There is no danger. At best they would meet few rats or small monsters. So as long as they are careful and don't act alone, they won't face any danger!"

"Well, no resources," Mason whispered.

Peter laughed and shook his head.

The team who was going out with Mason, Zach and Sham had the students from the same training camp as they had graduation from. All of them looked at Dudian's fine style armor and black bow which he held. They didn't expect the person who had trained with them in short amount of time to become a 'big man' while they scavenged little resources.

Dudian bid farewell to three and followed Peter into the underground passage.

"You should wait here first; I'll go and inform the people from Holy Church to come and pick you up," Peter laughed.

Dudian nodded. Hunters, as well as scavengers, had to undergo rigorous testing after they come from the outside.

Chapter 127 - Hold Still

After leaving the aisle, Dudian saw Peter using a flute-like pipe to whistle. A black crow flew afterward, he wrote a message with the pen, and it carried the message away.

“The area within the giant wall is too vast, so consortiums have raised crows for carrying messages. If you are in a hurry to report something you can also use them.” Peter explained with a smile.

“Are not they afraid of radiation?” asked Dudian.

“These crows are not only smart but also resistant to radiation. They can also be used in radiation area while hunting too. ” Peter laughed.

Dudian knew that crows had mutated to something unique which was resistant to radiation.

Peter accompanied Dudian. He saw the huge storage bag on Dudian’s back: “Even if you are a hunter, you haven’t forgotten to scavenge various materials. It should not be as profitable as killing those beasts.?”

Dudian knew that Peter was worried that they would get delayed of unnecessary things, so he truthfully said: “These are materials from beasts.”

“Ah?” Peter was surprised and stunned as he asked. : “From

monsters? All these? Is this…Did you hunt on your own?”

“Almost right,” Dudian replied in a general manner.

Peter recovered himself as he was aware of his rude attitude: “I thought…I didn’t expect you to go out hunting in such a short time. You can hunt beasts on your own. Well, thinking about it, you already have the power of a hunter, it’s just you lack skills and experience. Gee! Look at your storage bag! Worth a dozen coins, right?”

Peter was a bit envious.

Dudian understood that Peter thinks he had hunted ‘bone rats’ or small monsters similar to those. Those monsters had little valuable material. If they accumulate to such a large size, then they would be worth about a dozen gold coins. However, there were more than 700 pieces of cold crystals in the storage back which was about 700 gold coins. However, he hadn’t brought the materials that he got from Linda to prevent any unnecessary exposure.

After all, Glenn was going to give him 4000 gold coins. Now, he could be regarded a rich man. Most of the other primary hunters would not have as much money as he would.

A wagon cast in steel came over. It was like a dark cage made of iron. There were two Knights of Light in front of the carriage. But after checking their badges, he saw white flames engraved on them which meant they were apprentice knights.

“Let’s go,” Peter said Dudian.

Dudian nodded and went into the carriage.

The carriage stopped moving two hours later. Dudian lifted the curtain and found that they were not at the castle from the previous time but in a desolate and empty town. Leaves were all over the place while almost all the shops were closed and buildings looked stale.

“Where’s this?” Dudian inquired a nearby apprentice Knights of Light who was in charge of the escort.

This apprentice knight coldly glanced at him and indifferently said: “hold still!”

Dudian didn’t expect his attitude to be so cold. The apprentice had a trace of disgust on his face. Dudian couldn’t help but wrinkle his brows. He didn’t care much so put down the curtain. It seems the place where he was taken to was not the same castle as the last time.

A moment later, the carriage stopped.

One of the apprentices came forward and handed a pair of steel handcuff to Dudian.: “It’s part of the regulations; please cooperate!”

Dudian was flabbergasted.: “Why do they attend to me as if I’m a

prisoner?” However, because of the white flame medal on their uniforms, he holds back his anger. If he over-reacted, they could mistakenly believe that he had been infected, which could lead to unnecessary trouble. He moved his hands and let them handcuff him.

Afterward, the apprentice knight took out the key and unlocked the carriage. : “Please, walk in front!”

Dudian sullenly said: “What about my luggage?”

“You shouldn’t be worried about it.” Apprentice knight indifferently replied.

Dudian no longer said anything as he turned around to walk in front. It felt as if he was a prisoner and they were the guards who are escorting him.

A female Knight of Light was inside the hall when they came in. She clutched her nose as she looked at Dudian and waved. : “Shower! Get him to take a shower and clean himself!”

“Yes.” The apprentice knight answered in a hurry.

Dudian is brought into a large bathhouse. There were no rooms for a private shower. Moreover, he felt angry as he would be supervised even while he is taking a shower and they didn’t even uncuff him.

Although he felt that he was humiliated, he barely holds back. Afterward, he was given a new clothing by the maid who had brought them in advance.

Afterward, he was brought into another hall. There were rows of cages in this one. They were entirely different to the ones he had seen previously. This cages had steel cast which was as thick as baby's arm. Even senior hunters wouldn't be able to break them apart easily.

"Go in and wait. Someone will come to you to test." Apprentice said and left.

Dudian didn't reply but quietly went into the cage.

All the other cages were empty. The book of light was on the table near the bed.

He didn't read it but instead leaned against the wall. He was thinking about archery training and alchemy plans.

A few days passed in the blink of an eye.

Few doctors had come to check his body on a daily basis. The inspection method was different from the last time. Not only the radiation content of his body was checked but also his blood and magic marks.

The method to test the blood was very simple. They would fill a

bowl with water. Then they will add a few drops of Dudian blood. Afterward, they will add few drops from an ordinary person and will see whether Dudian's blood will try to engulf it.

If it happens, then it is proof that Dudian's body is infected with the virus and someone will be sent to destroy him.

Although there were people like Linda, who had magic marks abilities which could control the blood. But once the blood was out of the body it was not subject to their control. So this set of blood testing method was by far the most 'scientific' and accurate way.

During the initial test, Dudian learned that he had to stay in here for seven days. The virus would affect scavenger's body in three days while it would take almost a week for it to change a primary hunter. A silver level hunter would have to stay for half a month while senior hunters would need to wait for a whole month.

This was the sole reason why senior hunters would only perform a task once or twice a year.

Chapter 128 - Exceptional Hunter

Seven days passed in the blink of an eye.

All of the indicators were normal except Dudian's body radiation content which had increased and reached 1.5. It was much higher than the primary hunter's average result which was close to zero.

Dudian knew that the main reason for such a result happened because he had soaked in the pool. But he didn't worry as the radiation value lower than five would not affect his body's functionality. If his body's radiation content had passed five, he could buy purification water from the Holy Church to eliminate the radiation. Although the purification water was expensive, as long as he could solve out the problem of money, then it would not be difficult.

On the eighth day, it was female Knight of Light who came to the cage and raised her hand indicating the apprentice knight to open the cage. Apprentice pulled out the key and unlocked the cage.: "You can leave now, a person from your consortium has been waiting for you outside."

Dudian stood up and patted off the dust on his body and followed after them.

As he came outside the place, Dudian saw a carriage with Mellon Consortium flag parked. In the past few days of the examination, the guards had asked him about his identity and had helped him by informing Mellon consortium about his return.

As Dudian came close to the carriage, the coachman immediately jumped out of the carriage and respectfully asked: “Are you, Mr. Dean?”

Dudian nodded.

“I’m here to pick you up, sire. Please get in.” Coachman politely said to Dudian.

After living in poor conditions in a cage for some time, Dudian’s heart had a trace of satisfaction as he sat in the luxurious and spacious carriage.

The carriage drove out of the desolate and dilapidated town. After a short while, it entered the outer edge of the commercial district. The surrounding towns and villages were getting more clean and smooth.

A few hours later, Dudian had returned to the Hunter headquarters.

Dudian thanked coachman after he got off the carriage and turned back to the castle where his previous training had happened. The guards stopped him, but after showing his hunter medal, he was able to enter the castle.

He directly went over to the archer training ground near the river. As he gets close by, he saw five shadows standing in their

respective practice corners and practicing archery. They were practicing aligned shooting.

Five of them were surprised as they saw Dudian approach the field. The one who was closest to Dudian asked in surprise: “Are you alright?”

“Do I look bad?”

The boy suddenly knew that he had been rude towards Dudian, so he quickly said: “No, no, what I meant was you were away for so long that we all thought you…”

Dudian smiled but did not say anything. He saw the servants responsible for helping him were not present, so he picked up his training bow and arrows and re-entered the training ground that belonged to him.

“What was the task about? What did you do?” The youth on next training ground was curious as he asked Dudian.

Dudian remembered him as the youth was the kid who had exchanged words with him when he had breakfast. : “I helped to track a beast. The hunt has been over for some time now.”

“Completed?” The boy asked: “Was it dangerous? Was the beast powerful? ”

Dudian saw that the other were looking over curiously, so he

said: “It was very dangerous and cruel. If we don’t train properly and meet such a beast on our own, we will be its dinner and turn to its excrement.”

“Dirty!” The girl who heard the word ‘excrement’ quickly covered her mouth.

Dudian shrugged, did not say anything and continued to shoot arrows.

The others were disappointed as they saw Dudian didn’t continue to talk about the task. However, they didn’t take his words too seriously. They had heard a lot of stories such as Dudian’s. They knew that the beasts were very dangerous in comparison to mutated beasts that lived within the giant wall. But they were confident that once they would get their hands on magic marks, they will have super-human power and earn large sums of gold money.

Training continued.

Half an hour later, the young instructor ran over as he saw Dudian in the field. His face was relieved as said to Dudian: “How come you came back so late?

“It ‘s been some time that I was back it was just that they kept me for a disinfection period.,” Dudian stopped archery training and began to explain.

The young instructor snapped: “I know about that. But if seven days ago we didn’t get news from you the consortium was ready to mobilize a mission to search for you. Glenn and the other who had performed a task with you had been back for a long time!”

The five who were close by were surprised, and their eyes widened as they heard Glenn’s name. All of them had heard about top two hunters of the Mellon Consortium. Glenn’s name was widely spread even between the trainees too. Everyone was familiar with her status.

All five of them envied him as they didn’t expect Dudian to follow such a legendary figure while implementing the task.

Dudian observed young instructor’s grim expression, so he coughed up before saying.: “I went back to clean an area from the undead. I killed way too much. I have forgotten the exact number.”

“Well, I know!” the young instructor continued, ” You have brought back a total of 723 cold crystals. According to one to one exchange principle, 723 gold coins has been prepared by the Finance Department for you. Well, if you are going to fetch it, you should have told us in advance!”

Dudian was relieved as he saw that young instructor was not angry. He smiled and said.: “Yes, I’ll.”

The young instructor said: “Alright, it should count as a good training, but you are not allowed to do so again. This time we are

not faulting you as a newcomer, but you aren't authorized to go on your own until you finish with the training."

Dudian nodded in understanding.

Young instructors face also eased down as he saw Dudian's good attitude. He no longer continued to say anything. In fact, he was very satisfied with Dudian. He knew that not just newcomer but even normal primary hunters wouldn't be able to hunt 700 pieces of cold crystal on their own. Only some veteran primary hunters would be able to get a result such as that.

Psychological pressure alone was a difficult hurdle to cross.

Moreover, instructor knew that Dudian's talent as a hunter was superb if he was able to hunt to many undead in about 8 or 9 days. Whether it was courage or hunting skills, all of them were compared with a primary hunter. Dudian's only inadequate forte was his lack of experience. He should further enhance his skills too.

Moreover, the 'ghost assassin' Glenn had mention Dudian after they had returned. Also, she had said few positive words about him and appreciated Dudian's attitude. This matter had been spread in the training camp, and the boss had praised him a lot these days. Also boss had said that he had nurtured an excellent hunter.

Chapter 129 - Scattering Archery

“You have just come back from outside, so I’ll allow you to take two days off and come to train the day after tomorrow.” The young instructor said.

The other five people couldn’t help but look with envy at Dudian. They were selected as the beast from all over the place. However, they never had a break after they had joined the camp. Even if they were wounded, as long as it was not a life-threatening injury, they had to continue training. Holidays were already a luxury for them.

“No,” Dudian shook his head, said: “I’ve rested for seven days while in detention. If I relax a bit more, I’ll forget the feeling of the bow. ”

The instructor was surprised by Dudian’s reply.: “Alright, then today I won’t give you a task to complete, so practice on your own. Tomorrow I’m going to teach you a new archery skill, though.”

“What kind of archery skill?” Dudian was curious.

“Scattered arrow.” Young instructor continued: “This time you have to learn it. Scattered arrow shots are critical in archery. Especially if you encountered a group of monsters, then this is the best way to destroy or create the greatest harm in the shortest time. Moreover, you can support warriors and knights at the same time. It’s not same as aligned shots so you can’t neglect this skill.”

Dudian lost interest as he learned the name of the skill. If the

lethality of the arrows were too weak then even if eight or nine arrows were shot at the same time they wouldn't have much of an effect. Although in some a great number of enemies would be injured the effects would be less than a single destructive shot.

Moreover, if you didn't kill the monster, then it didn't amount to anything. As only wounding a monster didn't make much sense. Additionally, he was concerned and in pursuit of individual combat capabilities, rather than fighting in groups. After all, by relying on gunpowder, he had enough resources and power which was in no way inferior to a group of hunters.

He didn't have 'light physique' which the rest of hunters had. So each time he went out to hunt his body's radiation content would increase. So he had to harvest a lot of valuable things to be able to buy purification water.

"I will," Dudian replied. But in his heart, he thought that if it would not be too difficult, then he would learn it. But if it was going to be difficult then he wasn't going to waste energy.

After all, his training time was only one year. So he had to learn more practical skills most suited to his own, one man team.

As the young instructor left, Dudian went back to training. The other five quickly came over as they curiously asked Dudian: "You followed Glenn to hunt? Did you see her fight? Was she exceptionally powerful?" "

"What was her magic ability?"

“I heard that when she hunted monsters, she appeared and disappeared as if she was a phantom, so they call her Ghost Assassin.”

“You have heard wrong. She is called Ghost Assassin because the magic marks she had obtained originated from ghosts!”

Dudian saw these people for going to ask and talk for a long time. He was stunned and speechless as he said: “After you graduate you should be able to see her hunt. It’s better to see in person, as it would be hard to describe!”

“After we graduate we will be junior hunters. How are we going to go hunt with her? ”

“Yeah! Come on, talk to us about her. ”

All of them were eagerly look at him.

Dudian was getting a headache because of them. Apparently, they have not figured out the mess they are in. The consortium was simply imparting knowledge and skills to them right now but wasn’t giving them training in combat. They would get personal experience throughout the brutal hunting.

Dudian said few words to cope up with their curiosity and later on sent them off and continued his training.

The next day.

The young instructor comes to teach Dudian “scattering” archery. The main trick behind this skills was that when a hand went back to get an arrow from the quiver, he would have to catch more arrows in between the gaps amidst the fingers. Dudian had to repeat this to exercise and perfect the skill. If he spent too much time while getting the arrows, then the whole point of scattered shooting was pointless.

The second trick was finger adjustment.

After fingers caught the arrows and brought them to the bow, they had to adjust the angle of arrows according to the distribution of monsters. The spacing would not be uniform and had to be improved rapidly through the fingers.

Otherwise, even if he shot the arrows not only he would waste them but also affect efficiency and power.

In general, the scattered archery was not difficult. But to have significant effects while shooting, you must meet the three ‘F’ criteria.

Fast arrow! Quick aiming! Quick adjustment!

“Practice well. It is one of the skills an archer must master!” Young instructor was serious: “Aligned arrow shooting didn’t matter much, but you must master this!”

Dudian nodded. Although the scattering archery was of little significance for him, the arrow grabbing speed and precision training were obviously of great effect to him.

After the young instructor had left, he began to practice.

The training ground for the scattering archers was separated from the place where the other five were practicing. It was a separate subdivision where four targets were meant for a single archer trainee.

Dudian listened to the young instructor talks about senior hunter's super archery skills. He was able to grab eight arrows and shot them at different parts of eight monsters. It meant that each finger caught two arrows but also adjusted both arrows at different angled. The sound of it was incredible, but Dudian knew that young instructor wouldn't lie.

As he trained, Dudian realized the hardship. Sometimes arrows would slip from fingers. The other time they wouldn't clip from the beginning. After several hours of boring repeated practice, he was gradually getting better, but his speed while grasping the arrows was very slow.

Dudian knew that initially, he would encounter such problems and the patience was the only solution. The only thing he could to now was to continue to train.

After training, Dudian went to Finance Department to receive his

gold coins.

He took a heavy bag which had seven hundred gold coins in it. He sat in a carriage arranged by the consortium and was ready to go to his house assigned by the consortium. It was night and weather was pretty dark.

He was planning to take Jura and Gray over as soon as possible. By the way, he could let Mason and the other two settle in his house too.

Rumble!

Thunder echoed. Dark clouds had covered the sky, and after a moment , torrential rains began to pour down.

Dudian pulled the curtain to prevent rain from splashing into the carriage. He sighed. The rainy season was too troublesome as rain would fall too frequently. But he thought that the other two seasons weren’t much better either.

They were half the way to his house when the carriage stopped as neighs of horses resounded.

Chapter 130 - Once Again

Dudian frowned as he was displeased. He slightly moved the curtain to check outside.

He saw a middle-aged gentleman wearing a coat while standing in front of his carriage as the torrential rain poured down. He had raised the stick that he was holding to stop Dudian's carriage. He seemed relieved as the carriage stopped in time. The middle-aged man immediately approached to the driver.: "Our carriage broke so we will need to requisition your carriage temporarily."

The coachman looked at the middle-aged man. Heavy rain affected his line of sight, but he still could see an elegant carriage parked in front. An oil lamp lit the carriage. He hesitated for a moment but still looked back at the carriage. : "Sir, this... ..."

Dudian didn't wait for him to finish his word as he waved: "Don't!"

The middle-aged gentleman heard the soft sound coming from the carriage. He was stunned as if he couldn't believe the words coming out of the carriage. He stepped forward and said.: "Hello! I am housekeeper of the Burong family. Would you please use the next carriage. Of course, I'll pay you double the price. You can use our wagon to shelter from rain until the next carriage passes by while I can use yours to get the lady of my house back to home. The weather is still early, and I believe there will be carriages that would pass by."

Dudian knew that Burong family was one of the two highest ranking family in Mellon Consortium. He didn't expect that he would face someone so troublesome.: "Sorry, I am in a hurry. You should continue to wait for another carriage."

The middle-aged gentleman's face turned a little ugly. He was about to say something when a soft voice echoed from the aristocratic carriage that was behind him.: "Uncle, forget it. Give me a coat, and I'll ride back home!"

The middle-aged man quickly turned around.: "The rain is so heavy! You will catch the flu."

"It's alright! My body is adamant." The girl's voice echoed out from the carriage.

The middle-aged gentleman continued to persuade her hastily.

Dudian listened to the familiar sound coming from the carriage. Although the rainstorm interfered, he wasn't an ordinary person either. He knew that he heard the voice somewhere but couldn't remember when and where. However, the next moment a figure flashed in his mind as he quickly said.: "You come here for the time being."

The middle-aged gentleman to hear him call Dudian, stunned for a moment, turned and said: "Do you agree?

"Well," said Dudian, "but there is a condition. That is I won't

leave the carriage. If your miss wants, I can take her home."

"This ... ..." the Middle-aged gentleman hesitated for a moment and shook his head: "No, miss can't stay alone in a compartment with a stranger. "

Dudian was disappointed as he heard the middle-aged man talk.

"There is nothing to be worried about, uncle." The female's voice echoed from the broken carriage: " The knight will be riding alone too, so there won't be anything dangerous. "

The middle-aged gentleman looked at the knight who had full body armor and was sitting on top of the horse close to the broken carriage. He hesitated a bit: "But, I wanted to escort you back personally."

"No, there is not enough space." Dudian immediately refused.

Middle-aged gentleman almost suffocated in anger: "What do you mean? What are you after? Ha? What are you trying to do to our family's lady? I tell you, the Burong family is not something that you can provoke."

"What I meant was, can't you see the size of the carriage?" said Dudian.

Indeed, it was a small single carriage, and only two people could sit inside.

“All right. Jim, you must protect the lady. No slip ups, do you get me?” Middle-aged gentleman hesitated again but agreed and talked to the knight who was riding the horse. He had agreed because he could judge from Dudian’s voice that his age wasn’t that much and speculated that he was the son of some wealthy family.

If the other party were an adult, he would never agree to such a thing.

Dudian’s lips curled up into a smile as he saw the middle-aged man agree. The man went back to the broken carriage. He raised the umbrella and opened the compartment. A petite figure came out and followed the middle-aged gentleman back to Dudian’s carriage.

Dudian opened the door of the carriage and saw her appearance clearly. His heart was full of joy as he raised his hand to help her into the carriage.

Middle-aged gentleman saw Dudian and sighed in relief. However, he pushed away Dudian’s hand. He helped the girl to get into the carriage and spoke in a serious tone to Dudian: “You can’t touch our miss. Lady if he dares to touch you tell Jim immediately so that he punishes him on the spot!”

The girl’s head has been down as she got into the carriage. However, when she looked up and glanced at Dudian she was stunned for a moment, and her cheeks flushed crimson red. She subconsciously replied to the middle-aged gentleman: “Ok, uncle!

You should take care of yourself too. ”

“Miss, you do not have to worry about me,” replied middle-aged man and glared ferociously at Dudian, implying warning. He closed the door of the carriage to prevent rainwater splashing into the compartment.

Dudian turned a blind eye to the middle-aged gentleman’s actions.

“Coachman, go to Glint Street!” The middle-aged butler told the driver.

The driver saw Dudian didn’t say anything, so he began to ride the carriage towards the Glint Street.

Dudian smiled and looked at the figure sitting opposite to him.: “Long time no see, ah! I didn’t think you would turn out to be Burong family’s little miss. You deceived me.”

“I did not mean it.” The girl looked up at him once again. However, she quickly bowed her head so that he couldn’t see her red face.

She was Jenny who Dudian had met last time in the noble party.

“If it was unintentional then I assume it’s alright. Fortunately, you met me today or else you would turn into a chicken soup after being drenched in the rain.” Dudian laughed.

Jenny seemed to hear for the first time a phrase like that. She could help but laugh at him: “Where do you learn such strange phrases? By the way, I wasn’t worried or afraid as I could stay inside the carriage.”

“Well, a few moments ago someone was talking about riding a horse back home!? ” Dudian laughed. “I did not expect you to know how to ride a horse. Should a noble lady practice riding?”

“Yes, it’s not ladylike to ride a horse. ” Jenny calmly said: “But I think it is very chic. Moreover, there are ladies who rides horses though the numbers are a bit small.”

Dudian nodded: “As long as you want to do something do it, try not to pay much attention to what the people say about it.”

“Do you think so?” Jenny looked at him with delight.

Dudian looked at her and found her eyes sparkling, like two bright gems. The speed of his hear-rate inexplicable increase but he recovered himself and turned calm. He continued to speak in a serious tone.: “Yes, of course. It’s not like horse riding is limited for men only.”

“But my father does not like it when he sees me ride a horse, he gets so angry.”

“You should ride in secret then,” Dudian advised her.

“That’s what I do,” Jenny replied cunningly.

Dudian could not help but laugh.

Chapter 131 - Fate

“Having said that, why are you out so late?” Dudian was curious.

Jenny answered passionately: “Remember, last time I told you that I study law. The thing is after a few days there is going to be a trail to recruit trainee magistrates. So, I’m doing my best and study under a tutor who has a good relationship with my family. I was coming back from studying when the carriage broke up, but fortunately, I encountered you.”

“So to say it is our fate to meet.” Dudian laughed.

“Cause?” Jenny could not understand the word. (Now, sorry for disturbing you read, but the word used in here has quite a few meanings in Chinese FATE, CAUSE & EDGE [VERGE]. He means FATE, but she understands it as CAUSE. If you read it in Chinese it makes sense, but after translations it loses the edge.)

Dudian thought that the word ‘fate’ was coming from a Buddhist concept and in this world, there was no Buddhism. So he quickly explained: “The meaning of fate… ah, it’s like… It’s like when God of Light has arranged a fortuitous opportunity for two people to meet once again. An affinity.”

Jenny face reddened again as she heard Dudian’s explanation. She secretly looked at him to see if he had noticed her abnormal actions. She was curious as she asked another question.: “So, how come you happened to be in here?”

“I’m going home,” replied Dudian.

Jenny thought of something and said: “Have you been outside the wall yet? How is it over there? Is it like my father telling me? Is it dangerous?”

Dudian looked at her sparkling eyes and thought of that night. He remembered her longing words as he sighed in his heart.: “There are vast grasslands, towering mountains and blue sea out there.”

“Really?” Jenny was surprised.

Dudian nodded, “Well, although a bit dangerous, but if you can see the beautiful scenery and the vast world, then coming up with a bit of danger isn’t that problematic.”

“I think so, too,” said Jenny. “I hope that one day I can also see the scenery of the outside world. ”

“You will!” Dudian assured her.

Jenny sighed, as her face turned sad: “Unfortunately, I can not go out.”

Dudian slowly said: “Even if you can’t go out, but you can still see.”

“Really?” Jenny looked at him in surprise, some hope.

“You will naturally be able to see if the giant wall disappears,” said Dudian.

Jenny shook her head: “The giant wall is to protect us. If the giant wall disappears then, our livelihood will turn dangerous.”

Dudian opened his mouth, but didn’t say anything.

“Tell me something about the wall,” Jenny said to Dudian.

Dudian saw her staring at him and lost his cool: “Yes, uh, can ah.”

“Why are you stammering?”

“Keke, it’s cold.”

“Are the scavengers also afraid cold?”

“Of course. ”

“Well, I won’t interrupt, so you continue to speak. ” Jenny rested her head in between her hands as she attentively listened to Dudian.

Dudian's body stiffened, and muscles uncontrollably tightened as he saw her lovely look: "Ok, I will tell you all I saw. There are very high mountains covered in lush trees. Many cute little animals are lurking around. Such as rabbits, foxes, small squirrels..."

"No monsters?" Jenny asked on instinct.

Dudian nodded: "Monsters are in other places."

"Where?"

"Well, different regions. They live far away from the mountains that I talk about. "

"Well, you go on, I want to hear more."

"There are waterfalls on the hills ... local people live in peace ..."

The carriage slowly moved because of heavy rain pouring down. The young knight who was riding his horse close to the carriage was drenched wet in the rain. He pressed the horse close to the carriage, listening to young lady's laughter from time to time. His face slightly wrinkled but didn't say anything and chose to silently and closely follow the carriage.

"There are many fish and shrimp in the sea. There are animals called mussels which can grow pearls in their bodies... ... ah, pearl looks like a white bead. They are as good-looking as diamonds. Pearls are round and very smooth ... ..." Dudian talked about from

mountains to the sea while the wind whistled outside the carriage.

Jenny listened attentively, and when she heard about the pearls, her face was a little surprised and had a feeling of longing, “I want to see the places and animals that you talked about.”

Dudian smiled but didn’t reply. Because of the virus and biological changes caused by the nuclear radiation, there were no pearls within the giant wall. They couldn’t be found outside the giant wall too as pearls had a shelf life. Most probably they had rotten to dust. That’s why people living within the giant wall didn’t know about the existence of pearls.

The carriage’s speed gradually slowed down, and vehicle completely stopped.

“Miss,” Driver called out.

Jenny regained consciousness as she did not expect to get to home in the blink of an eye. She looked at Dudian and said: “Thank you for bringing me home.”

“By the way,” said Dudian.

The knight had jumped off the horse and came to knock the door of the carriage.: “Miss, we have reached home.”

The door opened, and Jenny saw the knight holding up an umbrella. She went and looked back at Dudian.: “Thank you for

telling me the story."

"Story?" Dudian was perplexed but let it go.: "Did you like it?"

"A lot." Jenny's face flushed. She hesitated a bit but got her courage up: "Thank you for the poem too. I've been treasuring it." She turned around and ran away.

The young knight also rushed chasing after her while holding up the umbrella.

Dudian thought: "poem?" He remembered the poem that his sister was reading a lot. It seemed poetry and drama were the things that nobility loved.

He didn't think much as he told the driver: "Let's go."

The storm stopped. The drainage system in the commercial district was working fine as it was looked after. However, there was a different sight in slums because of floods brought by the rain.

As the rain stopped, the carriage began to ride at full speed.

Dudian sat in the carriage. The girl's fragrance was still floating in the compartment. She had not applied perfume, but it was the faint aroma coming off from her body. Her face illuminates in front of him. A warm feeling passed by his heart.

Suddenly, he thought about what Jenny had said: “An examination to recruit trainees. I don’t know if my knowledge is enough to pass the exam.”

Chapter 132 - Magistrate Examination

As Dudian thought about Jenny and the examination, the carriage arrived at a remote town on the outskirts of the commercial district and stopped in front of an ordinary resident's house.

Dudian opened the curtain of the carriage and looked at the number near the door of the house to confirm the address. The rain had stopped, but the ground was still wet. He took the bag filled with a gold coin from under the chair and got off the carriage. He took out the key and unlocked the door.

The house was full of furniture. The consortium had assigned most of the things to help him out. However, because of the training, the house was unused and thick dust had accumulated.

"I need to recruit a few servants," Dudian said as he touched the dust. He put the bag full of gold coins in the safe.

Bong! Ding-dong!

The clock began to ring.

Dudian checked the time. It was eight in the evening. After an hour, curfew time would begin. He locked the door as the driver went back to the Hunter headquarters.

The next day.

Dudian woke up on time and arrived to eat breakfast in the castle's cafeteria. He saw a few students looking at him and whispering.

However, he could still hear their low-toned voices.

"I didn't expect that after being stained with Glenn's light, I'll become a celebrity." Dudian thought as he ate breakfast. Afterward he came to the training ground and continued with yesterday's practice.

Two servants who were meant to help him with arrows and other things were present when he arrived there.

As they helped him out, Dudian could concentrate on training. Moreover, his efficiency, improved at least by double because he was only shooting.

The young instructor came earlier than usual. He watched Dudian who was diligently practicing. From time to time he pointed out a few things and left very satisfied. Because he saw the Dudian was already getting the essentials of scattered arrow shooting.

Since the absorption of more than hundred cold crystals Dudian's physique had already exceeded the estimates of young instructor. Dudian had finished the task set by instructor earlier, but still continued to practice until 3 o'clock.

As he thought about the examination that was going to happen in a few days, he left the training ground and hired a carriage to the magistrate. The architectural style of magistrate's division was extraordinary. It was on par with scavenger headquarters regarding magnificence.

Dudian approached the reception.

"Yes, the apprentices will be recruited in five days at Boer Square. If you want to join, then you should go there to pass the first test." The guard said.

Dudian wrote down the address and left the place. He hired another carriage and went back to the residential district.

Jura and Gray were at home, eating when Dudian arrived.

They were surprised to see him back. After inquiring him because of few concerns, Dudian said to them: "The house in the commercial district is ready. I came back so that we can go and get your temporary permit to live in the commercial district. So, therefore, you can move whenever you want."

Both of them were happy.

Gray laughed: "Your aunt has been reluctant and didn't want to leave as we have lived in here for too long and familiar with the neighbors."

Dudian nodded, as he was aware of Jura's temper.

The next day.

Dudian took both Jura and Gray and came to the government agency and helped them to get a temporary residence permit. Afterward, he took them to the new house.

Jura and Gray were very satisfied with the house. Although it was in a remote suburb of the commercial district, but was far better than the location, they were living in the residential district.

Dudian took hundred gold coins from the safe and gave it to them with the key to the house.

By nine o'clock in the morning, he was at the training ground. The young instructor severely criticized him as he saw Dudian was late and then asked the reason.

Dudian answered truthfully.

Young instructor's face eased a bit after listening to Dudian but nevertheless increased the amount of the task by one-third as a punishment.

Dudian was skimming through his law knowledge during the break he took while training. The position of a trainee magistrate

was important for him although he was no longer an ordinary civilian.

He was a hunter. Nevertheless, his identity was still a civilian.

A status of civilian meant that in case he was assassinated outside the wall, in addition to Mellon Foundation no-one would feel sorry. It meant that the enemies would not care about too much attention to his status as he was a regular civilian.

The next day, Dudian still finished the task arranged by the young instructor about three o'clock. It meant that his proficiency in archery had increased by one-third.

Five days passed quickly.

Dudian practiced scattered arrow shots and improved in accuracy during the day while in the evening he went to the library to study law. He would bring some books back to his room and stay up every night until 12 o'clock to review the books. For almost a week he had only six hours of sleep.

"Instructor, I want to take a day off." Dudian was wearing ordinary clothes as he found the young instructor in the training field.

Young instructor frowned as he saw the way Dudian was dressed: "Where are you going?"

“It’s a private matter,” Dudian replied.

The young instructor looked at him: “Alright, but today’s amount will be added to finish tomorrow. ”

Dudian overjoyed, quickly thanked and bid farewell as he left.

Five students who were close-by stared in shock. One of them reacted in a hurry. : “Instructor, I gotta leave too.”

“Get back to training!”

…

Dudian jumped into the carriage parked outside the castle and ordered the coachman to ride it to Boer square at full speed.

Half an hour later, the carriage was on the street outside the Boer Square.

Dudian heard noise coming from outside, so he opened the door to check the situation. He was shocked as he saw the streets packed with people. The carriages arranged on a long queue. All of them clearly were here to participate in the examination.

“So many people!” Dudian felt some pressure. He left the carriage and dived into the crowd.

He was taller than his peers, but much smaller than a healthy adult. He was like a poach who passed through the crowd. On his way, he leaned over and squeezed a girl. She turned around in a fury, shouted and abused the teenager behind her.

The guy was surprised as he was ignorant of the situation.

Dudian was half the way when he saw a refined carriage with a familiar flag. He remembered the rainy night.

“It is her!” Dudian was surprised. Because of the crow, he couldn’t detect Jenny smell as his senses were confused. He moved past towards the carriage.

The knight with full body armor was by the carriage and protecting it. He saw Dudian getting closer, he raised his hand and coldly said: “Back off!”

Dudian stopped and said out loud. : “Jenny!”

The sound of the crowd almost overwhelmed his voice. However, the curtain of the carriage opened as Jenny looked at Dudian in surprise. She said pleasantly: “You?!”

Chapter 133 - Qualified

Dudian would never think that he would be able to meet her on the way to the examination. His heart was happy as he said to: “What a coincidence that I have encountered you!”

Jenny rejoiced too. “Why are you here?”

“I’ve told you before. My goal is as high as yours.” Dudian laughed: “I’m also here to take the exam and strive to be a judge or magistrate in the future!”

Jenny cheeks were reddish as she asked: “Did you study the law?”

“Of course.” Dudian deliberately exposed his face proudly as he was an expert on law.

Jenny laughed: “Alright, I’ll wait and see!”

“You look good!” Dudian confidently said.

Jenny checked the long line of the carriages that were parked in front and slowly moving. He was a bit sad as she spoke: “Way too many people. I’m afraid it will take a lot of time until we catch up.”

Dudian also knew that it was going to be a problem to wait to pass. “You should get off then, I’ll take you past the crowd!”

“You?” Jenny looked at him and shook her head, “No way.”

“No, I’m strong!” Dudian raised his arm and deliberately squeezed the muscles. He winked and said: “Don’t forget what I do.”

Jenny’s eyes brightened: “Well, you wait for me. I’m getting down.”

“Young lady, no! No way!” The knight got in front of Dudian as he saw her intention to get off the carriage was real. He hurried to stop her.

However, the door was pushed open, and Jenny stepped down. She was wearing a green floral skirt which was very eye-catching and full of lively atmosphere.

“Do not stop me or I’ll be late for the examination. I’ll complain to my father!” Jenny looked at the young knight who was standing in front of her.

The knight hesitated: “Miss... Then I’ll escort you past the crowd. I swear on my dignity as a knight that I have no ill thoughts...”

His words weren’t finished as the knight was pushed down with massive force. The force sent him reeling.

When he looked back, he saw the previous kid who he had stopped had clutched lady's hand and was already squeezing through the crowd. In the blink of an eye, they disappeared.

"Miss! Miss!" Knight shouted as he was shocked. He wanted to push through the crowd, but in that case, he would inevitably injure many people. Moreover, it was contrary to the rules of knighthood to act so.

...

"Let us pass, let us pass, let us pass!"

Dudian was grabbing Jenny's hand with one hand while pushing the crowd with the other. The people have pushed around as if they were weightless.

He was relieved when he saw the young knight was not chasing them. He came to the edge of the street and looked back at Jenny: "Are you okay?"

Jenny clapped her chest as she spoke: "Noting much. It's just a little hard to breathe!"

"Ok, we will rest a bit." Dudian was acting considerately.

Jenny nodded in agreement, but saw that Dudian was still holding her hand.: "You can release my hand."

Dudian's heart burst forth with inexplicable warmth and agitation as he was holding her soft hand.: "There are way too many people in here. We will be separated if I let go of you!"

Jenny looked around and saw the chaotic crowd. It caused her heart to shudder. For a time she felt that the palm of the other side was thick and warm. She felt secure holding Dudian's had. Her face turned crimson red, so she bowed her head and didn't retort back.

Dudian was worried that her silence would be a disadvantage to him so he added: "But you can rest assured. I will find you no matter where you are, even if we are separated!"

Jenny uttered ëoh' but didn't look up.

The next moment, they began to move forward.

He was pushing people around to create a gap for Jenny to pass quickly, but people were turning back in anger and mistake others as offenders. So most would vent their anger on entirely innocent people.

It didn't take long before they reached the street before the Boer square. There was a sea of people.

"Let me check out the place," Dudian said to Jenny and began to jump. In front of the square, there was an open space with a

diameter of 20 meters or so. In the middle of open space, there was a normal rectangular table. Three people wearing white robes were sitting behind the table. Two men and one woman.

In front of them, there was a long queue.

Dudian bounced up a few times more.

“Where now?” Jenny didn’t ask any more as she saw Dudian was not jumping anymore.

Dudian laughed: “Come with me.” He began to squeeze from the side, and after a few moments, they were lined up in the queue.

A large group of teenage girls was lined in front of them. It was evident that they belong to aristocratic families or were heirs of wealth syndicates from their extraordinary clothing, speech, and temperament. It was also the proof of how important and attractive the post of judges and magistrates were.

“You stand in front,” Dudian said to Jenny.

Jenny stared at him, but didn’t say anything. She quietly lined in front of him.

Dudian stood behind her and smelled the fragrance floating off from Jenny’s hair. (TL: The guy is a 100% stalker)

“The first test seems to be very strict.” Jenny looked at teenagers who were coming back from the examination with depressed looks.

Dudian encouraged her: “Belief in yourself! I know you can pass the test easily.”

It didn’t take long for them to reach the table.

“This is the paper with a question. Please write the answer in a minute.” A white-haired old man sitting by the desk indifferently said.

Standing by the desk handed a white paper and a quill to Jenny and let her write the answers directly over there.

“Do not peep,” maid told to Dudian and the rest who were standing behind him.

In fact, even if Dudian wanted to peep he wouldn’t be able to see as Jenny was facing the table and her body was blocking the paper.

A middle-aged woman who was sitting on the left checked her pocket watch and said: “Time is up.”

Jenny immediately stopped writing.

An old man sitting in the center took up the white paper, looked

and nodded: “Yes, you are qualified. Be on Pus Avenue for an interview before nine o’clock tomorrow morning. I wish you success.”

A wide smile covered her face.

“Please, don’t let others know about the content of the exam.” Main reminded Jenny.

Jenny hesitantly looked back at Dudian.

Dudian laughed: “Wait for me, I’ll take you away in a minute.”

Jenny nodded.

Chapter 134 - Kill! Kill! Kill!

Dudian stepped ahead and came to the long table.

“You will have a minute.” The white-robed old man said coldly.

Dudian took the paper and pen. He quickly glanced at three questions.

Question one:

“What do you do when the nobles break the law?”

Dudian saw the problem, did not hesitate at all and quickly wrote his answer: “kill!”

Question two:

“What would you do when the Knight of Light sways from the law?”

“Kill!” Dudian continued to write.

Question three:

“What do you do when you meet the evil alchemist?

Dudian hesitated, but quickly wrote: “Kill!”

“Well,” said Dudian and delivered the paper.

All three of them were a little surprised as it was the first time when someone had given the paper back before the time was up. The middle-aged woman checked her pocket watch and said: “You have another forty seconds to answer.”

“No need,” said Dudian and shook his head.

The old man in the middle took the paper and looked down the answers to all the questions. He had answered all of them in one word: “Kill!”

Dudian’s killing intent reflected in his writing style.

The old man squinted his eyes, then opened a lot. He looked at the handsome little boy and went silent for a little. He nodded and said: “You are qualified. Come to Pus Avenue tomorrow for an interview. My name is Dmitry. Find me tomorrow at arrival.”

The two examiners who were sitting on his right and left were surprised by old man Dmitry’s attitude. They glanced at Dudian’s answers and saw the simple answer to all three questions. They were startled. They had served for many years as examiners, but it was the first time they had seen such a concise and definite answers.

“Good boy!” The middle-aged man sitting on the right commented: “His mind is clear. ”

Then he waved to a maid and said: “Finished with these, and take them for registration.”

The maid led Dudian and the other few and left.

Dudian was relieved from the bottom of his heart as he passed the test. Although the answers were a bit extreme, he wrote the answers from his heart. Moreover the moment he read the question he knew the purpose of the first test.

“Magnificent!” Jenny, who was waiting close-by said in a surprised tone.

Dudian blinked: “I said it, I will certainly pass.”

“Both of you come to register your identity.” Maid interrupted their chat.

Dudian and Jenny laughed. The maid leads them to staff who would register their identities with household registration information.

The maid quickly copied their information from the household registration information and handed them two cards.: “This is proof of conformity. Please, keep them safe!”

Dudian and Jane put away the cards.

“You leave from here.” The maid said in an intimate tone.

Dudian looked at the direction she was pointing toward. There were crowds of people, but two apprentice knights were present too.

Maid spoke to apprentice knights as both of them get close to the area.

Apprentice knights immediately dispersed the crowd and made a narrow aisle for Dudian and Jenny to pass.

Dudian took Jenny’s hand as he leads her away and came out of the square to go through the less crowded streets.

“Your carriage is stuck on that street, so I’ll hire a new carriage to get you back,” Dudian said to her.

Jenny nodded: “I did not expect for so many people to come here as candidates. No wonder my father lets me take advantage of the opportunity. Fortunately, I met you otherwise I would still be sitting in the carriage waiting for my turn.”

Dudian smiled: “The magistrate and judges have more glory than Knights of Light of Holy Church. Moreover, we pass the first test

now. We still have to go through the interview tomorrow to become an apprentice. It's just we will be getting a step closer to our dream!"

"Yes," replied Jenny as she felt happy with the result. Suddenly she thought of Dudian and asked: "How come you answered so fast? What did you write?"

"What did you answer?" Dudian answered with a question.

"I answered that they have to respect the rule of law and the law which applies to civilians are for them to follow too. In front of the law, everyone is equal." Jenny replied solemnly.

Dudian looked at her beautiful face: "That's true. Everyone is equal!"

"Did you answer that?" Jenny turned towards him.

"Well, almost the same answer but not so well expressed as you have done. Relatively simple," Dudian didn't go too much into details.

Jenny laughed: "You are eloquent. Most probably you have used only one or two sentences to sum everything up concisely. But I was too long-winded."

"It's all round," Dudian joked.

Jenny's smile reached from one ear to the other: "But it's strange how so many people answered incorrectly to such a simple question."

"It is tough for a liar to tell the truth. Even more, it is impossible for an honest person to be involved in cheating and deceit." Dudian said.

Jenny realized the meaning behind his words, "Your opinion is different from an average person."

"Yours too," replied Dudian.

Jenny's face turned crimson red, but still tried the old method to bow her head to hide her face. However, her determination rose as she bit her lips and stared into Dudian's eyes: "Do you think so?"

Dudian's heart was beating fast as he was face-to-face with her. He subconsciously answered: "Of course."

Jenny stared at him, but didn't say anything. They began to walk side by side along the street, but didn't talk for a while.

Dudian coughed: "There is the carriage, should I hire it? "

"Well," Jenny nodded softly.

Dudian was sitting inside the carriage with her. The temperature inside the small compartment soon arose. To ease the embarrassment he said: “I’m a little unfamiliar with the law. Would you be willing to teach me?”

“Yeah,” Jenny replied.

Dudian raised few issues which he was stuck with, and Jenny patiently answered one by one every question, explaining everything in details.

It didn’t take long before the carriage came to a stop.

Dudian was in dismay and disappointed as they reached Jenny’s house.

Jenny looked at him and whispered, “I’ll go back first. See you tomorrow.”

“Well, goodbye. See you tomorrow.” Dudian watched her walk down the driveway.

He ordered the carriage to go to the Hunter headquarters only after she went into the castle.

Chapter 135 - Choice

After the lunch, Dudian had been in the training field practicing scattered arrow shooting already.

A bit later, the young instructor came to see Dudian. He was a little surprised but didn't say anything. He watched his practice for a while and pointed out small flaws and later left.

Back in the castle's dorm, Dudian went over to the library to borrow some law books to review.

The next day.

Dudian the same as yesterday ate his breakfast on time and went to find the young instructor to get permission to leave.

"Permission? Again?" The young instructor's brows wrinkled and spoke in unhappy tone: "Although you are an official hunter, currently you have to be trained by us. You can't neglect your practice. Yesterday was an exception. What's the matter today?"

Dudian didn't, the reason he was going to work: "Yesterday I went to the first examination for passing the magistrate trial. I passed the first test, so today is the official examination."

The young instructor was surprised. The first examination for magistrate trials was a major event. He had heard the news regarding the examination too, so he naturally heard of it. But he

didn’t think that Dudian asked for permission to leave to attend it.

The young instructor looked at Dudian with suspicion: “You have studied and acquired knowledge of the law. But to pass the test you don’t need knowledge of the law, but the mastery of the law. There aren’t so many who could meet the requirements.”

“I’ll try.” Dudian knew what was he talking about.

The young instructor thought for a moment: “Well, I wish you success.”

Dudian’s heart was delighted: “Thank you, instructor!”

“Go as early as you can but don’t forget to get back early too.” Young instructor waved his hand in dismissal.

Dudian immediately turned away and left the castle. He took the first carriage and went straight to the Pus Avenue.

Pus Avenue is located in the central part of the commercial district’s downtown area. The prices for every meter square of the land in this area was so expensive that you could buy a small town in outside suburbs of the commercial district.

People living in this area belonged to a high status even within the nobility. There were elegant high-end shops all around the place. Women were passing by with their children or pets and accessing jewelry stores.

Carriage parked in front of the magistrate in the Pus avenue. This part of the street was a bit desolate as pedestrians didn't pass by rarely. In the middle of the street, a thirty-meter high tall building is located. The upper part of the building was looking like a sharp corner of a gourd. On top of it, there was a huge 'cross' sign.

According to Holy Church's doctrine, cross represented purification!

Along the way into the courtroom, Dudian saw some people dressed in white robes. Some of them were holding law books and reading them while the others seriously focused on discussions.

"I came to take the exam." Dudian entered the solemn and quiet court. He took out and showed the card to the guard.

The young guard looked coldly at the card and nodded, "Come in."

The first floor's lobby was extremely spacious. A large plume light was suspended onto the dome projecting down the entire lobby. His heart was surprised as he looked up. A mosaic of a dolphin assembled from white crystal-like objects.

A waiter wearing white silk gown came over and spoke in a gentle tone: "If you are coming over for examination, please walk with me."

She leads Dudian into a hall on the side. It was a cathedral-like place. There were rows of seats while an independent platform was in front. More than a dozen teenagers were sitting over the place. Most of the dressed in gorgeous, bright color, silk clothing. Only one or two had linen or wool clothes.

In front of the podium, there were few tables. Few white-robed waitress were standing by next to the empty tables.

Dudian found a remote seat and sat. A moment later he smelled Jenny's odor. His heart was full of joy. It didn't take long when Jenny wearing a green silk dress came over.

Dudian stood up and beckoned.

Jenny was picking a seat when she noticed Dudian. Her eyes lit up as she walked over and sat next to Dudian.

"You're so early," Jenny said, lowering her voice as she sat down.

Dudian laughed: "Early bird gets the worm."

"What about the previous worms?" Jenny asked in cunning tone.

Dudian almost choked: "The bird eats them."

Jenny giggled: "Are you ready?

“Well,” said Dudian confidently, “as long as it’s a written test I will full marks. That’s guaranteed.”

Puchi, Jenny laughed.

They continued with jokes one after another candidate came over until 9 am. Two waiters opened the nearly five-meter tall doors to the examination room behind the hall.

Four people dressed in white robes came out while they are followed by two men and two women who were wearing gold robes. The youngest was about 30 years old. All of them had intense expressions on their faces.

“Quiet!” One of them spoke out.

The meeting place was silent.

“The examination time is one hour.” The person wearing gold robe waved to a maid and handed an hourglass.: “I hope you remember what we are doing over here. If I see someone trying to cheap, they will be immediately disposed of and imprisoned for a month!”

Dozens of people looked at each other as they were afraid to make a sound.

Dudian winked at Jenny.

Jenny was nervous, but as she saw Dudian's funny expression, she revealed a smile.

After a short while, the exam began.

Sand was slowly passing down from the top bulb to the bottom one.

Dudian was holding the quill while checked the papers. Afterward, he began to write down the answer. He knew the answer to many questions, so he thought a little to write the answer. However, there were questions that brought a headache to him. He remembered them fuzzily as he couldn't remember the answers. After all, he gained knowledge of the law from scavenger training. He squeezed out a little bit of time every day to learn. So his foundation was not solid.

"If you were a judge, where do you think the law needs to be improved?"

Dudian looked at the last question. The question was meant to test great overall understanding of the law. If his answer were already implemented or abolished, then the understanding of the law would be exposed. They will know that his knowledge is not comprehensive enough.

"If I were a judge, the first thing I would change would be slavery and nobility. If we are equal before the law, then we have weighed the same," he wrote. "Everyone is equal, and there is no distinction

between differences!”

“Time up!” At this time, one of the gold-robed men shouted out loud.

Dudian’s put down his pen.

Jenny finished writing too. She looked at Dudian. They made eye contact, and both of them knew that they had finished all the questions.

All the papers were collected.

“Please go back! You can come back three days later for the results.” The man announced.

The doors opened, and the other left.

Dudian said to Jenny, “May I send you back?

Jenny’s face was reddish as she said, “My auntie is here to pick me. She’s waiting outside.”

Dudian laughed: “That’s good! See you after three days.”

“Ok.”

After they had said goodbye to each other at the gate, Dudian looked at Jenny, who was taken away by a noble lady in a snowy white cashmere leather jacket. After they had sat in the elegant, aristocratic carriage, he withdrew his eyes.

He went back to the castle and began to practice scattered arrow shooting.

The young instructor asked him a few questions about examination, but reminded him that his main job was hunting and he shouldn't be distracted a lot.

Three days passed in the blink of an eye.

Dudian had told the young instructor in advance. He ate breakfast early on and went to the magistrate.

A dozen or so people had come to wait for the results. The weather was still early when he arrived. He didn't wait too long when Jenny's carriage arrived. The Burong family knight accompanied her. She looked out to the crowd and found Dudian.

"It's so early," Jenny said as she smiled.

Dudian winked, "The early bird gets the worm."

Jenny laughed at his words.

Two were quietly chatting when the door of the magistrate building was opened. An old man came up with a list. He began to read out the names.

“Jennifer Burong!” The old man read.

Jenny heard her name and was relieved.

“Dean!” The old man read again.

Dudian was also relieved. His heart was hanging on a slim hair-like string after he had submitted the answer sheet. He knew that several answers written by him were wrong. He didn’t expect to be qualified.

“Good!” Jenny clapped as she heard Dudian’s name.

Dudian was affected by her happy appearance: “We are going to be work-mates.”

Jenny’s face was reddish, “Are you going to be a scavenger again?”

Dudian couldn’t help but think of the desolate cruel scenes he saw outside the giant wall. He received trainee status. If he could get an official position, then he could change his life. Peter and the other executives at the scavenger headquarters were retired hunters. He could get a normal life.

No sane person would choose a precarious life of a hunter over a normal one if they had better life conditions. Even a senior hunter was risking death when going outside the giant wall.

Dudian was out of himself as he was thinking about the possibilities. Jenny realized that this was the choice that could change his future. She hesitated for a moment: “If the wall is as dangerous as my father has told me then… then… Would you still go outside?”

Dudian looked at her. On impulse, or on a whim, he wanted to promise her that he would never go outside. But eventually he shook his head: “I don’t want to live only within the giant wall.”

Jenny stared at him and smiled: “I know, I was not mistaken.”

Subsequently, both of the received their trainee status medals. Moreover, they got appointed time and date for an old man regarding their official reporting date and basic criteria.

The basic principles were: ‘fair,’ ‘just’ and ‘open-minded’!

“I’ll go back first.” Jenny waved to Dudian and got into the carriage.

Dudian also hired a carriage and returned to the training ground. He was thinking through the way back. “Trainee’s had to work about eight hours a day. If they had an outstanding performance,

then they will be promoted to a senior probation officer. Afterward, they wouldn't need to report to the magistrate every day. Only will need to help official magistrates, while dealing with various regional law cases."

"Eight hours. I won't have much time for hunter's training then."

"If I don't want to be promoted to a judge or senior probation officer then I don't have to report every day," he murmured.

"But I want at least the status of a probation officer. There is a layer of security within the wall that comes with the status. In the future, it would be convenient for my alchemical activities."

Dudian decided that for now, he had to focus on finishing hunter's training. It was a job that brought a lot of gold. It was a high-risk but high-return job.

As he reached the training ground, he continued to practice scattered arrow shots.

Chapter 136 - One Year

Time passed by.

Dudian's skills were getting better and better at scattered arrow shots. He was able to pull arrows quickly and shoot at the same time at four targets. It had been only half a month from his first study.

The young instructor was pleased as he observed Dudian's amazing progress. He continued to teach Dudian other skills that would be helpful to him outside the giant wall.

He was teaching Dudian how to eliminate sounds while acting, cover up his smell and rapid transposition.

Some monsters preferred eating undead. So blindly smearing undead powder was like courting death. This time he was taught other methods and tricks to cover up his smell. These things included plant juices, rotting mud, and a mixture of crushed insect body, vines or mud.

The tracking was based on footprints. Such as tracing monsters actions or direction according to the footprints. Determining the whereabouts of a monster was an additional advantage to Dudian. After all, not all the hunters had the ability to sense beasts up to 40 miles.

Crossbows were used while hunting giant beasts or, in destroying a nest of demons. According to the young instructor, primary

hunters had to learn either archery or crossbow skills. However, after reaching the silver level, the archer had to learn crossbow skills too. It would help increase their melee ability.

Crossbows could be used in close distance to get enough time for retreat.

After all, the essence of an archer lied in the distance control!

“If there is enough distance, then there will be sufficient opportunities to attack!” The young instructor repeatedly stressed these words to Dudian to let him keep in mind.

Dudian studied seriously. He also understood that in the last three hundred years the hunter’s career has long been developed and perfected. The differentiation was extremely meticulous.

During the training, Dudian took some time to check on Jura and Gray to see if they have moved to the commercial district. He found them working. Jura was working as a doctor for eight hours a day. She had a stable job. Gray worked in a tailor shop. He had a steady income and worked efficiently. He was much happier than the days when he worked in the factory. There was no overtime work every day and would get occasional vacations. Moreover, he would be paid at least twice as much.

Dudian was no longer worried about them as he saw they live a stable life.

A month later, he took the time and returned to the slums. He found Barton, Kroen and the others. They had found a waste plant. It was remote and in a desolate place. They had bought many building materials. The waste inside the factory had been cleaned out. Many broken workstations are repaired.

Dudian thought that they would have gone their separate ways because so much time had passed. He didn't expect that they would do so many things on their account. His heart was moved, but also increasingly trusted them.

"Here is a hundred gold coins." Dudian's main purpose of the return was to allow them to collect materials, said: "This is the list of materials that you have to purchase. Pile them up in a row and write the names of the components on each pile."

Barton and the other looked at the bag of gold coins in Dudian's hand. Their eyes glowed while they swallowed their saliva's. Barton said: "Dean, where do you get so much money?"

"Are you desperately in need of money?" Dudian smiled.

Kroen looked at the list, and his face reddened as he said: "Dean... We don't know much of the words in this list."

Dudian thought for a moment: "Well, first you gotta learn. So study well have a better understanding and then drop out to work with me."

“But tuition … …” Barton hesitated.

Kroen immediately touched him.

Dudian laughed: “I will pay tuition fees. The money what I give to you is for your distribution.”

Although one hundred gold coins were a large amount for him it was nothing. He wanted to nurture Baron and the others. The first was to make them have the ability to manage money and restraint of the desire for money.

If they spent, it left and right then Dudian could withdraw his hands earlier on.

Their eyes shone and were excited as they heard Dudian’s words.

Barton hesitated: “so much money, if we lost, this … …”

“It depends on your ability,” Dudian laughed.

Dudian ate lunch with them and then hired a carriage to return to the commercial district. There was a concern in his heart. Although Barton was alert and smart, they were too young. Moreover, he nurtured them to prepare an additional escape route.

In addition to day-to-day boring hunter training, Dudian would go and report to magistrate once a month so that his qualifications

as a trainee wouldn't be canceled.

He would meet Jenny every time he went there. Dudian would feel good, and his mood would be uplifted every time he chatted with the girl. He found that Jenny was totally different from a typical aristocratic girl. Her character was very easy going. Both of them had too many hobbies that crossed.

Later on, he would go to magistrate three or four times a month.

Six months passed by in the blink of an eye.

Dudian came out from the building and looked at the gray sky. It was 'black snow season, ' and the air was particularly cold. Heavy radiation clouds would cover the sky all day long, so even during the day the weather would be gray. From time to time black snowflakes would fall. People would try their best to avoid them.

Black snow and black rain were the existences that people tend to avoid.

"The wind is nice!" Jenny came out from behind. She was wearing a tight sweater.

Dudian saw her pale face, so he took off his coat and draped over her should: "Aren't you cold?"

Jenny was anxious, as she quickly said: "You wear it or you will freeze!"

“I’m not cold,” said Dudian warmly.

“You are lying!” Jenny bit her lips: “The last time you sheltered me from the rain and got wet. So you were sick the next day.”

Dudian didn’t think that she remembered that occasion three months ago. It was ‘black death season, ’ and the temperature was very high. It would take very little during that season. However, the day when both of them had free time and went out to play a sudden and heavy rain poured. The rain was cold, even to him who had the constitution of a hunter.

“Why are you so good to me?” Jenny grabbed Dudian’s clothes and looked up at him.

Dudian looked into her eyes and said: “Because I like you!”

After expressing his feelings, his heart paused for a moment. The whole world turned silent at that moment. Remorse gushed in his heart, but he tensed because he hoped… He hoped…

Jenny did not expect that Dudian will suddenly confess. Her cheeks reddened as she bowed her head. She spoke, but her voice was so low that even a mosquito flying around would sound louder than her: “I like you too.”

Dudian felt like his brain exploded in that instant. His blood was boiling up. The cold wind felt like springlike warmth: “Really?”

Jenny saw Dudian's excited look, but she didn't avoid and gently said: "uh."

Dudian felt unprecedented happiness. Even if the whole surrounded him, he would be happy if he had her in his arms.

After a long time...

"I'll take you back." Dudian rejoiced.

Jenny's face flushed as she gently nodded.

Dudian looked at Jenny's carriage and her family knight on the street in the distance.: "But we got to take a detour." He took her hand they run away.

That night Dudian sent her home and later returned. He was very excited along the way. He immediately went to the training ground and shot thousands of arrows.

Two weeks later.

In the library of the magistrate building in Pus Avenue. Jenny was finishing the book which was the work of her probation officer. Dudian was also here standing on the ladder and helping her classify the books.

After sorting out the books, Dudian took the ladder and whispered to Jenny: “Close your eyes, I got a surprise for you.”

Jenny was puzzled, but as she saw Dudian’s happy face, she slowly closed her eyes. Her eyelashes were slightly trembling

Dudian took out a thing from his pocket and said: “Now, you can open.”

Jenny opened her eyes and saw a string of jade bracelet: “How did you know I like jade?”

“You mentioned it two months ago,” Dudian laughed.

She took the jade bracelet. But when she heard Dudian’s words her body slightly trembled. She stood on her tiptoes as she quickly kissed Dudian’s cheek.

Dudian stared at her as his heart beating accelerated.

Jenny blushed and looked down.

Dudian excitedly looked at her and was about to embrace her when his face suddenly changed. He quickly said: “Come.”

Jenny was also surprised. She quickly put away the bracelet, turned and quickly organized the books.

Dudian grabbed the ladder and pretended to be making the adjustment.

After a moment a young magistrate came and looked at the both of them: “Do you know where I can get the history of the rule of slavery?”

Dudian, raised his hand, “It’s in that bookshelf. ”

“Oh, thank you.” The young man turned around and said casually left.

Dudian and Jenny looked at each other and giggled.

...

Burong family castle.

One of the most spacious and luxurious rooms.

There were two rows of tall bookshelves filled with books. Moreover, you could find antique porcelain and sculptures in the room. On the wall, there were rare gold, oil paintings. A middle-aged stalwart figure was sitting on the sofa and reading a book. He turned towards the middle-aged housekeeper and said: “I heard that recently Lady got very close with a trainee!?”

The middle-aged housekeeper heard the man’s flat tone and

shivered: “Yes, sir!”

“Investigate the other sides background.” the middle-aged figure indifferently said.

“Yes.” the middle-aged housekeeper quickly promised.

…

A year passed in the blink of an eye.

Dudian stood by the street and patiently waited. Suddenly, a familiar smell drifted into his nose. His eyes lit up.

After a while, he saw an extravagant carriage ride from the corner of the street and stop in front of him.

Jenny jumped out of the carriage and threw herself into Dudian’s arms, “I got wonderful news! Do you want to hear?”

Dudian smiled and said: “What is the good news?

Jenny blinked a few times,” My father agreed for us to be together ”

“Did he agree?” Dudian was shocked by the fact that Jennifer’s father knew that he was a couple with Jenny. Moreover, her father

had threatened him, offered a lot of money, but he didn't agree to break up.

Because of his trainee identity, the other didn't use any arbitrary means.

After so long the other side had agreed?

Jenny nodded as she looked at Dudian's suspicious expression: "MY father said that he refused you before not because he despised civilians but worried that you were useless. You were neither a judge nor a hunter. So he said he would personally arrange a hunting mission for you. If you can complete, then he will agree with us to be together!"

"He will personally arrange a hunting mission!?" Dudian frowned slightly. His heart felt a trace of a misdemeanor.

Jenny saw Dudian worried expression, so she smiled: "Do not worry, my father said that he would not give you a difficult task. However, it will be a particular task. I don't know the details; I don't know whether you will find it difficult. I have already told him that if he deliberately embarrassed you, I'll not talk to him in the future"

"Well," Dudian nodded.

Chapter 137 - Monster Atlas

“After you finish this mission, you are not going to be a hunter anymore. Will you?” Jenny looked up at Dudian. After a year she already knew that Dudian was no longer a scavenger but a hunter.

Although she was not interested in consortium’s business, but she still was aware of some stuff. The hunter’s job was to kill dangerous beasts. In the meantime, she unconditionally supported Dudian to do what he wanted to do. Deep in her heart, the thought of Dudian facing a risk as he left the giant wall, made her feel sad.

Dudian saw the hope in her eyes so he softly said: “OK.”

Jenny could not help but rejoice and cling to him. She buried her head in his arms: “After we become judges we will fight bad guys together. We will be together every day until we die.”

Dudian’s heart was full of longing as he heard her words. He was falling in love more and more with the girl. Moreover, he also didn’t want to face the life outside the giant wall. He was even reluctant to practice archery. He was thinking about her all the time. It was difficult to concentrate. He wanted to accompany her every day, look at her non-stop. He wished everything would go like that till they died.

Since six months ago when they confessed to each other, Dudian would go to the magistrate’s building after the training. He would accompany Jenny back to home. On Jenny’s holidays, he would love to be with her and play with her.

He found himself tired of boring archery practice. Even the alchemy factory which was ready was abandoned by him. It had been a long time that he didn't go back to visit.

The ideals and ambitions that he had already disappeared. Dudian was feeling tired. He just wanted to be with her, but nothing else.

"In a few days my father will give you the task. You should go back and prepare. I don't want to bother you" Jenny raised her head and said to Dudian.

Dudian smiled: "You're quite sensible."

"Of course," Jenny replied.

Dudian also felt that he needed to prepare for the job properly. Since the other gave him this opportunity, he would have to take advantage of it. If the task would be beyond his reach, then he would refuse. But if there were slight difficulties he was willing to struggle to get Jenny's father's approval. He wanted to prove him that he was worthy for him to be trusted with Jenny for a lifetime!

...

Two days later.

Dudian received the notice. He was assigned to the third team to perform a task outside the giant wall.

> Task content: Behead two ghouls from area no 2.

“Ghoul!” Dudian’s brows wrinkled as he saw the content of the task. He rapidly analyzed the information: “Captain of the third team is an intermediate hunter. The ghouls are graded as level 18 monsters. The captain should be able to resist one or two... If the rest of the team, including me, would grasp the opportunities, there should be 60 percent possibility for us to be successful.”

During the last year, Dudian had already taken the time to read the monster atlas of the world outside the giant wall. The atlas had simple information about a variety of monsters. Based on that information there was an assessment regarding their hunting levels.

In the early days, the information on atlas and monster’s actual combat power would deviate, but as the time passed the deviation had become very small. The hunting level assessed by the atlas would not deviate more than a level with the actual monster.

Dudian decided to go with the implementation of the task.

Although it was going to be difficult, but not without hope.

After all, there was a fortress in area no 7 too. He would be able to pick up a lot of materials worth money. He wasn't going to leave anything.

Dudian came to the collection hall in the Hunter headquarters. He found members of the third team. A total of four hunters, counting him in there were 5. It was a standard team size. In general, each team must have one knight or defensive warrior. The remaining vacancies were free to be filled with different hunter types.

"Are you Dudian?" A tall young man took the initiate to ask.

Dudian apologized: "Sorry, I'm late."

A 20-year-old female who was carrying a crossbow saw that Dudian was a newcomer and commented: "We are the people above drunk when they picked the hunters? It's an 'intermediate' level task, a lot of risk factors are involved, and they have sent a rookie!"

"Captain, is there anything wrong with the appointment?" Another warrior carrying a sword said his point of view. Most of the swordsmen were the defensive type, rather than the attack type ones like Linda.

"The decision was made by the upper level. It's not open for discussion, get ready to start." Tall young hunter waved his hand to prevent both of them from further talks. He looked at Dudian: "I heard that your magic marks originate from juranzhi. You will be

responsible for tracking ghouls!”

Dudian nodded: “No problem!”

Female archer and the other swordsman heard the order of their captain, so they didn’t continue to say anything, but from their looks, it could be seen that they were dissatisfied.

Soon, the captain led them towards the giant wall.

After a few hours, they passed through the radiation zone and came to the giant wall.

The Mellon Consortium’s staff was waiting for the underground passage, and when they saw the team arriving, they immediately came up to welcome them.

As they passed through the underground passage, Dudian followed others. As usual, they stopped in front of the engraved status of the goddess of hunting to pray and left afterward.

The passage that they used was different than the passage used by Glenn and team the previous time. It didn’t take to a giant tree forest, but a desolate plain. The ground was full of rocks.

“Let’s go.” It was apparent that it was not the first time that the tall youth had come to this place. At a glance, he was able to confirm that there was no danger lurking around. He pulled out a map from the backpack and checked the area that they had to leave

too. He took to lead as the others followed him.

In addition to Dudian, female archer and the swordsman there was a short scout in their team.

“Rookie, if you smell something dangerous to don’t forget to remind us.” Swordsman said to Dudian.

Dudian’s brows wrinkled but he did not say anything.

“Ghouls are active on the northern side of the marsh.” The Tall youth said to the crowd: “We have to be decisive and act quickly. There would be many other strong monsters wandering, and we wouldn’t like to be involved with them.”

Chapter 138 - Hunting Dudian

Under the leadership of the young knight, they rapidly went through the rubble of the ruins. Along the way, they saw some new footprints that were the size of a bathing tub. It is hard to imagine what kind of a giant had passed by.

Dudian traced the smell of the footprint. Through his sensitive nose, he tracked the creature to twenty-five to thirty miles away from them. At the source, the smell was very rich, and it was moving very slowly.

The tall youth walked down to the opposite side of the footprints and stopped by the broken street.: “We will take a break now. Dudian comes over and looks at the map. You have to track the ghouls!”

Dudian heard the tall youth and looked up towards him.

The tall youth suddenly turned, pulled out his dagger and violently stabbed it at Dudian’s heart.

This sudden change shocked Dudian.

Zheng!

Dudian flew out and fell to the ground.

The tall youth was disappointed as he watched Dudian's chest where the black armor was punctured, but... ... it hadn't taken Dudian's life as it was extremely hard as if a layer of steel!

Female, archer, swordsman and the scout were completely stunned as a result of this sudden turn of events.

"Captain ... ..." the archer girl was ignorant about the happening situation.

Dudian was horrified. He unbelievable looked at the tall youth. The next moment, he thought of something as he quickly stood up, turned and ran!

This hunting mission was simply a pretext!

The hunting mission's goal was not the ghouls, but him!

The tall youth saw Dudian running away and swiftly said to the rest of the team: "It's consortium's task to kill him! We must not let him get away!"

All three of them looked at each other, but didn't move.

The tall youth refused to say anything more to them and quickly chased after Dudian. His initial plan was to successfully wound and kill Dudian on the spot and afterward slowly explain to the team why he acted so. But if the rookie hunter ran away from him, he would be the source of a big joke. Moreover, the people at the top

would be angered.

Whoosh!

The tall youth was running at full speed. Although he was a knight, his flexibility and speed were in no way inferior to archers and scouts.

Dudian felt that he was being overtaken more and more as time passed. He was panicking. There was no chance of winning if he faced an intermediate level hunter head on. He quickly threw away the backpack. Although there were bombs in the backpack, there was no time to ignite them. It has been just cumbersome.

Run!

Dudian frantically ran.

Whoosh!

The sound of the rapid wind was coming from behind.

Dudian heard the sound and instinctively wanted to turn to check out. But alarm sounded in his mind and he didn't turn back. He went to the side to hide.

Although he changed his direction to hide rapidly, he felt an anguish of pain from his back. It was as if he was hit by a truck. His

body involuntarily stumbled, and he skids for several meters before coming to a stop.

At this time, Dudian saw the tall youth quickly approaching him.

“Uh ah ah ah … …” Dudian’s eyes were red as he endured the pain. He pulled out the spear that stabbed into his body from the back. The blood began to spew out and sputter onto the ground.

“Well!” The tall youth reached him and quickly kicked Dudian as not let him balance his body.

Dudian rolled but seized mud and dust with his hand and threw it to tall youth’s face.

The tall youth raised his hand to block the mud and dust. Dudian stood up and continued to run away.

“Damned boy!” The tall youth gritted his teeth and grabbed the spear from the ground. He aimed at running Dudian and threw away the spear.

Dudian clutched his abdominal wound and fought back the pain. Although he was injured and running, his mind concentrated at the back. He turned his face once in a while to check the tall youth. Dudian saw the other had picked up the spear and Dudian knew that he would shoot again. He endured the fear and continued to run along a straight path. However, with a sudden movement, he rolled towards sideways and hid.

He saw that a spear roared pass by him the moment he changed his direction.

Dudian was relieved, but he didn't stop but continued to run towards the next street.

The tall youth was stunned as he didn't think Dudian will change his direction at the last moment. He had seen Dudian foolishly run in a straight line so he thought the spear would be enough to kill him. His anger raised up as he understood that Dudian had deliberately misdirected him!

"Damn!" The tall youth reacted momentarily. He no longer went to grab the spear, but quickly came to the corner Dudian turned over.

Dudian felt an extreme abdominal pain. It seemed that blood was leaking from his body as he was running. It made him feel terrified. He tightly pressed over the wound.

At the same time, Dudian was flustered. He knew that the other side would catch up to him in a matter of minutes. Although the other side preferred to use the spear to kill him the distance between them was too close from the beginning. Dudian thought that getting rid of him seemed impossible.

Whoosh!

The tall youth looked at the front where Dudian was running while clutching the side of his abdomen with his hand. The Tall youth was angry as Dudian's speed was not usual for a newbie. Dudian was much faster than primary hunters and almost comparable to his speed.

Both of them run through the streets covered in moss, water, and mud. As the time passed, the tall youth was getting closer to Dudian.

Dudian sensed the smell and knew that there were three or four meters of distance between them. Dudian was already in the tall youth's reach.

So far ... ...

Suddenly, he saw and was attracted by a puddle in front. It was a collapsed street filled with rainwater. The dark rotten materials were floating on it while the water was cloudy.

Dudian took a deep breath and gritted his teeth.

Splash! The sound of diving into a puddle echoed around.

The tall youth suddenly stopped as he grasped the air instead of Dudian's body. He looked at the 7-8 meter long puddle. His eyes were gloomy as he whispered.: "Normally you would have at least a corpse after death. But this sewer should be full of monsters..."

He looked at the surface of the water and waited. Around ten seconds later the red colored blood floated up.

The first feeling was cold as Dudian dived head on into the puddle. It was deep, and he dived down, in fear that the youth will follow him down the puddle.

Dudian saw a black shadow swiftly swimming towards him. It didn't make much water fluctuation as it swam.

Underwater Monster! Dudian's pupils shrank as he remembered that the sewers were full of amphibious monsters.

His heart turned cold as he thought of the monster.

The black shadow was about four or five meters away from him and was coming at him as if it was a hungry tiger dashing onto its prey.

Dudian's eyes were in pain because of his efforts to keep them open in turbid water. It got closer, Dudian was able to see the appearance of the black shadow. It was a monster which had crocodile-like scales. It had six claws attached to its abdomen. They seemed very sharp, and in case a human body was caught by them it would take an instant to be shredded by them.

Dudian pedaled rapidly in panic as he wanted to flee away. However, the monster's acceleration was too fast in underwater. It

didn’t take long before its fangs caught Dudian’s left leg.

A sharp pain came from his left leg. Dudian painfully swings, but the other was tightly holding onto his left leg. He thought of his dagger and pulled it out in a hurry. Dudian stabbed the dagger to its head crazily.

The monster was in pain as the dagger stabbed onto its head. It swung its tail faster and agitated the water.

Dudian didn’t stop but continued to stab. A lot of blood floated from its head. After a few seconds, the monster’s bit, gradually loosened. He moved its upper and lower jaw and removed his leg. However, the same moment feeling of suffocation burst out of his chest. He quickly looked left and right.

Soon, Dudian found a hole in the wall and quickly swam past.

This hole was the end of drainage channel that leads to the sewers. Dudian opened the rotten steel bars of the hole and drilled in.

He swam up the hole and finally surfaced. He took rapid breaths as he checked the surrounding environment. It was a toilet covered in moss.

...

The Tall youth looked at the puddle of water. Blood was floating

and surging non-stop. The turbid water was stained red.

At this time, the female archer and the others caught up with him and looked at the puddle. They were alarmed, and the female arched asked: “Captian, why?”

The tall youth indifferently looked at them: “This task is given from top. Moreover, each of you will get a thousand gold coins as a fee from Burong family. It’s best you don’t leak out what happened today, or else even I can’t help you.”

All three of them looked at each other in surprise.

...

Dudian sensed that the team was only 20 meters away from him, so he didn’t want to do anything to get their attention. He vaguely remembered that there were quite a few collapsed buildings in the vicinity. All of their drainage systems should connect to the same sewerage.

He breathed softly after to let out to much sound. His body was still soaked in water and palm was tightly covered the wound in the abdomen.

A moment later Dudian sense the smell of female archers and the other came close. He holds his breath as his head sank into the water and didn’t make the slightest movement. He feared that one of them might have a magic ability to detect his position through

vibration or movement.

Dudian carefully resurfaced again. He sniffed their smells and found that they were still close to the puddle. He felt uneasy and thought that it was dangerous in here. He took a deep breath and dived down the hole and continued to swim. He prayed that he wouldn't encounter any underwater monster.

He was swimming close to the walls of the sewer. Although it was not lighted at all, fortunately, his vision was not affected by the darkness. After ten meters he saw a huge monster's body fluttering around.

The other side seemed to have detected him too. It began to swim over towards Dudian slowly.

Dudian was scared and hastily came to a stop. He looked around and found another hole. Once again, he drilled the hole.

After entering the channel, Dudian quickly swam towards the top. He still ended up in a toilet, but everything has long been smashed. The surrounds were flat. He saw decaying dark bones. The ground was full of rotten dirt and feces of an unknown monster laid around.

Dudian sense the smell of the tall youth. It seems he was going back along the same road. He had given up in jumping into the puddle and searching for Dudian. Most probably, the tall youth thought that Dudian was seriously injured and bloody wound. So, according to the tall youth Dudian's survival chance was close to

zero.

Moreover, the hunters would often kill monsters outside the giant wall, but they would never hunt in structures below the ruins of the city. That's why they didn't have much understanding of the environment and monsters living in underground waters.

Dudian sense that they were quite far away. His tightened heart began to loosen. However, suddenly he felt numerous cold and soft things wrap around his foot. They were climbing from his legs and wrapping his upper body.

Dudian thought of the amphibious underwater monster and climbed out in haste.

Although the area under the toilet was small, the surroundings were soaked in water. The concrete had long been delayed by the water and couldn't withstand Dudian as he struggled to break out.

Dudian climbed out of the hole and looked back at his body. Green colored snakelike monsters were biting into his body. Fortunately, the armor was enough to block them, and they couldn't penetrate through.

Dudian felt his scalp tingle. He grabbed his dagger and began to stab into the monster.

The monster felt pain and tried to attack and bite Dudian's face.

Dudian wielded the dagger and cut it off.

The monster screamed and retracted its body instead of winding around Dudian. Its body slide into the toilet. Blood began to float onto the water.

Dudian was relieved as he saw that he was able to scare away the monster. He carefully climbed out of the collapsed building.

“I have to deal with the wounds as soon as possible.” Dudian felt the pain coming from his left leg and abdomen. His face was ugly. He wanted to get out of this place as soon as possible so that the other team would not detect him.

He took off his armor and used the wet gauze from the first aid bag to cover the wound. Then he found some green vine leave and affixed them on top. The mixture of the plant juice would be able to stop the blood oozing out.

Afterward, he washed armor clean from the blood stains. He smeared it on the sludge and wore it. Rotten mud smell floated from his body.

“I must leave this place. Once a large monster catches me, I’ll be dead.” Dudian was seriously thinking about the possibilities. Camouflaging his smell was to improve his security, but for some monsters, it wasn’t enough to stay undetected.

Two days passed in the blink of an eye.

At the border of area no 2.

Dudian checked the surrounding buildings. He was vaguely able to see Mellon consortium's banner as well as badge pattern painted on the ground, symbolizing that this area was under their control.

"Its area no 6 in front. From there I can pass to area no 9."

Dudian passed by the banner clutching his stomach. In the past two days, he didn't dare to clean up the wound. The first aid products on his body have been soaked. Hemostatic drugs installed in the bottles had little effect as the wound was infected with serious viruses. It was decaying and must be cut off.

However, cutting off the festering tissue meant that the blood would ooze out.

In a dangerous zone, such as area no 2, Dudian couldn't do anything but enduring the rotting wound. He hoped that he would return to a clean area as soon as possible.

"I did not expect his purpose was to kill me, rather than test me … …"

Chapter 139 - Evolution

Three days later.

The boundary of area no 9 belonging to the Mellon Consortium.

A dirty body covered in mud drilled out of the tall grasses. Dudian looked around. After being sure that there was no danger he carefully groped out. He was barefoot as he stepped on moss. Moreover, he was unable to walk normally as his left leg was injured.

“Finally! Returned to the area no 9.” Dudian finally breathed out in relief. If he didn’t rely on his sense of smell to detect undead and monsters in advance, while he came from area no 6, Dudian would have lost his life 100 times over. Once when he was sleeping at night, a snake almost killed him. Fortunately, he was able to react in time and stab it to death before the snake entangled his body.

Dudian walked towards the location where he had stored cold crystals according to his memory from the previous time. Along the way, he senses the smell of rats hiding in the ruins of collapsed buildings. Also, he could sense few monsters who would drive up the sewers once in a while.

Hunters could fight head on with land beasts, but were helpless against the underwater beasts. There have been attempts of using poison, but the sewer systems spread in all directions. So tons of poison wouldn’t be able to kill the monsters living in the water. Moreover, if the poison didn’t kill a monster, then there was a

chance that it would go another evolution and transform into much terrible and horrifying beast.

A moment later, Dudian found the place guarding his hidden object. He removed the boulder which was hiding the materials. He took out a parcel of cold crystals and decayed weapons.

Dudian put aside the weapons and opened the bag containing the crystals. He thought about their real name as he looked at perfectly round, crystal clear cold crystals. “Crystallized souls, is this the soul of undead?”

Dudian shook his head as he removed the thoughts. He set off his left sleeve. There was a bit of hesitation as he held the dagger. If it were not totally necessary, he would not want to absorb the cold crystal to enhance his strength. But now he was forced into a corner and was in despair. If he didn’t enhance his strength, he wouldn’t be able to return to the giant wall. The main reason was that because of staying outside for the long term in his injured situation, and his body would rapidly corrode because of radiation.

He cut his wrist and twisted the cold crystal to block the blood to flow out.

The next moment he saw the cold crystal dissolve into the blood. It was like snow had met the boiling water. It gradually melted into a transparent silver liquid which penetrated into his arm along the blood veins.

In the blink of an eye, a cold crystal that was as big as a ping-pong

ball melted and disappeared.

Dudian felt the power surge within his body. He clenched his teeth and used the second cold crystal.

After a second it had disappeared into his body, Dudian continued to absorb third, fourth...

He had absorbed ninety cold crystals, and there were no signs of abnormality on his arm.

Dudian looked at the remaining ten cold crystals. He didn't think twice as he continued to absorb them.

However, the last cold crystal melted slowly. As he grabbed another cold crystal, Dudian felt a chill feeling coming off from his left arm. Moreover, there was discomfort radiating off from his magic marks while his stomach felt nauseous. Trace of fatigue and drowsiness attacked his brain. He had learned from his last absorption of cold crystals that when he felt such way he should know the limit and stop. He released the cold crystal and stopped absorbing anymore.

He leaned against the wall, quietly waiting for this uncomfortable reaction to fade away.

However, contrary to his expectations, this sense of dizziness and vomiting didn't weaken but got more intense.

Dudian felt like it was ‘black snow season,’ he was nude and covered in endless snow. He was shivering because of coldness that hit his body.

Kaka!

Dudian heard an ice-piercing sound. He looked down to find the source of the sound. He saw his left hand began to freeze from his fingertips. Moreover, this ice slowly spread up along his fingers, it extended to his palm, then to his wrist. If it continued with this trend, it seemed it was going to freeze all his body.

Dudian panicked. He tried to cover his left wrist with his right hand. However, he saw that biting cold began to cover his right hand and freeze it. In fear, he removed his right hand.

He thought of the fire at this moment of utter panic.

“The best way to stop the cold is to use fire!”, he came up with a plan.

He picked up dry wood and put them together on the ground. Later on, he took out the fire sickle from his pockets using the right hand. While clutching it, he began to desperately friction to ignite the fire. Soon, sparks ignited the wood and flared the fire.

He continued to throw withered vines and dry leaves and stack them up on top of the fire to grow it bigger.

Nonetheless, the ice was spreading upwards along his left hand. It had spread up to his elbow as he checked the condition of the right arm. Unfortunately, the fire was not enough to warm up his almost frozen arm.

He clenched his teeth as he shoved his left arm horizontally into the burning flame.

The ice met the fire and quickly melted. However, an intense tingling feeling burst from his arm. It did not result of the burning flame, but it felt like many ice knives were piercing his arm from inside out.

Dudian took out his left arm from the flame as the pain got more intense.

The tingling got less tense after some time. However, the freezing began to continue along his arm towards his shoulder. It made him panic. He didn't know what he was going to do if it went off the shoulder towards his throat. "Am I going to choke to death?"

He again raised his left arm and shoved it inside the fire.

The ice gradually melted into water and dripped into the fire. It made 'hissing' sounds as water evaporated.

An intense pain came up from his left arm. It was so anxious that he wanted to tear off his scalp. But he still fought back and tried to restrain himself. He picked a thick, dry wood from the ground and

tightly bite into it. The pain was so intense that a low howl similar to beasts echoed from his throat. Tears began to flow down his eyes through his face and mix with the sweat that was flowing down his forehead. Drops of mixed sweat and tears as big as beans were falling from his chin.

He did his best to conquer the pain, so he wasn't aware of the passage of time. He didn't know how long it had been, maybe ten minutes, maybe less than a minute. But gradually he felt that the pain coming off from his left arm reduced.

His eyelids were trembling. He slowly opened them and saw that his left arm was burning.

Hunter's armor is made of animal skins. He had shoved his arm to stop the freezing, but totally had forgotten about the armor. His arm was like a stick in the fire.

Dudian retracted his arm in fear and beat it on the ground. Soon the flame was extinguished. Charred smoked rose from his left hand.

Dudian raised his left hand and checked it. The skin slightly burned while the armor was tattered. He was relieved.

His face turned smug as he thought: "Why after such a serious injury... ... don't I feel any pain?"

Chapter 140 - Crime

Dudian carefully raised his right hand, and gently touched the burns.

“How could this be?” Dudian turned pale. Through his right hand, he could feel that his left arm’s temperature was extremely high. However, the left hand was unconscious. He didn’t feel anything at all.

“Impossible!” Dudian raised his left hand and hit the ground in anger.

Bang!

A deep pit was made in the ground.

Dudian was stunned.

He lifted his left arm and tried to make a fist. Dudian saw that he could freely move his finger. When he wanted to make a fist, the fingers moved, and his palm covered. But he didn’t feel anything. Even when his fingers touched his palm, there was no feeling coming off.

It was very strange. Apparently, he could see the activities of his left hand. He could freely control it, but it happened so that his brain couldn’t control the nervous system of the left hand.

He calmed down as he looked at his left hand. He thought of the pit on the ground. He raised his hand and punched the stones next to him.

Bang!

The stones crushed and turned into dust after a hit.

The stones were made of concrete and had long decayed. Originally, if Dudian wanted to crush them, it would be an easy feat. But now it felt that as if he didn't face the stones' reaction force. Like nothing was broken or crushed.

Dudian grabbed a stone with his right hand and clearly sense the touch. He increased the force of the grab, and the stone smashed.

He felt relieved. It seems that his left hand was not unconscious. It's just his strength had indeed improved. Because of excessive power, he couldn't feel the resistance.

Dudian took out the black bow, which was next to the other objects. It belonged to Brian, who was Linda's younger brother. He pinched the bowstring. As soon as he pulled it the bowstring slammed open and almost popped in his face.

"It's very light, whether I hold something or pull the bow string." Dudian clenched his hands from both ends of the bow. He put a bit force, and the bow suddenly bent into a circle.

“My strength had enhanced more than double...” Dudian whispered in excitement. But as he checked the burns, his left hand the joy in his heart vanished, ” Although the strength has increased my left hand had turned into a vast. It seems his nerve system has gone through necrosis. Is there going to be other consequences? Moreover, because of no sense of touch, my grasp of power will be biased. I have to rely on my feelings.”

He sighed as he thought of the disadvantages.

He continued to look after his left hand to see if it would restore back to usual for some time. He temporarily put away the issue as he took out the dagger from the fire. It was burning red. Dudian pulled out a disinfectant and gauze from the first aid kit. He opened his belly armor and saw that the abdominal wound he got from the tall youth’s spear had resulted in rotten meat on its outer edges.

He clenched his teeth as he used to dagger to cut off little by little the rotten meat.

“Hiss!” The pain made him go crazy. He held back tightly in his right hand. He thought of his left hand, which didn’t feel anything. It won’t be painful, so that it won’t tremble.

After a moment, anterior part of the abdomen where the rotten flesh existed was cut off and re-bandaged. However, the back part was done slowly. Operating in such circumstance was inconvenient. However, in the hunter course, they had gone through the course which taught them stuff like this in case an emergency occurred in the wilderness.

After a while, the wound on his abdomen cleared off the rotten flesh. He had put new gauze. It was time to clean his left thigh. The leggings given by the consortium had long been broken and tattered. There was a circle of teeth marks on his leg as if a row of black holes. The wound was completely rotten.

Dudian burned the dagger again to cut off the blocks of rotten flesh.

Ten minutes later, Dudian finished with bandaging the cleaned wounds. He was tired.

“I have to wait and get better before going back to the giant wall.” Dudian thought that recuperating outside the giant wall was not suitable. Nevertheless dragging his body back was extremely dangerous. Moreover, he may have to wait for some time before the underground passage opened, so it was better to be in better condition before he left to the giant wall.

...

Two weeks later.

Dudian thought about Peter, Mason and the others as he waited near the iron gate belonging to the passage owned by the Mellon Consortium near the area no 9. Once again, it opened, but Dudian didn’t expect that a hunter team would come out. Impressively, the female archer from the previous team was here.

The female archer should be assigned to a new team. She was surprised and stunned as she saw Dudian: “You!?”

Dudian’s eyes narrowed as a trace of killing intent flashed by. But he thought of her, the swordsman and the scout who didn’t help the captain to attack him. He didn’t say anything as he walked into the passage.

The other four team members who saw Dudian were surprised a little. There was no information that a rookie hunter would be here. However, they were relieved when they saw the Mellon consortium’s badge on Dudian’s armor. One of the team members asks the female archer: “Do you know him?”

She subconsciously nodded as she looked at Dudian who was getting closer to the gate they were by. She couldn’t help but touch the hilt of the dagger on her leg.

His height was lower that female archer’s his angle of sight was enough to see through her little trick. He looked up at her. As long as she dared to pull the dagger an inch, he would immediately take action.

However, the female archer touched the dagger not to attack but to defend. She was worried that Dudian hated her and would go for revenge. She knew that he was a newbie hunter, but his physical strength was not inferior to primary hunters. Moreover, Dudian was able to escape from an intermediate level knight and underwater beasts successfully. This made her heart tense.

Dudian saw that she didn't have any intention to attack, so he passed by and went into the passage.

After Dudian had disappeared into the passage, a one-eyed hunter called out to female archer: "You seem to be afraid of him. He is just a newbie hunter. What's the problem?"

She was relieved as she saw Dudian leave.: "We still have to find the monster that has leaked into area no 9 as soon as possible."

The others saw that she avoided answering the question, so they didn't ask anything anymore. They went forward to area no 9.

...

Dudian returned to the wall. By the rules, he once again was sent to be kept in place for the hunters.

"Will they find any problems with my left hand if they check it out?." He had absorbed too many cold crystals. After all, one of the crystals was enough to freeze a human body. It seems he wasn't able to digest all those cold crystals and his left arm ended up frozen. He didn't know if his left arm is the same as an undead's. This is what made him a little nervous.

Moreover, he knew that in was not feasible and logical to sneak into the commercial district. The inspection fortress on the border was extremely strict. In addition to the castle set up to check them,

there was a barrier set up by the military.

If a hunter wanted to get into the commercial district, he had to get a qualified mark from the check ups. By this logo, he would be able to pass the border.

Dudian washed his body clean with the water, put on clean clothes and sit inside the cage to wait.

The next day, doctors came for a blood test.

Dudian was tense as he handed out his right hand.

The blood drops went into the bowl. There was another drop of blood in it. The moment Dudian's blood was instilled inside the bowl, the other side didn't move but stayed suspended in place. There was no mutual attraction.

Dudian's heart was relieved as he saw this. He decided to wait for seven days to pass quietly.

"After returning to the commercial district I got to stay apart from the consortium's hunters. I have to climb to the position of an official judge as soon as possible. In the future, I can even ascend to the position of deacon or bishop." Dudian was planning his future while sitting aside.

On the fourth day, the cage opened again.

Dudian thought it was the hunters who were back, but instead he saw eight people came in. Four of them were armed apprentice knights of light. The other four were wearing strange armor. They came up to Dudian's cage. A middle-aged man shouted: "Are you, Dean?"

Dudian was startled as he felt a trace of a headache coming: "You are?"

The middle-aged man continued: "I'm coming on behalf of the magistrate to arrest you because of 'theft'!"

"Stealing?" Dudian was ignorant.

"You got it wrong. I haven't stolen anything. I am a hunter, and I have just come back from the outside!" Dudian tried to explain himself.

The middle-aged man was impatient: "Little long–winded. You are going to prison!"

"Prison?" Dudian was angered: "There was no interrogation and investigation! Are you qualified to imprison me? "

"If I say qualified then it means qualified." The middle-aged man sneered.

Dudian heard and looked at him: “So, you do not arrest the order?”

The middle-aged man suddenly face sank: “Of course there is. It’s just we were afraid that you would run away so today we came to capture you! ” He waved to apprentice knight of light: “Open the door!”

The apprentice knight of light nodded. He pulled out the key and went to open the cage.

Dudian came to realize that he was in deep problem. He slowly stood up and went forward as the apprentice knight of light opened the door. He looked up at the middle-aged man: “You are from the Mellon Consortium. How come you are imposing charges on me?”

The middle-aged man frowned and shouted to the people next to him: “Get him!”

Dudian did not resist, but raised his hand out as he stared into middle-aged man’s eyes: “Even you have confirmed my guilt on your own you can’t capture me without an official arrest from a judge or probation officer. I still have the right to prosecute you because of ignoring judicial process and abusing the law!”

The middle-aged man raised his hand and gestured to that person to stop taking Dudian. He looked down at him who was about the age of his son. He didn’t expect that a child in the face of such a situation would be calm and retort back. He felt that it was going

to be difficult to handle him this way. After a long silence, he said: “Boy, count yourself lucky!”

“Lucky? Ha” Dudian sneer.

The middle-aged man slightly frowned as he didn’t want to wrestle words with Dudian.: “You should wait for tomorrow when we came with an arrest to take you away. Look after yourself well!” Then he waved, gesturing the others to leave.

Apprentice knights of light and the man’s companions looked at each other. They didn’t think that they will be forced back by Dudian’s words. They felt useless and went back depressed.

Dudian looked at them leave, but didn’t feel any joy of victory. His heart was full of unspeakable anger and killing intent. He rapidly thought: “I have evidence that I was absent all the time and I haven’t stolen anything. Even if they have framed me maliciously, as they can perjure the facts, but the consortium is aware that I was outside. This can’t be concealed!”

He was at peace as he thought of this.

Another three days passed.

Dudian went out from the castle. His heart sank as he saw a caged carriage with few people were waiting for him. Moreover, the previous middle-aged man was present too.

“I had to be present in the cage for seven days. He came to arrest me, apparently he didn’t have an official order.” Dudian was thinking about what was about to happen and the ways out of it. In the last three days, he thought that something strange that he was not aware of had happened. ” He didn’t qualify to take the first time he came over. They couldn’t even take me to the prison in that state, according to the law.”

“He wasn’t planning to take me to prison at all but wanted to kill me in secret. So that the consortium would register my death as an occurrence out of the giant wall. There would not be even a trial. ”

Dudian’s brows wrinkled as he saw middle-aged man rush over, “Now he dares to come so he should have an arrest order. But the trial did not interrogate me, how could he a warrant for arrest?”

The middle-aged man took out a warrant and said: “Child you are coming with me now!”

Dudian’s heart sank: “You are not timid at all as you have forged a warrant for arrest!”

The middle-aged man was surprised for a moment,: “Boy it is not forged. You will know when the time comes. If you dare to resist now, I have the right to kill you on the spot!”

Dudian was not planning to resist. In case he did so, he would become guilty even if he weren’t guilty at all. He would be included in the wanted list of the city. No one inside the walls would want to shelter him.

“Go on,” the middle-aged man opened the door of the cage as he spoke to Dudian.

Chapter 141 - Fish And Bird

Dudian looked at him, but didn't say anything as he slowly went into the cage.

The whole carriage was made of extremely strong steel. Even with his current power, it would be difficult to break open.

The middle-aged man was bored as he saw that Dudian didn't resist. He locked the cage and jumped to sit in front. The coachman was wearing the same armor: "He's better than the ones sent in the past."

"So young, but so good at scheming. He dared to get his hands on an aristocratic lady. He is just a frog in the well!"

"Ridiculous! He dreams of stepping up! Ha! "

"It's alright, though! It's been a long time that new stuff has not been passed over. The brothers are itchy!"

"This kind of tender skin is the most popular. "

"Still a young child, ha ha..."

The two talked and laughed as the carriage drove away. There were four apprentice knights escorting them.

Dudian sat cross-legged as he looked at the scenery. After leaving the castle, they went through the desolate radiation zone. Along the way, they encountered occasional beast attacks, but the apprentice knights easily beheaded them.

After they had passed the inspection by the border fortress, they came to a remote wilderness.

The carriage stopped in front of the prison, the middle-aged man opened the cage and said, “Come down.”

Dudian jumped out of the carriage and said, “I’m going to appeal.”

“You can only groan.” the middle-aged sneered: “Do you think you will have the opportunity to do anything? No one will hear you! The decision has been passed down, and you won’t have a chance to stand up. If you want to blame, then blame that you were born poor. It was alright that you were a hunter and earned some wealth through the consortium. But why did you go and get involved with a noble lady?”

Dudian coldly stared at him: “You are not a warden, right?

The middle-aged sneered: “Do you think the governor would personally see you so that you can complain? You don’t have the right kid! You are just a trainee in the magistrate, but nothing else. Do you think you could bluff using that? ”

Dudian took a deep breath and clenched his fingers: “Thank you for your teachings.” Then suddenly he punched the man’s face.

Bang! The man’s nose got fractured, and the blood spewed out as he fell.

All of them were stunned because of the sudden attack as no one had expected it. Dudian even dare to attack in front of the prison.

The middle-aged man covered his face with one hand to stop the blood. He was angry and madly looked at Dudian. His body was shivering as he screamed: “Kill him!”

The apprentice knights pulled out their weapons. They had spears and swords.

However, Dudian didn’t act the way they had imagined... Instead, he turned and ran! He ran to the prison while shouting in a high-pitched voice: “They want to kill me!”

Because of the sound, many people rushed out from the prison.

“Stop!”

The prison door opened and seven or eight people ran out. A woman wearing glasses led them. She saw that knights were about to attack Dudian, so she had ordered them to stop.

The apprentice knights stopped and looked at each other.

Dudian immediately ran to the woman: “They have been bribed to kill me. I want to appeal! Are you the warden?”

The woman looked at him and frowned: “I am the judge’s secretary. You have the right to appeal. I can help you, but I don’t know if it is going to be approved.”

“Thank you! Thank you very much!” said Dudian.

The middle-aged man came over as his hand clutched over his nose. His face was ugly as his eyes locked onto Dudian. In anger and with killing intent, he said to the woman: “Miss Secretary, this wicked villain attacked us and obviously wanted to escape. He even attacked the prison guards. He should be executed!”

The woman’s face sank as she said in a cold tone: “Look at your embarrassed look. Disgraceful. Also, be careful and attentive of what you say. We are only responsible for keeping the prisoners. We don’t have the right to kill them. Don’t talk nonsense!”

The middle-aged people knew his tongue slipped, so his face immediately changed as he bowed: “Yes.”

The woman turned towards Dudian: “From now on you are being held in custody. If you repeat such a thing again, no matter the reason, it will not be tolerated!”

Duddian nodded in a very serious manner.

The woman saw his expression as she turned towards the middle-aged man: “Send him inside, but you won’t be responsible for monitoring him. I will arrange someone else and send the person over.” Finished she turned away and left.

After she left, the middle-aged man turned around and fiercely looked at Dudian. He spoke in a low voice: “Little devil, don’t think that you have escaped from my clutches. As long as I’m here, you will die!”

Dudian replied in a cold manner: “Aren’t you going to lead the way?”

The middle-aged man clenched his fists in anger, but still holds on to his nerves as he stepped forward and led the way.

...

Detention House, a luxury office.

“Oh, this kid turned out to be a hunter.” A clean shaved bald man sat in the chair while the secretary from before handed him out a document. He skimmed through the information.: “A hunter from the Mellon Consortium had committed theft? Funny... Funny... Moreover, the Mellon Consortium also supports his imprisonment... Interesting, they are ready to cut down their cash cow. It’s the first time something like this happens. Now contact

the Mellon Consortium about this matter and check their heartbeat to see how they react."

The warden's secretary was puzzled: "What about the appeal?

"If the Mellon Consortium wants to kill him, then we have to give them some face. Of course, it won't be cheap. It's a good opportunity, and we got to take hold of it." There are joy and happiness in the bald man's eyes: "Moreover, this matter should be useful for our consortium too. "

"I know." Secretary nodded.

...

Dudian sat in an independent cell as he waited quietly.

"I don't know if that the middle-aged man has informed the Mellon consortium about the news." Dudian was worried, "I must think of alternate ways to get out. As long as I get the opportunity to complain, then I'll have a chance to prove that I was wronged. "

"Unfortunately, there is no one with a little bit of background who could bail me out. "

"However, the people with that level of power would collapse after being pressured by the Mellon consortium."

“I don’t know how Jura and Gray will be affected as they were involved in my upbringing. ”

“Damn it!”

He couldn’t think of anything. He was angry, but at the same time, there was a trace of fear.

Three days passed in the blink of an eye.

He didn’t get anything but water and break in these three days. He knew that the person responsible for looking after him was someone else but that the middle-aged mad could buy him off for a silver coin. At the end of a day, he was a prisoner.

However, the worries in his heart increased as in the last three days there was little movement.

“There should be no hope of appeal … …” Dudian looked at the dim light shining from the window. There was desolation in his heart. But despair and anger were lurking around making him crazy. “The only option is a jailbreak. Otherwise, I’ll be trapped in this dungeon and die here. There is only suffering and humiliation in here.”

“If I escape, I won’t be able to live in the light, but the darkness is the only choice. ”

“In that case, I’ll never see aunt Jura, I can’t see Mason and the

others. Also, I can't see... her!"

Dudian was sad, but his instinct of survival inspired and increased his determination to live. He began to seriously think about methods that could get him out of here.

Another two days passed in the blink of an eye.

On this day, the cage suddenly opened.

A familiar smell drifted into his nose. He was a bit surprised.

"Dean!" a sweet trembling voice echoed: "You, How did you become like this? "

Dudian was startled when he heard the voice. His eyes were wide open as he saw Jenny wearing a white skirt standing on the other side of the cage. Her white fingers were grabbing onto the thick steel pillars of the cage.

Dudian stared at her almost doubting his eyes. He thought that he saw an illusion because of hunger.: "Jen...Jenny, how did you come here?"

"My father sent me over. Did they abuse you?" Jenny's eyes were red.

Dudian hurried up and grabbed her hand. He spoke in excited:

“Are you alright? Your father didn’t hurt you, right? ”

Jenny immediately broke free from his hand and backed away a few steps. She rubbed off the tears on her eyes. : “Why would my father want to hurt me? I just wanted to ask you. Why? Why did you want to steal?”

Dudian was startled. His blood was boiling up because of meeting her, but he suddenly calmed down. The coldness invaded his heart as a piercing pain walloped him. His heart was bitter as he thought: “Of course he won’t hurt you. You are his baby daughter. Why should I worry about that?”

He looked at the white girl: “Do you believe that I will steal something?”

Jenny clenched her teeth: “The evidence has been conclusive. They have found the Milan family’s Longshan (Dragon Mountain) Ruby in your safe. It is one of the three treasures of Milan house. There is no second identical piece. Why did you do something like that?”

“If I say that I never knew about the existence of the Milan family and had never seen the ruby that you were talking about. Would you believe it?” said Dudian. He clutched onto iron pillars as his body trembled.

“Why do you have to lie to me!” Tears flew down Jenny’s eyes: “I have inquired about everything. I know all the truth regarding this matter. Why do you want to lie to me now?!”

Dudian was full of bitterness: “I never cheated you. It is done by your father who wants to break us up. He deliberately framed me. Why don’t you want to believe me? Why are you acting like this, as if you are alien to my character after the year that we have spent together?”

Jennifer crouched down: “At first I also thought so, but I asked the people of the Milan family. Two months ago Miss Milan had invited you to their house for a visit. At that time, I again thought that you wouldn’t something like that. Even when they said that a ruby was found in a safe at your house, I still believe that someone else has framed you!”

“But the deacon took the case and personally investigated it, he had confirmed that you had stolen the ruby! ”

Dudian suddenly understood everything. No wonder there was no interrogation and the order to capture him was released so easily. It was a deacon level judge who had accepted the case and made the investigation.

However, even though the whole world was against him, he was aware that he had never seen that Milan family’s Miss. All of this was fictitious. He was being framed!

“Your father should also buy this deacon,” Dudian said in a sullen tone.

Jenny raised her head in anger, “You must utter a word about my

father!”

Tears almost fell down Dudian’s eyes: “Do you believe your father?”

Jenny replied: “You may not understand this. Although the Burong family is very large, but bribing a deacon is absolutely impossible! The judges are pure, noble and aren’t confounded by money. The deacon has never had contact with us. So he has no reason to slander you!”

“No one is going to be tempted by the money. Not even the judge and magistrate, not even the Knights of Light from the Holy Church,” he said.

Jennifer looked up at him. She rubbed off the tears. Her expression slowly calmed down: “It’s all because you are a thief! You love money, so you think everyone loves it too! The book of light says that in the eyes of despicable everyone is despicable and in noble eyes, everyone is noble!”

Dudian firmly held onto iron pillars: “If you no longer believe me then why have you come here?”

Jenny’s body trembled: “I just want to hear you admit your sins. As long as you admit, I won’t care about anything. I will still be with you. I can forgive your crime. But you are still obsessed. You even try to frame my father. Moreover, you are slandering the deacon to cover your crimes. I am really… disappointed with you!”

“Disappointed?” Dudian laughed as tears slid down his face. “You’d rather believe an outsider, a deacon at the magistrate than trust me. You’re right. I’m guilty. I’m too silly and too naïve to think that we can break the shackles of the system. An aristocratic lady and a common man’s love! My sin is that I am too self-righteous in believing, that you can follow me to the ends of the earth!

“Even if they fall in love, bird and fish cannot be together!

Suddenly, the door was pushed open as a stalwart middle-aged man entered. He had the extraordinary temperament and was full of dignity as he said to Jenny: “Child, let’s go back!”

Dudian looked up at the man with eyes full of resentment: “If you want to break us up why not do it openly? You could give me a request, a target! If I couldn’t do it, I would leave. Why? Why do you use such underhanded means?”

“It’s enough!” Jennie interrupted Dudian’s words and looked at him bitterly. “Why do you refuse to admit that you have been wronged? Until now, I had to shout at my father! If a man is innocent, who can get you wronged? Is the entire consortium corrupted? I asked, your magic ability is tracking by smell, right?”

Dudian stared at her.

“You knew about my identity at the first encounter, right? You had used your sense of smell time and time to arrange coincidences to get close to me deliberately! The time when you sent me back at

rainy night and later accompanied me to attend the examinations...And over and over again! It was all deliberately done by you to get close to me..."

Jenny continued, "Even if I knew all of this, I still loved you. I loved the tone of your voice, and I loved your maturity. I knew that you were not disguised. But why? Why do still not admit it? Why did you want to be a thief?"

As he heard her speech, it felt like his heart was pierced by a dagger time and time again, suffocating him in pain.

He suddenly understood that when a person does not trust you, all your explanation seems like a lie to them! Hypocrisy!

If there is no unconditional trust, even if you do everything right, but wrong once then everything will crumble!

Is this love?

He looked at her and suddenly wanted to laugh.

For you, I was willing to give up everything, even my own ideals!

For you, I even give up myself, willing to live your favorite life.

Because your father's calculations, I almost lost my life in the hunt!

At the end, I have become a bad person, a dirty thief!

Dudian felt ridiculous.

How ignorant he was! He should have understood earlier that there won't be good results.

It was ridiculous to hope that with sincere treatment alone, he will be able to overcome all the difficulties.

Naïve!

Goodwill was all he had, but in return, he was framed.

He looked up and smiled. He began to laugh. He laughed so hard that couldn't help but cough up!

The stalwart middle-aged man looked at Dudian indifferently and turned to Jenny and softly said: "Let's go."

Jennifer hesitantly said to the middle-aged man: "Father, will he be alright?"

Middle-aged man smiled and said: "It was just a theft. Although the value of the thing he had stolen is too expensive, I talked with the Milan family. Because of the help from our family, he will get commutation and will be released in three to five years. This

approach is a bit illegal, but...I hope he will change for the better!”

Jenny breathed a sigh of relief. She deeply looked at Dudian as she held back her tears and then turned away.

Instinctively, Dudian wanted to raise his hand to retain her. But he didn’t. He understood that some things once lost, wouldn’t be restored again.

He was silent as he stood alone in the cage.

He was like a cold and hard stone.

After two days, the formed middle-aged man who was wounded by Dudian pushed open the door. His nose was bandaged. He saw Dudian’s motionless body and jumped in fear. Soon he found that Dudian hadn’t hanged himself, so he was relieved.: “Brat, you scared the shit out of me.”

Dudian did not respond as if he hadn’t heard him talk.

The middle-aged man sneered. He took out a sheepskin scroll and said: “This is the notice sent by the magistrate. The ruling has come out.”

Dudian’s body slightly moved and he slowly raised his head. His eyes swept over the sheepskin and then moved to the middle-aged man’s face as his lips curled up into a smile.

Middle-aged man’s hair stood erect as he saw Dudian’s smile.

Sylvia Giant Wall Calendar. Year 305. ‘Black Snow Season’

13-year-old Dudian was escorted to the number one prison within the giant wall. Thorn Flower Prison! He was the youngest criminal to serve a sentence there in the last fifty years.

Chapter 142 - Imprisonment

Thorn Flower Prison also is known as “The First Prison of Sylvia”!

The fame of the prison has overshadowed some of the ancient noble families. In addition to relevant personnel, only a select few knew about its location.

At the moment, a giant steel carriage shook once in a while as it moved. The cage was covered with a black cloth and tied in different places with rope to prevent the wind to open it.

A total of twelve official knights from the magistrate were in charge of escorting the prisoners.

Even though they were not matched to the Knights of Light, but twelve of the knights of the magistrate were equivalent to a thousand guards army combat potential.

The carriage stopped as the black fabric covering it was lifted off. A figure sitting cross-legged was revealed.

Dudian had been hungry for seven days in the detention house of the former prison. His hair was scattered, his skin was pale. At the moment his hands and feet were bound by a sturdy metal chain, limit his action.

“Get down,” One of the knights lightly shouted.

He raised his head and looked around the carriage. His eyes flashed as he saw the structure called Thorn Flower Prison. The prison was located in the middle of a lake. At the moment, in addition to the aisle that connected the land mass to prison, all the other sides were water. A huge shadow was faintly visible as it swam in the lake.

“There is nothing to see! Come Down!” The young knight chided him.

Dudian slowly stood up and patted the dust off his body. He went off the carriage.

“Go!” The knight next to him holds down onto Dudian’s shoulder.

Dudian stared at him coldly, “I’ll go.”

The knight frowned: “Then walk briskly! ”

Dudian stepped into the human-made aisle constructed of stones. In the front, there was a huge black castle-like prison. As he walked, the metal chain bound to his ankles were dragged and made ringing sounds.

thump!

Suddenly waves poured out from the lake next to the aisle. Two meter long fish jumped out of the water while an eight-meter long crocodile-like monster crest into the sky after it. The fish was dangling from its mouth as it sinks down to the lake.

Dudian carefully looked at it slightly squinting his eye.

“Don’t look at it!” The knight next to him sneered.

Dudian quietly took back, his eyes as he continued to walk.

They reached the end of the aisle. The top part of the prison was surrounded by gardens. At the moment, many servants were cutting down the lawn and watering the garden.

“Go in, the prison is under the garden,” said one of the knights.

Along the stone trail in the garden, they went to the gate of the castle prison.

They entered a luxurious and spacious lobby. Dudian saw seven or eight jailers sitting in the lobby, eating snacks, drinking coffee, chatting and joking with each other. If they didn’t have uniforms and badges on their shoulders, Dudian would have thought that he was in a high-end restaurant in the commercial district.

People in the lobby looked at them. A few of them had charming smiles on their faces as they looked at Dudian.

“It’s my first to see such a small one. ”

“He is my dish.”

“There is a new plaything.”

“Last time, it was too weak to play as he died after several times.”

Dudian’s hearing was extraordinary so he could hear clearly all the whispering sounds of conversation happening in the lobby.

“Quickly take him down!” One of the jailer’s sitting close to the door ordered.

A knight ordered: “Come with me.” They went through a dark corridor that led them into the underground.

The basement was an interrogation room full of tools for torture. All of them were stained with blood, some of them had remained of flesh on them.

Dudian looked gloomy.

The jailer sitting at a counter next to the interrogation room saw Dudian and others coming.: “a newcomer?

The knight said to him: “This is his information. We are here to give him to you. ” Then he handed out a document to the young jailer.

Prison guard took a look at the documents: “His crime is theft?! Are you sure there is nothing wrong? A thief has been sent to us?” However, when he checked the file below, he realized the circumstances, “Oo, poor little guy.” The guard didn’t have sympathy but gloating on his face. Afterward, he put the documents on top of the counter and said to Dudian: “Little guy, take off your clothes.”

Dudian slightly frowned and didn’t comply.

“Well, well, well. Who have we got here! I haven’t eaten all day long, so let’s cut the formalities.” The guard stood up and went to the side. He brought up a big bucket of water and splashed onto Dudian’s head.

Dudian’s head was down as he slightly clenched fists.

The jailer youth caught a glimpse of Dudian’s fists and sneered: “He is angry now. Do you want to get revenge? I like ones like you. The ones who think they are tough. They seem to be very hard to break at first... Now, I will make you squat and check out your ass. Let me see if there is anything hidden inside!”

Dudian looked up at him.

“Little devil, it’s better to comply with them.” The knight from the magistrate who was standing behind Dudian seemed to know the inside information. He had a trace of regret as he looked at Dudian: “Although you are to here to reprieve for your crimes. But after you enter this place, basically there is no room for a return. It’s best not to provoke these distorted devils or else they will torture you to death. You better listen to them.”

There was a touch of a smile on jailer youth’s face who heard knight’s words.: “You are totally wrong. In this prison, we are not devils but holy angels.”

The knight’s brows wrinkled.

The jailer youth smiled: “If you ever commit a crime and get distributed to here. I promise you. I’ll love you!”

“I hope so.” The knight sneered.

The jailer recovered his eyes and looked at Dudian who was standing in front. His face sand: “Kid, are you deaf or dumb? Don’t you understand what I have told you? Why are you so stubborn?” He grabbed a steel pipe from the side and hit Dudian’s shoulder.

Bang! Dudian felt the pain and looked at the jailer youth like a ferocious beast.

puff!

One punch was enough to make the young jailer fly. Sounds of broken bones echoed out as the jailer youth's body inverted out and hit the torture device.

"stop!"

"stop!"

The knights quickly scolded him and approached from behind to pull back Dudian.

Dudian roared and waved his hand. Dudian grabbed the knight who was about to pull him and throw him to the side. He rolled over and got up. The knight was stunned at his strength.

The other knight who was the leader shoved a kick to Dudian's back. He was fast and had great strength. Dudian's turned but failed to react. He was kicked and fell to the ground.

At this time, the other knights of magistrate rushed into action and pressed Dudian onto the ground.

Dudian's eyes were red as he was tightly staring at the knights who had knocked him down. Dudian was struggling, but his arms, legs even his neck was tightly held the knights. He was almost out of breath, let alone to break free from their grasp. Although the common formal knights of the magistrate were not his opponents, at the moment, they had swarmed up. It was difficult for him to match them.

Moreover, the leader of the knights had the strength similar to an intermediate level hunter.

At this time, the jailer who was punched by Dudian stood up and came to him.

The jailer youth was sweating in pain as he looked at Dudian and growled: “Kid, I’m going to peel your skin!” He was too emotional as his chest injury was affected. The jailer spouted blood and fainted.

One of the knight’s asked their leader: “What should we do now?”

“Send him to the hospital and inform the others,” replied the leader.

About four or five guards of the prison had come down the corridor. They didn’t expect that the new little guy had so much power that so many knights would be needed to keep him in check.

“You should take him to a cell! We got to go back,” the leader of knights said to the oncoming prison guards.

They looked at each other and went around to find chains. One of them told the knights: “Help us to lock up this kid on the cross.”

The six knights who were holding Dudian down and looked at their leader.

The leader of knights frowned, but nodded.

Six knights who were locked on Dudian's hands, feet and head moved him to the cross. Firstly, Dudian's hands were locked to the iron cross. Secondly, they put a steel hoop around his chest. Dudian's height was smaller than an adult's, so his feet were locked close to the ground.

Dudian struggled, but the six knights were experienced. They had locked him from joints so he couldn't muster up power. He helplessly looked as they locked him to the frame.

"Let's go." The leader knew what was going to happen until he ordered the others to leave.

The other trials which saw the prison guards take up whips were disgusted and followed their leader up the stairs. They only heard a 'bang' sound which echoed after the door was shut.

All five of the prison guards looked at struggling Dudian. One of them laughed.: "No need to struggle, kid." He pulled up the whip which he was holding. There were sharp nails attached to it.

Dudian stopped struggling as he saw the parts where he was tied to cross showed no signs of loosening.

“I want to live!”

“Live!”

He continued to remind himself in his mind.

Puff! The whip in jailer’s hand moved and hit him. A sharp pain suddenly invaded all his body. It didn’t even take a moment when the whip hit Dudian second time.

“Scream, ah, ah, scream … … … …” the jailer cried in excitement as he used the whip.

Dudian lowered his head as he clenched his teeth.

The other four jailers laughed.

“I like this one. Pay attention to the points!” (TL notes: they are playing a game based on who will hit how many times)

“Get the spikes! ”

“Good.”

One of them went over a box, opened it and took out two finger long metal spikes. They were full of dust, so he just blew it off. It must not have been used for some time, so there is a lot of rust on

the spikes, but the prison guard didn't care. He picked the hammer from the desk and walked over to Dudian.

"It's been so long that the spikes have rusted." Another one picked up the spike, he shook his head and laughed.

"Come on, hold him!" the guard holding the hammer said.

Several others went over to hold down Dudian. The man with the hammer put up spike's sharp edge few inches below Dudian's shoulder. He raised the hammer and hit the end of the spike.

Puff! The sharp spike pierced into Dudian's flesh.

What is pain?

He had experienced multiple injuries outside the giant wall. But nothing like this.

Bang!

The young man raised his hammer and once again hit the spike.

Dudian could not help but scream. He screamed in agony.

The guard began to smile as they heard Dudian's screams. For a time only mournful screams echoed out from the torture chamber,

as well as the sound of hammer hits.

Both spikes were nailed several inches below Dudian's shoulder blade. In this severe pain, Dudian felt that he was going insane. He found that because of pain his mind couldn't remember anything. He couldn't focus his thoughts to remember the sadness, disappointment. Everything was gone, only pain existed.

The guards apparently weren't going to stop there. They picked up the torture instruments and continued to inflict injuries on Dudian's body.

A few hours later, the guard dragged the blood dripping body of Dudian through a corridor to one layer below.

It was dimly lit in here. There were yellow oil lamps on the wall. The cells covered in iron pillars and were defected from each other.

"Hey, a newcomer?"

"Poor little guy. The smell of the blood ah ... ..."

"So small? Gee! Look at this little tender piece of meat."

"Hey, Sire, please send this little guy to our cell."

Excited sounds came from both sides. Some people whistled out.

Dudian's vaguely sensed what they were saying, but couldn't understand anything.

A voice echoed out close to his ear: "Welcome to our little happy family."

It was the moment voice echoed that Dudian felt he had been thrown onto a chilled ground. His cheek was attached to the floor. The smell from ground clung to his nose. It was like someone had sprinkled the floor with urine. Because of his habit of cleanliness, he instinctively wanted to raise his head, but the body was full of pain and couldn't move.

'Click,' the cage's door was locked.

The Prison guards left with a smile.

Suddenly, he felt a big hand holding onto his hair and grab him up. Dudian's vision was blurred as he couldn't see the details, but the general structure of a fat face. The man grinned as he said to him: "Devil! What kind of a crime have you committed to being locked up in here? Great though! Great! Ah"

Dudian gasped: "Let me down."

"What do you say? I can't hear ya." The obese man deliberately leaned his ear towards Dudian's mouth.

Dudian gasped, but didn’t say anything.

The fatty puts Dudian next to a mat. Then he stood up and untied his pants in front of Dudian.

Dudian reluctantly opened his eyes and saw the lower body of the fatty. He understood what the fatty wanted to do. His brain awakened, but his body was painful. He wanted to react, but especially because of the spikes he couldn’t move his arms.

Fatty saw that Dudian had opened his eyes and said: “It’s your turn so enjoy it.”

Dudian stared at him: “I guarantee that you will lose it if you dare to put this thing in my mouth.”

Fatty’s face was cold: “I will instantly smash your head if you dare to bite.”

Dudian stared back at him, “Believe me when I am in pain the first reaction is to clench my teeth!

Chapter 143 - Tragic

The fatty stifled as he heard Dudian talk. He sneered as he looked at the juvenile with stubbed eyes: “I’ll break your teeth. First, let’s see how you bite then…”

Dudian’s face changed.

“Are you stunned? Come over and hold him!” the fatty shouted as he turned back.

A few figures came out of the darkness of the cage. They laughed and sneered as they came closer.

“This little devil should be strong!”

“It’s going to be exciting as we play with him!”

“Don’t struggle kid. I’ll make you happy!”

Bursts of laughter echoed from the cage next door.

Some of them said: “Pig, don’t overdo anything. We also want to play with him!”

“It’s rare for such a tender-skinned meat piece to come in here. The cheap pig is lucky!”

“If I had known there would be a newcomer, I would have killed a person or two so that he would be put in my cell.”

Dudian’s looked at the approaching figures. They stink with the smell of urine. His heart was nauseous, but he clenched his teeth and struggled to stand up. His body was almost cramped after a little action. He was almost going to lose his consciousness.

However, because of laughter from surrounding cells and from approaching people, his heart was in panic but also angry. There was a deep helplessness and sorrow feeling. He clenched his fists as he growled: “Don’t come!”

As his roar echoed, it only increased the laughter of the others.

His spine was tightly touching to the cage. He wanted to escape, but there was nowhere to go.

What is desperation?

He had the urge to survive even when facing the beasts face to face.

But at this moment, despair had inflicted deep into marrows of his bones.

At this time one of the figures was getting closer to him grabbed

his arm and shoulder.

Dudian was frightened as if he was a beast in the corner. He growled in anger and raised his fist to punch. As his arm was lifted the handcuff's chains rattled. The pain burst out from his shoulder blades, almost fainting him.

Bang! Dudian's fist hit the slim figure who had grabbed his arm into his chest. He made a few steps back and almost fell. He kept rubbing his chest to relieve pain.

Because of the sudden counterattack, the other people froze up for a moment.

The cells next to the were silent for a moment, but afterward waves of laughter followed.

"Little devil has a bit of strength, ah! "

"So there is the strength to fight back an injury, Gee.

"Pig, your men, are too weak! They can't even fight with a kid! "

"Ha ha ... ..."

Fatty and his people had ugly faces as they heard the sounds of laughs from the other cells.

“Damn! Strip his pants. I will get him dry! ” Fatty shouted in anger.

The others immediately stepped forward.

Dudian began to scream and randomly hit out punches as he saw people try to approach again.

They stopped for a moment, but one of the bold ones tried to catch Dudian’s fist. But after just a touch he was against to find that this little kid’s power was beyond his imagination. His arm was numb as he quickly retreated.

Fatty saw that the other were afraid to get close to Dudian. So he took the opportunity and approached him to kick Dudian in the chest.

Bang! Dudian issued a muffled sound as his body hit the back of the cage.

Fatty moved forward to kick fiercely in Dudian’s chest while he cried out: “You are stubborn?! Alright, then let’s see how long you are going to be stubborn.”

However, the moment his feet swing to hit Dudian he screamed out in pain as Dudian had wrapped his feet like a vicious beast and bite on.

Fatty was in a hurry to get his leg out of Dudian’s wrap as the

other side teeth were pulling out his flesh. In pain and anger, he raised his fists to hit Dudian in the head.

Dudian almost lost his consciousness because of fatty's punches, but there was only one thought in his mind. "Never relent! I got to stay alive!"

Bang! Bang!

Fatty saw that his punches didn't have any effect on Dudian.

"Faster, help me and pull him " Fatty roared out to the others as he was soaked in cold sweat because of pain.

The other reacted and pulled Dudian's hands and feet. One of them was clever enough to kick Dudian's wound where his flesh was pierced.

Because of sharp pain, Dudian loosened his arms. Fatty took advantage of the opportunity and withdrew his feet. His thigh had clear bite marks. The flesh was almost bitten off by Dudian.

He growled in pain and sat onto the mat. He shouted at his minions: "Hit him! Severely! I want him dead!"

The others who heard his orders immediately began to punch Dudian.

Dudian felt like he had been thrown into a mixer (fruit blender). There was a steady stream of punches impacting his body.

“Perhaps if I bow down there won’t be pain any longer?”, a thought passed through his mind.

“Do not revolt, do not resist, or you will die … …” A voice constantly was whispering in his mind.

Dudian didn’t know how long the punching continued, but finally it seems they were tired as they heavily threw him to the ground. After the constant punches had been stopped, he felt like the world calmed down.

He was relieved and wanted to lay down like this for a while.

However, the world was coherent and not as good as he thought it is. Once a person falls there will be someone to step on him.

Hands grasped from his waist as if carrying a weak sandbag.

He was confused, but his mind woke up in time.

Although he couldn’t see, he realized what kind of position this was!

“Do not revolt! It won’t be too painful … …” a voice was persuading in his mind.

Bear it?

He thought that even if he can endure such a thing. But what about giving up on his self?

Many thoughts flashed pass in his mind. He hissed and wriggled. He raised his left arm, turned over and waved it past.

Bang! He punched the shadow on the abdomen. The hand grabbed him immediately released.

Dudian stood up and clenched his fist and roared!

“Ah ah ah ah -”

The roar echoed through the cell!

The person who was hit in the abdomen was about to rush and grab onto Dudian but stopped the moment he heard Dudian roar. It was as if the members of some beast clan were fighting. The echoing roar had intimidated him.

The laughter’s coming from the other cells were overshadowed by the sound of the roar.

All the people looking at the young and thin kid couldn’t help but put away the contempt for him.

There was a silence in the cell.

Chapter 144 - Little Game

Fatty who was clutching his hurt thigh cursed: “Break his legs and arms. Make him disabled, ah! Let’s see how he will fight back then!”

The man clutching his abdomen spoke with hesitation: “That little devil is too strong, unlike normal people. Should we wait for a few days for him to weaken in hunger and waste him later on?”

Fatty frowned and cursed in anger: “Damn it, damn it!”. Although he was cursed out loud, he didn’t force people to siege Dudian. The latter had made him feel shocked. Normally, when a person who was pierced by the spikes, they would be like a dead and obedient dog. No matter how rebellious they had been before, they would have no ability or strength to resist. This little devil was very strange. He didn’t have strength to stand up when he was thrown into the cell, but now he acted like a crazy beast.

Moreover, he had first-hand experience on Dudian’s strength. He thought that if the spikes were not used on him, then he may not be this kid’s opponent at all.

“Don’t let him breathe! This little devil should be a hunter or some high-level knight.” Although Fatty’s face was ugly, his mind was very sharp: “For next twenty-four hours attack him in turns. Don’t let him sleep. I don’t believe he won’t collapse and break-up.”

“Pig, stop it!” A voice echoed from the next cell.: “The kid has

good potential.”

Fatty’s face sank: “Scar, it’s not like I don’t want to give you face. But I have already offended the kid. If he gets better after a few days, there is no good future waiting for me. I must scrap him!”

“I promise you. He will not provoke you later.”The burly youth frowned.

Fatty sneered: “After he gets well and wants to get his revenge you may not be able to pull him off. This decision is not open for a discussion. Don’t continue to persuade me as I don’t want to turn against you.”

The burly youth’s face was gloomy as he deeply looked at Fatty, but he didn’t say anything.

“Why are you guys stunned? I said, don’t give him a chance to breathe!” Fatty roared in anger.

The other hesitated, but still came forward as a percussion, to threaten Dudian. They want to keep him as tense as possible.

Dudian looked at the figures get close to him as his body was shaking. Previously, when he was tortured, he had a large amount of blood loss. His vision was blurred. He raised his hands and made an attack posture while waiting for his physical strength to restore.

The clever prisoner saw that Dudian was like a futile, empty

shelf. A few made deliberate postures to trick Dudian and suddenly attacked with a kick.

Dudian was caught off guard, and the kick hit his arm. As a result, he fell to the ground.

The others who saw this also used the same technique. The used constant feints and occasionally made sudden attacks.

This happened several times. The clever one managed to kick Dudian's neck.

Dudian who seemed to have forsaken resistance suddenly raised his arm and caught that person's feet. He lifted his other arm and slammed onto his knee.

Kacha The sound of bone fracturing resounded. The clever youth's mouth issued a pig-like screaming as he howled in pain.

The others began to attack Dudian in a hurry to force him to let go.

Dudian didn't continue to brace and loosened his hand as he leaned his back against the cage. He took big breaths. In comparison to his previous state, he was barely able to bear the pain. The human instincts would gradually adapt.

"Ah, ah, ah ... ..." the others dragged back the person who was injured by Dudian. He was screaming out in pain. His leg was

protruding in the opposite direction.

Fatty who saw this his face changed. He looked at Dudian and spoke in cold tone: “Good boy. Tenacious!”

Dudian stared back at him and did not speak.

The others began to help the young man to deal with his injured leg. They were adjusting the bones so for a time Dudian was ignored.

The people checking out the scene from the other cells knew that the entertainment had ended. The show was done.

“It’s boring.”

“Pig is a trash who can’t handle a kid. ”

“Piggy if you don’t kill the kid, you will be the one to die. ”

“I can’t imagine how evil he is to be thrown into Thorn Flower at his age.”

Fatty heard the words coming from other cells, but he didn’t continue to rush out in anger. He didn’t expect the new kid to be full of tricks. He chose to wait.

A few hours later, the two guards opened the door and put down two pieces of wood onto stairs. They rolled down the cart and pushed it through the promenade. “It’s time to eat, garbages!”

The laughter and noises coming from cells have silenced the instant the prison guard’s voice echoed out.

The other jailer took out a piece of dark bread and threw into each cage.

“Sir, we seem to have less today.” One of the prisoners said.

The jailer who was distributing the bread bent over towards the cage and said: “The next time you will get much less.”

The prisoner seemed to realize something as he shook his head. “It’s a lot, a lot!”

“Give that back to me!” The prison guard screamed as he came towards the cell.

The man’s face turned ugly, but still gave back the bread in his hand.

The jailer picked up the bread and spit on the floor. He threw it onto the ground outside the cage, raised his toe and stomped on it. He twisted back and forth until the bread was flat. The prison guard sneered.: “Trash!”

A moment later, the cart came to Dudian's cage.

One of the prison guards saw Dudian and leaned against the cage: "The little devil's habit has kept him alive. The pig hasn't been able to cool you down." He had an easy tone as he spoke. It was like he was talking to an old acquaintance.

Dudian's head was down and did not say anything.

The other guard saw Dudian and smiled: "Today, I heard that there was a new kid who made a guard disabled. Is this the little kid who did that?"

The previous guard laughed: "Yes. But he was unlucky because of his stupidity. Didn't he know that the first thing is to nail the spikes? He will lie in bed for six months, and his wife is going to be lonely."

The other guard laughed as he heard him talk.

The prison guard turned back and said: "Do you want to see a show?"

The other people who were eating black bread in their cages heard the jailer's speech and raised their heads. One of the took the lead as he shouted: "Yes!"

The other prisoners did not lag behind and responded swiftly.

The jailer listened to echoes coming from all the cages. He took out two pieces of black bread from the card and looked at Dudian's cage: "Let's play a little game. Piggy! Piggy, you are going to play against this little devil. Whoever wins will get two pieces of bread for today and tomorrow. Whoever loses will eat soil!"

Chapter 145 - Who Is Stupid?

As he heard the jailer talk, fatty's face changed. He was already planning to rob Dudian's allocated food and make the others attack him in turns to deplete his strength and spirit. However, Fatty didn't expect that the prison guards would come with such an extravagant game today.

There was ruthlessness in fatty's eyes. He was not afraid of those two prison guards, let alone a scared child.

"Let's start," said the prison guard: "If there is no winner today, both of you will get nothing to eat."

Fatty took a deep breath and slowly stood up from the mat. Although his foot was bitten and ached when it came to facing a real fight he was able to hold back. Step by step he went towards Dudian.

Dudian was leaning against the iron cage while his body was full of dull aches. His brows wrinkled as he saw Fatty slowly approach him. He looked at the prison guard: "Can I throw the towel?"

The prison guard smiled: "Little guy, you better don't disappoint me as everyone is looking at us. Don't be worried this piggy can't kill you. We are the only one who can decide who lives and who dies in here!"

Fatty clenched his fists and grinned: "Boy, you should beg for mercy. Laozi may beat you a bit less in that case."

Dudian sighed and murmured: “Unfortunately, I don’t have a stupid offspring like you.”

“You seek death!” Fatty’s eyes were full of anger, but he wasn’t affected by Dudian’s words. He knew that in prison people could play roles to injure the others. It was a harsh environment. He took a deep breath and punched out as he aimed at Dudian’s shoulder injury. It was faint as fatty loosened his arm and raised his foot to kick the next moment.

Whoosh!

Because of the speed and momentum of his kick wind whistled.

Dudian coldly stared at him as if a tiger was crouched down waiting for its prey. He lifted his arms slightly as he looked at fatty’s foot.

Fatty saw Dudian lift his arms, so he retracted his foot. It was another feint!

Dudian’s arms also fell.

Fatty sneered in his heart in disdain.: “You want to fight with me?” He raised his foot again.

Dudian saw fatty lift his foot, he also slightly raised his arm.

Fatty again took back his foot.

Fatty walked a few steps while at it continued to raise his foot and made a feint again.

Fatty made seven or eight times feints. None of them knew when the other one was going to go for a real attack. The advantage of feints was to consume Dudian's physical and mental energy. Fatty was patient.

When a person is unguarded and unprepared, then the damage is the most.

"Piggy, do you know how to fight? Ah!"

"The kid is so small. Piggy do you even have the balls?"

The people from the other cells began to ridicule Fatty. But the main point for them was to curse the cunning fatty. He was very foxy while dealing with an injured kid.

Fatty was not affected by the other's mockery. However, his face was exasperated. Almost everyone from the other cells thought that fatty was going to attack this time. So when they saw another feint, all of them lost temper as they felt bored.

He lifted his foot and feinted for another seven or eight

consecutive times.

Dudian's breathing got heavier with each of Fatty's feints. Someone he seemed too lazy to defend against fatty's attack as he didn't even raise his arm.

Fatty again raised his leg similar to previous postures he had taken.

There was small killing intent exposed in his eyes.

Everyone thought that this is another feint. However, this time it wasn't as the kick swept directly towards Dudian's shoulder.

Dudian who seemed out of it suddenly raised his arms as fast as lightning. He accurately grasped onto fatty's leg as if he was an eagle and his hands were claws. The moment he grabbed onto his leg, he suddenly pulled it towards the iron pillars.

None of them had noticed when Dudian's arms were already out of the iron pillars.

This out-of-nowhere pull brought Fatty's leg out of the steel column and imbalanced his body as he fell to the ground.

Because of spikes nailed to his arms earlier on, Dudian's was in pain as he moved his arms. He clenched his teeth to bear the pain. The next moment, he jumped onto fatty's body and seized his hair.

Originally because of steel spikes pierced and taken out from slightly under his shoulder blades, he wasn't able to move his arms. But Dudian found out that he would still be able to exert strength with his left arm. So he was relying on the strength of his left hand the most!

Because of absorption of cold crystals his left arm didn't perceive touch or pain. Although the activities of internal muscles affected, his shoulder blade's injury the left arm still had the power.

However, he knew that he must seize the opportunity at all costs. He bites the pain and broke out all of his power.

Bang! Dudian fiercely knocked Fatty's head onto the ground. It almost split, and Fatty almost fainted. Although Fatty had done a lot of bad things, it doesn't mean that he had suffered great pain.

Dudian gritted Fatty's hair and his fingers poked onto his face.

Puff! Pop! His left index finger and middle finger had deeply inserted into Fatty's eyes at the same time. Both eyes were squeezed out.

"Ah! Ah!"

Fatty went crazy as he screamed and raised his arms to wave around casually.

Bang! Fatty's punch hit Dudian's flank affecting his previous injury caused by the torture. Dudian saw that he had successfully blinded him, so he released his fingers and backed away.

Now he had the initiative to attack.

Chapter 146 - Indifferent

Everyone was stunned by this sudden reversal.

Fatty was lying on the floor howling in pain as his eyes were poked. This caused everyone to shudder.

Dudian leaned against the cage as he took big breaths. He suppressed the pain coming from his body as he listened to the mournful screams of the fatty. There weren't slightest emotion in Dudian's eyes as he looked at Fatty.

After a moment, Fatty closed his eyelids. He was slightly accustomed to the pain. He fought back the horror coming from his heart. He raised his hands and began to sweep around. He feared that Dudian would take the opportunity and rush to attack him. Moreover, he wanted to seize Dudian.

He knew his eyes were blinded and what it meant for him in prison.

Moreover, there was an injured tiger in this cage!

"Come out!" Fatty growled in anger. Blood dripped from his eyes down to his cheeks and dropped to the thick hair on his chest.

Dudian didn't want to kill him, so he silently observed Fatty. In case, Fatty was accidentally coming towards his position. He would silently bend over to the iron pillar and tap with fingers to make a

sound.

The prisoners who saw Dudian's cunning move felt that if the kid resists Fatty and live through, then he was going to become a tiger-like existence in the prison.

Fatty rushed on as he heard the sound. He roared as he raised his hand and punched severely. Instead of Dudian, he had hit steel column with all the power that he could muster. As his fist touched the iron pillar, he bent around flapping in pain. He didn't come across Dudian's figure and were aware that he was fooled. He didn't re-rampage, but stood still. He tried to rely on his hearing to induce the movement around the cage.

"Pig is refueling, ah!"

"On your left Piggy, on the left!"

"You're blind piggy! Oh, you're blind!"

The people from the other cells showed no sympathy to Fatty as they deliberately were speaking out loud and laughing to make it hard for Fatty to find Dudian. In fact, Dudian was on his right. However, the prisoners were clear about the unwritten rules of life. They knew that with blind eyes, Fatty didn't have a prospect to live. Especially when he had offended an injured young tiger, who was living in the same cage as fatty.

The coax seriously interfered Fatty's hearing He growled in

anger: “Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!”

“O, piggy wants to catch the tiger!”

“Behind you, piggy! Behind you.”

“Piggy, be careful!”

Everyone was ridiculing fatty. Especially the ones who saw that Fatty was listening and responding to their words couldn’t help but laugh out loud.

Dudian sat next to a dark corner. He looked at fatty who was cluelessly rampaging around the cage while surrounded by laughter. The coldness in his eyes gradually disappeared.

“Where is he!” Fatty growled as he thought of his men.

Those several men looked at the location where Dudian was sitting. They also saw Dudian look at them. Dudian’s hair was scattered, and his face was covered in blood. But those pairs of cold eyes were preying on them. All of them kept their silence.

One of the men who had a strong physique clenched his teeth as he screams: “Boss, he is on your left, close to the wall.”

Fatty turned to left and moved towards Dudian’s direction.

Dudian's eyes were cold as he dragged his body towards the sturdy youth who leaked his location.

"Come here, come at me!" The person with the strong physique showed a trace of fright on his face as he saw Dudian scurrying to him.

Fatty rushed down the source of the sound.

Dudian saw that the others were hesitating and were about to join the forces against him. Dudian's voice echoed: "Do you guys want to follow a waste? Piss off if you don't want to die!"

The others who heard Dudian's words immediately went to avoid him.

Only the stout youth stood there, but his face was ugly: "You bastards! If the boss dies, he will come after us eventually!"

The others heard him, but didn't respond.

The youth immediately understood their intentions. He cursed in his heart as he runs to the left to avoid a head-on clash with Dudian.

The cell was big. Although the youth was physically fit and strong after all, he was only an ordinary civilian criminal. So he was quickly forced to a corner by Dudian.

“Boss, here boss! He’s after me!” The youth cried in horror.

Fatty roared and rushed over.

Dudian lifted his left hand and slowly moved towards the youth.

The sturdy youth was retreating, but he changed his direction as he lifted his fist and punched towards Dudian’s shoulder blade.

Dudian was intentionally moving. Slowly waiting for this moment. He grabbed onto the youth’s wrist, pulled him and turned towards the fatty who was running to them.

The sturdy youth resisted strongly, but unexpectedly the kind who was strangling him was as strong as steel. Moreover, Dudian was a head shorter than him, which made him feel horrified.

However, the sturdy youth responded very fast. He quickly raised his hand to attack Dudian’s other shoulder blade.

Dudian wasn’t going to stop, but he was unable to lift his right hand. He saw the youth squat and try to attack again. Moreover, the youth screamed: “Boss!”

Fatty had reached them and punched out. Dudian used the same tactic as the sturdy youth used seconds ago.

Bang!

Sturdy youth spewed blood as hit the wall. His face was in pain as he said: “Boss you hit me! He squatted down!”

Fatty squatted and waved his arms to catch Dudian.

However, Dudian had long rolled away. He was similar to a cat as he had quietly reached another place.

Fatty waved his hands but didn’t find Dudian. He shouted in anger: “Where did he go?”

The youth who was hit by the fatty began to run around while giving him advice.

Dudian was extremely gloomy as he changed directions to hide from the Fatty’s clutches. His body was in pain, and his legs trembled.

The others who saw the youth who was accidentally hit by the fatty also began to run around the cell. These footsteps seriously interfered with fatty’s hearing.

Fatty was getting impatient as he hadn’t found Dudian yet. He suddenly roared and turned towards the sturdy youth: “Are you playing with me? Do you want to harm me?” He lifted his fist and punched out.

The sturdy youth shouted in panic.: “No boss! I did not!”

Bang! Bang! One of Fatty’s fists punched onto the bridge of the youth’s nose while the other hit his head. The youth fainted on the spot.

The others who observed this stopped, afraid to make any sound.

Chapter 147 - I'm Not A Trash Like You (Part 1)

"Well, you did good," said the prison guard. He shrugged his shoulder as the suspense was gone. He threw two pieces of black bread into the cage and said to Dudian.: "Eat, little one."

Dudian was relieved and was about to go to pick the bread pieces.

Fatty roared loudly and rushed along the voice of the prison guard. He indiscriminately touched the ground and picked up two pieces of bread and stuffed them into his mouth.

"Darn! This piggy!" the prison guard yelled in anger.

Fatty desperately stuffed the bread into his mouth regardless of the guard's yell.

One of the guards was enraged as he took out the key and opened the cage. He took out a torture stick from the cart and went into the cage. He severely beat Fatty on his back and head. The anger had risen to his head, so the guard didn't care about fatal points.

Fatty screamed in pain as he desperately tried to go backward to run out of the guard's reach.

"You can't eat unless we let you eat!" Both of the guards were angry as they kicked Fatty's face and chest. The others in the cage

were silent as they saw the guard beat Fatty. They didn't dare get close to the guard. In prison, the guards were the highest existence who held the ropes of life and death.

After the constant beating by the two guards Fatty screamed and howled in pain: "I dare not! Mercy! Mercy Lords..."

However, the guards didn't stop because Fatty was pleading. They kicked and kicked until the fatty's body had turned into a pool of blood. Both of them spat on his face, turned and left the cell.

Dudian saw that a crumpled piece of bread on the ground. He wanted to talk to the two guards, but hesitated and didn't say anything. He quietly went and picked the piece that was on the ground. He crushed it and began to chew it little by little.

He had not eaten for six or seven days in the detention center. He was very exhausted, and it was his first meal in almost a week.

The prison guard pushed the trolley and continued to distribute the food to the behind in other cells. After they had finished, both of them pushed the empty cart back as they chatted and laughed.

The prisoners swallowed their salivas as they heard guards talk about 'roasted chicken', 'steak' and 'foie grass'.

It was silent all around as everyone focused on eating as fast as they could. Afterward, they began to chat in a low tone.

They would talk about the scenery, their past and so on.

Dudian quietly ate the piece of bread. The burning feeling coming from his stomach because of the hunter slightly calmed. His body also restored some strength. Although the thin bread slice that got was not enough to fill his stomach, he had been hungry for so long that eating too much would have hurt his stomach. It was enough for him to digest the slice of bread.

Dudian half-closed his eyes to rest and restore strength as he leaned against the cage.

Other's carefully looked at Dudian and the fatty who was moaning as he laid down. Not only Dudian but every criminal who came to this prison would be pierced by spikes. It was the treatment that everyone had gone through.

The only difference was that after being nailed with spikes, no one would be sieged like Dudian. They would have time to recuperate.

"Boy, what have you done to get in here? Ha? Talk about it." A sound echoed from another cage.

Another prisoner spoke out from another cage: "Ah, yes! You have joined our happy little family, but haven't introduced yourself yet!"

Dudian slowly opened his eyes and coldly glanced at these people.: “I’m not trash like you. I haven’t committed any crime!”

Laughter echoed out from the other cages as they heard Dudian’s reply.

“Little guy, are you saying that you have been wronged? Right?”

“Haha, all of us are innocent! There is not a single criminal in here!”

“Let me ask you, who is not wronged?.”

There was a sudden response coming from different cages to Dudian’s words.

Dudian frowned, but didn’t say anything. He closed his eyes.

Dudian suddenly opened his eyes and stared at one of his cell mates who was silently getting close to him. That person stopped and looked at Dudian.: “I didn’t offend you! I’m here looking for leftovers.” He tentatively picked the bread crumbs from the ground. He saw that Dudian didn’t respond, so he slowly put them into his mouth.

Dudian saw this scene and realized what was happening. He didn’t say anything and half-closed his eyes to rest.

In the evening, two guards pushed the cart again and entered the promenade. One of them whispered: “Today we have decided to add a benefit. We have steak! Who wants a steak?”

The silent cells turned into an uproar as they heard the guard’s words.

“I!”

“I want!”

“Give me! Excellency give it to me!”

The guard was satisfied as he saw such a warm response. He raised his hand slightly and spoke in a sad tone: “So many people want a steak! We will go with the old rules. Do you know what to do?”

The reaction from each cell died out after the guard muttered out the words.

Dudian leaned against the cage and watched in silence.

He saw two people from the cage next to him say: “I want.”

Both of the guards looked at them as if they were dissatisfied with the results: “Only two people? It seems the rest is eating very well!” They saw that there was not a reaction from the other cages:

” Then you grab it. ”

They opened the locks of the cage.

There were two prisoners. One of them was ‘Scar’ who had spoken for Dudian previously.

“Scar, that’s mine!” A golden haired youth came out too.

Scar sneered: “According to each’s ability!” As he finished talking, he punched out.

Dudian looked as they fought out. In about few minutes, both of them separated, and Scar won the fight. Some parts of his face were red and swollen. He panted as he said: “I won.”

“I know.” The guard delivered the steak.

Scar’s hand was about to reach and grab the steak when the guard released it, and the steak suddenly fell to the ground. Dudian saw that there were a few rows of bite marks on the steak. It was clearly a leftover.

The guard sneered: “The fights are getting worse. Do you think I don’t know that you are intentionally acting?”

Scar’s face slightly changed: “How we would dare? I can not wait for the guards to take him and peel out a layer of his skin.”

The guard sneered, “That’s what you said.”

Scar’s expression was the same as he listened to guard.

The blond who had been beaten down and was lying on ground roared at Scar: “Damn you beast! I curse you!”

Scar picked up the steak and locked into the cage. The guard pushed the cart and delivered the bread. Afterward, on their way back they picked the blond and left.

The heavy air through the corridor was relieved as the sound of doors locking echoed from the end of the corridor.

“These two damn beasts!”

“Unlucky Jin.”

Dudian picked up four pieces of bread that were left at cage’s door. He looked back at the dark, hungry eyes: “Who would like to come and grab them?”

All of them saw that Dudian had picked up the bread. Coherently they shook their heads.

One of them spoke in flattering tone: “In the future, you are our boss! We will follow all your commands!”

Dudian understood the law of survival in this prison. He didn't say anything as he ate two slices of bread and kept the other two to eat after the midnight.

The others enviously looked at him, but didn't dare come forward to snatch the bread. They could only continue to please Dudian.

Dudian was indifferent. He understood what real power meant.

At this time, Dudian noted that Scar who was in the next cage didn't eat steak but hid in his arms. He couldn't help but desired the steak.

Scar noticed Dudian's eyes. He smiled.: "Little guy, the big boys call me Scar. How should I call you?"

"Dean," Dudian replied. He had heard the man's previous words when he tried to rescue him, so Dudian didn't have ill will towards him.

Scar nodded: "You used to be a hunter or a knight from the magistrate? You are not a knight of light, right?"

Dudian wrinkled his brows and didn't answer.

Scar seemed to realize that Dudian didn't want to go into details,

so he didn't say anything.

"Why aren't you eating?" asked Dudian.

Scar knew what Dudian meant. He sighed.: "Jin is in bitter conditions now. I will leave it to him."

Dudian knew that by saying 'Jin' he was referring to blonde youth: "Were you acting?"

Scar looked at him and considered for a moment. Afterward, he nodded: "Yes. These bastards out of 'kind heart' occasionally would give us something good. But every time they would want to see us to kill each other. So we play along. It is worth the injury."

"Originally, it would be mine. But these pricks took Jin, so I'm going to give it to him as compensation."

Dudian looked at the other cell and said, "Do the others agree?"

Scar nodded: "If no one comes up, then they would deduct all the food from us. So we must play according to their wishes."

Dudian went silent as he heard his words.

More than an hour later, his body was dragged back by the two guards. Blood was dripping from his body. He was thrown to his respective cage where he laid on the ground for half a day without

moving.

After the guard left the Scar shouted twice, ‘Jin, Jin’ to see if he could react. The blonde moved his head, but Scar said: “You take and eat it. You suffered today!”

A few others helped blonde to get up. He spoke with difficulty: “One day I’ll make them pay!” Scar looked as he sighed and shook his head.

In the blink of an eye, the middle of the night came. Dudian ate the rest of two loaves and closed his eyes to rest.

It didn’t take long when he felt very light voice. He opened his eyes and saw the previous man taking up the bread crumbs.

The man jumped in fear as he saw Dudian open his eyes. He didn’t expect that Dudian will detect such a small movement. He quickly explained and apologized.

Dudian did not say anything and closed his eyes.

The next day.

Dudian felt that the pain has reduced a lot. The wound has long scarred. The part where the spike had pierced in was still dull. There was slight ulceration.

However, there was no knife or first aid kit around. He could only use his saliva to coat the wound.

There were two meals a day. One at noon and the second one at night.

At noon they would give three pieces of bread. All of them were not exclusive to Dudian. He ate two while he throws out the remaining one to the others. He wanted his injuries to heal not to tear them apart.

However, he saw that the others didn't compete for the piece of bread, but each shared a small piece.

Dudian understood that there was no one here who was worthy of trust. But there was a tacit understanding built between each other to allow them to survive.

Like between Scar and Jin.

The rest of the prison operated the same way.

If you broke the tacit understanding, then you were bound to die, like Fatty.

The prison guards seriously injured Fatty and there was no one to take care of him. There would be no treatment, and injury means that his status will rapidly decline. Unless he was like Dudian, and he could quell others, even if he is injured.

Chapter 148 - I'm Not A Trash Like You (Part 2)

Fatty gradually woke up the next night. Fatty groaned as his body was in extreme pain. Especially, the guards had kicked on the places where the spikes had nailed him. At the moment his body had gone soft and weak so that he didn't have the strength to get up.

He growled in anger: "I'll kill you all! Come over and help!"

The others shrank back to corner as they looked at Dudian. Even the previous sturdy youth didn't dare to help Fatty out, after Dudian's previous reminder.

Fatty roared out a few times, but saw that no one responded. There was panic and sadness in his heart. He was angry, but he understood that he was abandoned. No one would side with a blind tiger.

Moreover, Fatty didn't have good ties with Jin and Scar who had high prestige within the prison. Most of the cell leaders showed respect to them. So even when the cell leaders were injured, they would support them, and no-one would dare to bully cell leader.

Loneliness, helplessness, despair, and darkness.

He remembered the first time he was thrown into prison, which didn't happen that long ago. He was crying in violation. However,

he was able to climb the ladder in here.

Now, he fell again.

Dudian quietly looked at him, but did not say anything. A moment later, dinner was served, and the jailer threw four pieces of bread to their cell.

Dudian picked them up.

Fatty heard the sound and crawled up. But didn't rush to snatch the bread, but instead kowtowed towards Dudian and pleaded: "Spare me, I beg you! You are my boss. I'm one of your men now. Please don't hate me for..."

Dudian didn't think much of his status, which was reversed. But he thought that Fatty would do a desperate counter-attack. So he was silent for a moment before he looked towards the other cellmates: "Do you think I should forgive him?"

The others were sitting on top of a mat in the corner looking at the bread in Dudian's hands. One of them tentatively answered to Dudian's question: "Boss you should forgive him. We are all assigned to work in the prison. If he is wasted, then we would be quiet at a disadvantage as there will be fewer people to work."

Dudian nodded and waited until the two prison guards left. He said: "Destroy one of his arms and his third leg."

The others were surprised as they heard Dudian's order.

Fatty's face changed as he was lying on the ground. He clenched his fingers tightly, but loosened them to plead: "Big brother, they are right. We have a week to work if my arm is destroyed I'll become a waste. The work has to be equally done by the others so that you will suffer too."

Dudian quietly looked at him: "Do you think I need to be personally involved in the work?"

Fatty was stunned.

The faces of the others changed too. They knew the meaning behind Dudian's words. They didn't expect that after their boss changed their conditions would still be same.

Dudian looked at the others: "No one wants to move?"

The others as one maintained the silence.

Dudian took out two pieces of black bread.: "Who is going to be obedient?"

He was using the same trick the prison guards had applied.

The rest of the cell mates were startled. One of them finally came forward: "I can, but I'm afraid of killing him."

Dudian looked at fatty: “I believe that you are smart enough not to resist. Or I’ll have to cut off more than one hand. I guess the rules are very simple in here. I just don’t have to kill you. So a bit of torture should amount to nothing in the prison guard’s eyes.”

Fatty heard the ‘a bit of torture’ statement by Dudian. His body trembled in anger, but he was afraid too. He knew that what Dudian had said was correct.

As long as there was no murder, the prison guard’s loved to see a dog bite dog situation.

Dudian began to eat the bread and said: “Let’s begin with the performance!”

The others looked at Dudian chewing the black bread. They clenched their teeth and came to surround fatty.

The prisoners from the other cells also noticed the situation. But it was a rare no laughter scene. Everyone felt a hint of chill. They had seen many vicious criminals who wouldn’t blink while doing the evil things. But they had never seen someone who would not have the slightest hatred or killing intent, but calmness while going for a pure retribution.

It was this tranquility that made people think of him as a dangerous person.

Screams and an angry roar echoed out inside the prison. The sound waves stirred in the cage and crashed down mercilessly.

Dudian ate the black bread while quietly watched the scene. After the atrocity, the fatty was lying down as blood oozed down from his crotch and his left hand was broken.

The show was over, and the others were looking at the black bread in Dudian's hand.

Dudian didn't say anything and threw out the black bread.

One of them quickly picked the bread and quickly shared in between them.

Day after day.

The prisoners were not stupid. From Dudian's initial struggle they had seen that he was not an ordinary civilian, but someone whose strength was superior to normal soldiers.

After all, by relying on anger, you couldn't burst out super strength. They have seen too many people struggle with anger and despair, but ultimately still pressed down their unyielding heads to the ground.

Anger was nothing while facing an absolute power. It didn't have the slightest effect. The only thing that would change was that the person would appear sadder by the end.

These days Dudian occasionally chatted with Scar. He got to know that this prison was located in the bottom of the lake. There was a total of three floors for prisoners. They were on the first floor, which represented part of the prison which had the weakest criminals.

The criminals were distributed to floors according to the crimes that they had committed outside.

For example, Dudian who had committed ‘theft’ naturally belonged to the weakest category.

In the past few days, Dudian also got to know that Fatty was a wealthy man in the outside world. His crime was that he had tried to rape a noble lady. However, because of his wealthy identity, he had a chance to buy a ‘God’s blessing’ in the black market. It made him stronger than usual prisoners. He was at the same level as a scavenger.

It was here that Dudian understood that in public ‘God’s blessing’ was referred as a ‘sacred’ item. It could be purchased on the black market.

Chapter 149 - I'm Not A Trash Like You (Part 3)

Most of the prisoners were either from the residential district or the slums. They were convicted of theft or murder. The reason for them being imprisoned in Thorn Flower Prison was that their activities had to affect either a noble or the Holy Church. Some of them had leaked or proliferated knowledge that had to be kept behind closed doors.

The fifth day in prison.

More than dozen prison guards came in and opened the cells. They forced everyone out.

Dudian knew that they were going to start the weekly work.

Although more than a hundred prisoners came out at the same time, there was no resistance or hint of a collective riot. The first reason for being obedient was that all of them had gone through 'spiking'. The conditions were so bad that the deep wounds wouldn't repair for a long time. Even for a person like Dudian who was a hunter, there would be too much fatigue and pain if he put too much force into his arms.

The second reason was that the security forces outside the prison were too large. If there was a riot, they would be sent to suppress them.

This reason made Dudian drop the idea of killing the prisoners and escape.

The guards led the prisoners to the second floor of the prison. It was a huge processing plant. No-one knew how many layers there were in the prison.

Dudian was startled when he saw things accumulated on the tables in the processing plant.

There were all kinds of limbs of monsters, complete furs or horns.

“Bunch of scum! Get working!” The prison guards who closed the heavy iron gate scolded the crowd as he waved the rod in his hand.

Everyone came to their respective workstations. Each cell was a small team and occupied a workbench. There were different monster parts on different tables. There was a classification on peeling and cutting them.

Dudian took out work clothes from the wardrobe. Also, there were protective gloves that had to be worn. They were made of plastic and nylon materials.

Fortunately, the limbs of the monsters that were brought from the outside of the giant wall had their blood dried up. The hair on their skin was dry and hard. More than half of the viruses, parasites and the other germs had died.

Dudian didn’t work as he took into account that the protective gloves were in bad condition. Instead, he watched as the others picked up limbs, stripped the fur and neatly stacked the things on the side. They cut off the horns, sharp teeth, claws and other parts with either a guillotine or dagger. Most of them were skilled in the process, and it seemed it wasn’t the first or second time that they were doing it.

The leader of the other cell didn’t also do any work, but quietly stood watching the process.

Dudian played around with a very thin knife as he thought about different things.

After a few hours, the work shift finished. Everyone lined up to return.

But before leaving the guards arranged every to strip all their clothing and came to a bathhouse to clean.

Dudian saw that Fatty and the others hands after the wash were a bit redder than normal skin color. It seemed as if mosquitoes had taken constant bites and the skin had slightly swollen. However, they were accustomed to this.

After the shower, the guards checked their mouth, ears, nostrils and other parts to confirm that none of them were smuggling out anything.

In the evening, four black pieces of bread were distributed to their cell. Dudian picked two for himself while gave the other two to the rest of cell mates.

Time went by.

The days were boring in the prison. After two weeks of imprisonment, the prison returned to its usual calm as prisoners lost interest in Dudian.

Cries and moans echoed throughout the prison during the day and night. It leads to more restlessness.

Dudian wasn't interested in such kinds of activities. His cell mates would secretly look at Dudian. Afterward, when they saw that he didn't care much about their relations, some of them couldn't bear anymore and helped out each other.

Fatty's third leg was wasted so his desires wouldn't be realized in any case. Occasionally he would feel envious, but was enduring.

Dudian noted that most of the people involved in such things would look at him with eyes full of desire and greed. Needless to say, he knew what was going on in their heads.

At the beginning, Dudian was full of resentment and anger, but gradually got used and indifferent towards such looks.

Dudian would rarely start a conversation. But sometimes he would ask a strange question to the cell mates and the prisoners from other cells. His questions would be related to astrology, business, the radiation zone, the giant wall and so on.

Many were willing to answer Dudian's questions. The main reason being Dudian's super strength. But also the prison life was boring. People were willing to participate in discussions to waste time.

However, most would ignore questions related to their past. But there were still a bunch who would be willing to share information about their families, hobbies and their brilliant ... crimes.

After three months in prison.

There was a new prisoner who had joined the 'happy little family.'

The youth had a temperament of a gentleman. His hair was blue colored while he had sword-like eyebrows. He was wearing a death sentence uniform. As he was dragged in by the guards and immediate warm concern was aroused. Shouts and hands were coming out of cells to express desires from prisoners for the newcomer to be assigned to their cage.

The guard didn't listen to the prisoners. They threw the youth into Dudian's cell.

The youth groaned as he stood up and shouted back.: “I was wronged! I was wronged! I have to appeal! I want to appeal!”

The prison guard sneered and left.

The guard had locked the iron gate, and a funny laughter echoed from behind.

The ‘welcome’ was held in front of Dudian. He silently looked at the youth who was thrown to the ground by several men. The youth struggled fiercely, but nothing changed at the end. Cries echoed throughout the prison.

The rest of the prisoners were excited because of the sounds.

Dudian quietly watched the youth to be rotated by the prisoners. Screams echoed out. Dudian knew that if he weren’t strong enough, he would end up like this youth three months ago. But he did not speak out to stop.

The youth’s had been screaming out for several days in a row. In the end, he was broken like a dead fish and let the prisoners wantonly play around with him.

A week later the youth had understood the situation in the jail. He knew that when he was in the prison, there was no way out.

Two weeks later, the youth was already accustomed to his role in the cell. He silently bears the attacks of others as he no longer

screamed.

After a month the youth was fully integrated into the system. Occasionally he would have the strength to try to fight back, but others would always overpower him. He was the first person to get into the part of the cage Dudian resided. But Dudian didn't care for him, even didn't look at him.

The youth was dissatisfied with Dudian's reaction and enraged, thinking that he could push over him. Because of his traumatic experiences he had cursed out Dudian with some vicious words.

However, it took a moment for Fatty and the others to curse and make threats to the youth. He slapped and beat him and afterward made him kneel down in front of Dudian and apologize for his misbehavior.

The second month after the newcomer had joined their cell, Dudian was selected by the prison guards to fight out another cell leader. The guards wanted to enjoy a good show. The cell leader had no prior communication with Dudian, so he was not aware of Dudian's prowess. He wanted to go for the kill, but unfortunate to him because of Dudian's punch his ribs were broken, and he almost died because of internal bleeding.

Since then all the cell leaders were clearly aware of their cage. Although Dudian was younger than them, his power and strength was at a level which they could not even imagine.

The youth also understood that the thin child that was their cell

leader had a position in this prison that was completely not in order with his own.

There were many conversations about Dudian in other cells. Scar's cell was opposite to Dudian's, so they were much aware of the situation in comparison to others. Scar shook his head and smiled.: "I have already told you. Nine out of ten which come to this prison are guilty. The remaining one, the tenth is a great devil. Look at him. So young and with such prowess, he certainly was involved in something very big."

Dudian heard Scar carving out a stereotype about him: "I have told you, I'm not a trash like you."

Scar smiled and replied: "It's been so long that you are here and you still act so proud. But you have eaten the same trash bread and drank the same water with us. I can't find anything different!"

Dudian glanced at him. "I haven't committed any crime. But in the future, if I commit a sin, I will never be caught. So, I'm not a trash like you! "

Chapter 150 - Insane

Time flew by.

It has been a year that Dudian spent in prison.

During this past year, Dudian gathered information about the entire Thorn Flow Prison through the gossips of the other prisoners and guards. Some stuff that he was not sure of Dudian would ask Scar or some other old-timers who would answer him.

He had asked many about their intent to ‘escape’ but everyone avoided the question. No one didn’t want to escape, but the problem was that no one could escape!

After collecting enough information, Dudian also was tackled with problems.

First of all, it was about the difficulty of a jailbreak. The Thorn Flower Prison was built within the lake. That’s why prisoners had lost the interest in a prison break.

Dudian knew that monsters were lurking in the waters of the lake. Cutting a hole through the prison’s wall was nothing but an act of suicide.

Moreover, the thickness of the walls would have to be very big for the prison to withstand the pressure of the lake. It had to be extraordinarily solid, so the idea of cutting a hole through the wall

was nonsense.

Therefore, no matter how reconciled you were, ultimately everyone would resign the idea of a jailbreak.

Dudian knew that he couldn't come up with a solid plan and was in despair. After a few days, he sat in the cage. Not feeling anything and avoiding giving a response to anyone. His mind was empty and the prison life became painful.

It took a while for him to get out of the depression and think about his jailbreak plan.

This time, he was going to start from zero. He had to think through all possibilities that could lead to a successful escape.

In the end, he divided the plans into two parts.

Outside and inside.

"Outside" referred to the chiseling the wall. He could start from the cell he was living in and continue to make the tunnel to outside. But he knew that he didn't have the tools to dig. Even if he could smuggle something out from the weekly workshop and begin to chisel the wall, he didn't know how many years it will take to get out of the prison.

So Dudian gave up on this method.

He could process by using the guards.

Attacking the guards?

The guards dared to put them out to work collectively so they had backups and naturally were not of their riots. So this option was out of his consideration.

Bribe the guards?

He dispelled the idea as soon as he thought about it.

He had seen the newcomers try to implement that method. The result was that the guy was dragged out by the guard, tortured until death and thrown back into the cell.

Obviously, bribery was not an option. Not that guards were not greedy, but they had better ways to squeeze out every valuable thing from the prisoners.

Dudian felt that there was nothing that he could do.

The prison was full proof, and there was no way to break out.

“Am I going to die in this prison?”

Another six months passed by.

Dudian went insane and became crazy.

He shouted out nonsense and beat the cell mates almost to death.

Two guards became furious when they came over to see Dudian's cell mates lay on the ground, almost dead. One of them took out a stick from the craft and opened the cell to attack Dudian. However, Dudian didn't even give him a chance as he threw punches and kicks at him.

Dudian roared as he punched towards the second guard.

His strength was tremendous. Both of the guards were knocked to the ground. This scene caused all the other prisoners to become stunned. No one thought that with the spikes pierced into him he could come up with such a vigorous force.

One of the guards got up and ran. Soon, another five guards came and attacked Dudian.

He was beaten and later dragged out from the promenade.

More than an hour later the guards dragged back Dudian's bloody body and threw him back to his cell.

A few days later, as Dudian's injury got better, he began shouting

again. Fatty who had restored a bit of strength in the cell was knocked down to the ground and beaten to death. The guards who were bringing the meals saw this scene and rushed to stop.

Dudian fought back with them and even overturned the trolley while he was scuffling with guards.

The guards saw that both of them couldn't suppress Dudian, so one of them ran away to call for back up.

This time again, Dudian was dragged out and brought back after the torture. However, they threw him into a separate cell.

"Damn, this kid has gone insane."

"Why don't they give him to another section?"

The guards were angry, but all they could do was to torture him. They would avoid killing prisoners at all costs. In fact, they couldn't treat prisoners as disposable materials. The torture was a small matter as it could be covered up. But in a case of a death of a prisoner, the people above them would ask for proper explanations. So in case even if there were people outside who wanted prisoners to die, they wouldn't go for it as it didn't matter who or what was the client's background.

Moreover, they had seen many prisoners like Dudian who couldn't cope up with prison life and gone crazy through the years.

People would get depressed in this dark prison day after day. It would often take a normal person three to five years for that depression to occur. However, some with weak willpower would go crazy, and some would even commit suicide. So it was not surprising to see Dudian act the way he did.

Moreover, no matter how tough or power Dudian was, they were aware of his age. At the end of the day, for them, Dudian was a child. Inevitably, his heart wouldn't be as strong as an adult's.

The guards reduced Dudian's daily food to only a black bread while he was in solitary confinement.

Dudian's body gradually thinned down. His cheekbones were protruding, and his face was similar to a skeleton.

Fortunately, he wasn't missing any water.

Because of the availability of water, it was rare for someone to starve to death.

Dudian was still acting insane while he was held in solitary confinement. He was beating steel columns or tearing mats from time to time. Over time his symptoms gradually eased down. He would occasionally attack, but would curse at others.

The prisoners were aware that Dudian had gone mad and didn't care much about his cursing. But at the same time, they looked at him with regret as if seeing their future in Dudian's present.

After he had become a bit stable, the guards assigned him back to weekly work. After all, the prisoners were not meant to stay idle.

Another six months passed and it was the second year of Dudian's imprisonment.

However, Dudian's madness becomes more serious. Sometimes he would hit his head against the wall and self-mutilate himself. Other times he would throw back the bread at guards and curse them.

Chapter 151 - Dudian's Plan

Because of such occurrences, and his resistance Dudian was dragged and tortured to death many times.

Another half a year went by.

The guards were too lazy to care about a madman like Dudian. Torturing a lunatic was not interesting for them. They would get pleasure for painful moans and screams of ordinary people. But he wasn't like that. Torturing Dudian had lost all the colors.

At night.

After dinner, groans burst out from different cells.

Dudian squatted in front of the urinal. He was moved to a dark cell at the end of the promenade. Normally, the pit was in the opposite direction so the excrement would pile up in the urinal and the water was a need to wash it down.

He had tumbled down to the torn mats on top of his mattress. The bedding had been distributed during the 'black snow season.' After all, the lake was stationed in the middle of the lake. In the 'black snow season,' it would be freezing. If there were no mattresses to sleep on, then the prisoners who already ate less would certainly die.

At the moment the mattress was a mess and close to the steel

column. But it was in a place which blocks the view to his toilet and bathing position.

Therefore, unless he deliberately created a gap, no one would know what Dudian was doing in front of his pit.

Dudian squatted down in front of the toilet as his head was down. With one hand he touched his buttocks. Because of a deep breath, he almost suffocated. A moment later, a sparse excretion of dung came out. As a result of eating less, it was almost all water. However, a small and thin object falls out with the dung.

Dudian looked around as the darkness didn't affect his vision. He saw that no one had noticed, so he immediately grabbed the thing. There was a thick, thin linen covering the object. He untied it and took out the thin, sharp knife.

Dudian picked up the knife and hummed a song for a few times. Then he began to roar and curse.

As he was cursing and shouting he bent over to move the toilet. The pool around the mosaic has long been chiseled. But while he lifted it a sound would be made, so he was cursing and shouting to cover it up.

He dived into the trail. His upper body was still on the ground, so he cursed time to time. It didn't take long for his whole body to enter the hole.

It was a very narrow but very deep pit. He had chiseled out a route next to the pipeline. Initially, his plan was to go through the manure pipeline. According to the prison model that he conceived the pipe should go straight to the bottom of the prison and then go through the lake under the ground. But it wouldn't release the manure in the bottom of the lake as the water pressure would recoil and drown the prison.

Therefore, it seemed that this was the only safe escape channel from the prison. But the weakest link in the prison's design!

However, the thing that made him disappointed and even led him to despair that the diameter of the pipe was not large. Even though he was skinny from hunger, he still couldn't fit into the pipeline.

Moreover, the pipeline was made of steel and couldn't be destroyed.

So he could take the risk and use the opportunity while in weekly work to steal tools.

After six months of digging this narrow channel of more than ten meters depth was made.

Everything had been solidified and strengthened whether it was the thickness of the wall or the thickness of the floors. So in a sense, it was much more solid structure than an average prison. But it was the biggest advantage Dudian had at the moment while he chiseled the wall.

If the wall were too thin or similar to an ordinary building, then he wouldn't have an opportunity to dig in the wall. His actions would be easily perceived, and he wouldn't have a place to chisel through. According to the thickness of the ground, Dudian speculated that the wall was at least five meters wide.

Although the wall was thick, Dudian still didn't dare to cause too much movement. He carefully poked out the soil and stones with the blade.

In the blink of an eye, most of the night passed.

Dudian would bring little by little the soil and stones as the channel was too narrow. He would go back and forth several times before soil and stones were moved to his cell. He would soak them in water and wash off. There would be some hard stones which couldn't be washed through the urinal, so he waited for the right opportunity to loose them.

The greatest difficulty that he faced while chiseling the channel was dealing with soil and stones.

He wanted to secretly transport them to the studio. But it was clean inside in the workshop so it would be eye-catching if he moved the soil over there. He had to dispel the idea.

Others gradually woke up after a few hours later.

He soaked the small stones and soil in the water. Afterward, he began to slowly grind them into mud. Then he would smear the mud on the dark part of the cell.

Because of Dudian's madman acts the prison guards would seldom get close to Dudian's cell. They would leave the bread and leave. So no one noticed that the walls of his cell were full of mud. Some parts were thicker in comparison to other parts.

However, this part of the wall was blocked by the mattress.

It had been half a year that the straw mat had blocked the place. The last person who wanted to grab it away was caught by Dudian and almost snapped his arm.

Since then none of the prisoners from the next cell dared to get close to Dudian's mats or mattress.

After finishing the process, Dudian closed his eyes and slept for a while. He wakes up to the voice echoing from the other cells. He immediately grabbed the larger and harder pieces of stones and threw them past as he cursed out loud.

The others didn't respond back as they knew that Dudian had gone crazy.

After finishing the stones, he clutched the steel column and roared. He hit his head against the column as if to break free.

He acted for a while. Afterward, he restored his calmness and continued to sleep.

The prisoners were helpless. Moreover, they didn’t dare to fight back and anger a madman. After all, Dudian was not an ordinary maniac.

After all, such things didn’t happen in a day or two. They secretly thought that once Dudian had done enough damage to the ground, the prison guards will beat him up anyway.

Chapter 152 - Tiger In The Cage

Afternoon.

Prisoners were passionately waiting for the guards to bring them meals. The place trembled from above. At the same time noises came from a very remote distance. Occasionally, the sound of metal colliding was heard.

The prisoners were surprised as the sound isolation was excellent in prison. There had to be an inevitable momentum caused so that the sound had reached inside.

“What’s going on?” The prisoners puzzled and asked each other.

A middle-aged prisoner spoke in an alarmed tone: “It’s a clash!”

“Jailbreak?” The crowd was shocked in surprise.

“Great!”

“Maybe we will have the opportunity to rush out.”

“Most probably its battered outside, so there is no meal delivery.”

Jin and Scar were looking at each other as they heard excited arguments of the prisoners. Jin frowned: “A few days ago while guards were talking, I heard that a senior hunter was imprisoned

in the third section. Are they the forces who have come to take him out?”

“Yes, it should be so”, Scar nodded in agreement: “However, it would be very difficult for these people to ascent down to the third section. Maybe they can organize large-scale attacks outside the prison. They may even pass the aisle and land on top of the prison. But even if they bribed and bought some of the guards, it’s still impossible for them to go all the way in and take the prisoner out.”

Several other leaders nodded in agreement. It was not the first time that they had seen such a situation to occur. They weren’t as excited as the other people. Thorn Flower Prison wasn’t called the number one prison within the wall for no reason. It is a fortress that could stand up to war!

Dudian opened his eyes, but didn’t stand up. He listened to other’s comments while his expression was extremely calm.

In the castle on the Thorn Flower Prison.

Two figures were standing on top of the watchtower. One of them had a telescope and overlooked the invading army of hundreds which was equivalent to a small army.

“Well-trained bunch. They should be planning this for a long time.” The middle-aged man put down the telescope and lightly laughed.

A butler wearing black robes was behind him. He chuckled: “Unfortunately, they haven’t trained their brains…”

“It’s not that they haven’t trained their brains. Well, it’s just the people who direct and command them do not have brains at all.”

Butler smiled: “They have passed through the border fort. They should be getting here soon. It should be military… Should I go and greeted the mice that passed in? ”

The middle-aged man slightly nodded as his eagle-like eyes overlooked the entire battlefield by the lake. He softly whispered: “tiger in the cage.”

“They have yet to taste the thorn of the rose,” The butler said with a smile.

The middle-aged man said: “Is my tea ready?”

“Just waiting for you to enjoy it.” The butler respectfully replied.

The sounds coming from the outside gradually subsided after a few hours.

Everyone was staring at the iron gate. They were hoping to see a

strange person to open it, but two prison guards with indifferent faces went inside. All of the prisoners were disappointed as this riot was unsuccessful and a failure.

This didn't affect Dudian as he continued to dig the tunnel in the evening.

It was already three years that Dudian had been in prison.

Heavy black snow was falling from the gray radiated clouds in the sky. The earth was dyed black. Most of the open-air orchards, farms, and gardens were covered before the season so not to be destroyed by this black snow.

The weather was too cold. Prisoners in each cell held together to warm up each other.

It was night time when guards wearing thick cotton-padded jackets came to deliver the food and left hastily.

In 'black snow season' the distribution of the food had increased in comparison to other seasons. Dudian also got three black pieces of bread. He was slowly eating while the others fall asleep.

After finishing eating and making sure that no one was watching he gently slid the toilet and went into the underground pit.

The sides of the rough pit rubbed his skin. He slid all the way down to the second floor of the workplace. He felt that soles of his feet had touched cold lake. At the moment he was standing in the bottom of the prison.

“This pit’s height is 25 meters. There is another layer above our chamber so the height of the lake should be somewhere close to 35 meters. Senior hunters and knights of the magistrate are held in that bottom layer. Jin is also a primary hunter who was in the 1st section as me.”

Dudian bent over and took the tool he used to dig. This new tool was the teeth of a monster. After using it, the progress of digging was greatly enhanced.

He would often think that next to the pit senior level hunters on the same level as Glenn were imprisoned. Fortunately, his title was only a junior hunter. If it was a middle-level hunter, then he would be stuck in the bottom section. Although the distance to cutting the wall would be shortened the criminal law that applied to mid-level hunters was different. Their living conditions were much more strict too.

Scar had told him that on the first section the guard would just nail them with spikes. However, on the other level, they would cut off arms and go through different kinds of tortures which were hundreds of times worse than they had gone through. Even if a senior hunter came to this prison, they would be broken and wasted!

Dudian bent down in a difficult position to reach into the water

to dig the earth.

Dudian once poured water into the deep pit. The first reason was to soak the soil to soften it. The second reason was the when he was cutting the wall the sound would be substantially eliminated.

Now, he also saved pouring water on his own as the lake water infiltrated out of its own.

A moment later Dudian's hit a hard object. His heartbeat speeds up.

Soon, he exposed the appearance of this hard object. It was a horizontal oval metal. Although he had exposed on a small part of its oval shape, he could deduct that it was a pipe. Its diameter should be big.

However, he wasn't excited as he saw this oval metal.

Although the system to deliver out the excretion was buried in the bottom of the lake, but the pressure to bear was too strong. Its structure would be extremely strong too.

How can I break it open?

Dudian was silent as he was thinking about a method. He cleaned the soil from it and saw that the pipe was big enough for him to walk upright in it.

He grabbed a stone and tapped it on the metal pipe.

Afterward, he immediately leaned to listen.

His expectations were not proven right. It seems there was a protective layer and beneath it, another pipe went along which was the real system for draining wastage and manure.

Dudian grabbed a relatively hard stone and hit the pipe.

Bang! There was a light echo.

Dudian hit a few more times in a row. The stone was crushed, but the metal pipe was unscathed. Nothing more than a few small dents.

Dudian punched the metal pipe in anger. Because of the rebound, his shoulder ached. He picked up the tool and continued to dig along the pipeline.

“The soil at the bottom of the lake is much softer. So the progress would be very fast. Moreover, I wouldn’t have to worry about the sound impact. If I go into full force in about five years before the death penalty, I should be able to dig outside the lake.” He was making calculations in his mind as he continued to dig.

Another half a month passed.

Dudian chose to dig in the opposite direction. Although the possibility was extremely low there could be a guard at the end of the pipe who would be guarding it. In about half a month's time, he had dug a three-meter long horizontal channel about four or five meters above the bottom of the lake.

He vaguely remembers the time when he entered the prison. He had seen the scene from the aisle. The lakes radius was about 300 meters. According to his calculations and his daily schedule in an about a year's time, he would be out.

His only worry was that the mud would collapse and crush the channel. Fortunately, manure pipe was standard, and he was making the pit about four or five meters above it so that the surrounding soil was more dry and hard. The probability of being crushed by the mud was low.

Moreover, he would find some hard rocks while digging the channel. Although it was trouble in a sense, it added some security to channel's stability.

Although digging a tunnel was the most common way to escape from the prison, but most people couldn't think of this method. Moreover, they couldn't just dig out a tunnel.

Even the senior hunters who were in bottom level couldn't do so. They were tightly guarded by rotating guards. Moreover, they had gone through very heavy torture and were weaker than Dudian. After all, their title was enough for the administration of prison to take enough action against them.

Even if they had the change, they wouldn't have the tools. In case, if they could go and steal the tools like Dudian did, they still wouldn't be able to dig a tunnel of few hundred meters. After all, dark vision was an ability which came with Dudian's magic marks. If there were not vision, it would be impossible to dig a parallel tunnel to pipe.

This escape wasn't just about ability. It was about courage, firm mind, opportunity, luck and chance. If any of these lacked the more difficult to escape would be.

Bang!

The knife in Dudian's hand poked into a rock wall. However, instead of being damaged the rock suddenly slipped up

Chapter 153

Dudian was slightly surprised.

At this time, this rocky surface stretched out, and two sharp teeth came into his view. It didn't stop for a moment as it bashed over towards Dudian.

Dudian understood that the surface which he had stabbed earlier was cuticle of a rock monster. He raised his hand and punched over to the position which Dudian considered as the monster's head.

Bang! His left hand had hit the monster. It was affected by the hit as it hurried back for a moment.

However, it screamed as it was impinged by the hit and rushed towards Dudian in anger.

Dudian quickly grabbed the knife in his hand and stabbed it.

The knife stabbed on its scales but did not cause the slightest injury. Although the knife was used by him less than a week, it had been worn down seriously. It wouldn't be able to cut through the skin of an ordinary person.

Swinging its head, the monster attacked Dudian's left arm and bit on it. Though there was no pain.

Dudian was anxious as he quickly raised his right hand and punched it.

The monster was like a small crocodile. It had short claws, flat body and the scales were very hard. However, it was clutching onto Dudian's left arm, and the bite was getting deeper and deeper.

Dudian groped onto its head with his fingers. Suddenly he found a soft skin and pushed onto it.

This gap seemed to be its weakness. It released its mouth on Dudian and shrank back into its body.

Dudian quickly grabbed and pulled it by its short paws. His body weighed down on it so it couldn't use its mouth to bite him.

It struggled, but it was not strong enough to overcome the Dudian's body pressure.

Dudian found the previous soft gap and began to tear it apart with his left hand.

The monster began to struggle intensely because of the pain, but Dudian's left hand wasn't perceiving any pain, so he did his best to rip it apart.

The monster suddenly went stiff and gradually stopped moving at all.

Dudian slowly crawled down and checked the monster which was about a meter and half long. Its body was covered in scales similar to rock. The body temperature was cold too.

“It looks like … … like a stone beast!” Dudian was looking at it while he suddenly remembers that he had read about this monster in the atlas.

This monster had the ability to drill down the area, same as the black weaver which they had hunted with Glenn. Moreover, it was completely active in the underground. Black Weaver would go out of the soil, but this monster’s choice was to live underground all its life. That’s why its drilling abilities were much more elaborate than the black weavers.

“It is one of the few monsters which can enter through the giant wall. But its hunting level is too low. Combat capability is almost same as an ordinary undead. However, because of its skills in drilling down endowed by nature, even level 20 or 30 monsters would find difficult to kill it.”

Dudian knew the identity of this monster. He felt fortunate that he was able to hit and rip out its fatal weakness.

Dudian looked at the broken knife in his hands while he was sitting on this stone beast to rest. However, he thought of its claws and his eyes lit up. He saw sharp nails of the stone beast above its claws. They were curved, extremely hard, thin and very suitable to dig up the earth.

He had an idea.

Two days later.

Dudian once again came to the underground tunnel. The stone beast's body had signs of decay. Dudian pulled out its four claws and scales of its head. He dug down a pit and buried its body as to avoid its rotten smell to float into the entire tunnel.

After burying down the beast, Dudian shook the claws of the beast and began to dig.

"It's like an excavator." Dudian was surprised as his efficiency and speed were about ten times faster than earlier on when he used a knife.

After a few days, Dudian met another stone beast. Its body was smaller than the previous monster. After a fierce struggle, he was able to kill it.

"It's 'black snow season' now. So the stone beasts have drilled down so that their bodies are much warmer in comparison to upper layers of earth. I don't know if I'll encounter another if I continue like this." Dudian was distressed. This stone beast had extremely durable claws. Having beast's claws was enough for him to speed up digging the tunnel. However, if he met more on the way, he could fall into trouble. Moreover, if he met their king, then he estimated that he would serve as a main dish for their dinner.

The main advantage was that he had beast's claw in his hands so he could wait a month so that 'black snow season' would end.

In the blink of an eye, another two months passed.

Two guards were dragging the cart across the cells. They casually threw the bread into the cells. The prisoner would pick up and eat the bread as if they were treasures.

When both of them came to the last cell, the guard picked up the last piece of bread and threw it in the cell. But he found out that there were two pieces of bread on the ground left from yesterday. He wrinkled his brows and sneered: "Don't starve to death."

It was not the first time that he had seen a situation like this. Almost a year ago when he came to deliver the bread he had seen that Dudian hadn't picked up the pieces of bread. At first, he thought that the crazy prisoner had made a suicide or some misfortune had happened. He opened the cage and went in, but the crazy kid had rushed out, punched and cursed at him.

It had happened so many times that they had gradually got used to it. Sometimes Dudian wouldn't eat for a day or two, but eventually will pick and eat the bread.

He turned the cart and began to chat and smile with his companion as he left away.

The next day, noon.

The guards were in good spirits. They were going to play another game today. As usual, the reward will be an extra bread.

The guards pushed the cart after the performance. By the time they had two pieces of bread left in the cart, they had reached the last cell. One of them was about to throw the bread into the cell but noticed that there was a total of three pieces of bread on the ground.

Chapter 154 - Wanted

The prison guard frowned and glanced into the cell. The light from the closest oil lamp wasn't enough to brighten the cell. In the darkness, the guard saw a figure lying on the mattress.

"Come and eat." The guard shouted out. He saw that the figure didn't respond, so he pushed the cart and left.

It was raining heavily outside the prison.

It was the early rainy season as the 'black snow season' had already passed. Rain fell frequently. Everything was hazy as the rain covered the world within the giant wall.

There was a slight movement at the edge of the lake. A pair of black eyes looked around. Although the heavy rain blurred the vision of most, those eyes were able to see the everything. On his left, there was a tower positioned.

There were two fuzzy silhouette's on top of the tower as he checked that direction.

"I haven't eaten all day yesterday and including today's afternoon distribution of food... " Dudian's eyes flashed, "Tonight is the last chance. The guards will come to distribute the meal. Even by chance, they don't look for me, then at maximum by tomorrow noon they will be aware that I've escaped. At best I have

half a day… … ”

Although his plans were successful and he was able to break out of the prison. But he knew that jailbreak was the first step. The real danger would be after this step when they would begin to hunt him!

He went out of the hole and began to crawl over the weeds. He used to tall grass and wrapped them around his body.

His body was soaked in the heavy rain. He crawled faster and faster as he reached a location far enough for him to stand up and run away.

Dudian was a little relieved as he couldn’t see the castle even if he turned back to check it. He dragged his tired body. He was barefoot as he walked on top of the grass.

“I don’t know in which suburb the Thorn Flower Prison is located… …” Dudian raised his hand to block the heavy rain falling onto his head. He checked the sky full of gray clouds. He found the direction from where the sun rays were penetrating.

Dudian calculated his position.: “The giant wall should be in the south, while the inner wall has to be in the north of my position. I have to walk north.”

According to the position of the sun, he identified the north and walked away.

The giant wall and inner wall of districts were parallel to each other. The was suburban wilderness and the radiation zone in between them.

The mud and sludge covering his body were completely washed away by the heavy rain.

Dudian stumbled around as he walked through the wilderness. The cold rain that poured on his body made him shiver. He was sniffing to check the surrounding to prevent meeting up with patrolling guards.

The rain finally stopped after an hour later. Dudian's body also dried up afterward. It didn't take long before he saw a fortress in front of him. The place was familiar. It was the fortress leading to the commercial district.

"Unexpectedly, Thorn Flower Prison is not located in slums or residential district, but it was set up in the wilderness of the commercial district." Dudian wrinkled his eyebrows. If the prison was established in the slums, the others could get the prisoners out much easier. After all mobilization of forces would be a lot more comfortable. However, as the prison was established in the wilderness outside the commercial district then for forces to attack the prison had to go through the commercial district's exit first.

In a sense, it was a line of defense that was thought up by the higher ups of the prison.

Moreover, the prisoners who wanted to re-enter the commercial or residential areas would be blocked by this layer of tight defense. The option left to them would be to wander in the wilderness or the radiation zone which weren't good for survival.

He checked the weather. Although the heavy rain had just stopped the clouds were lingering, and it seemed that another heavy rain brewed.

The wall of the fortress was made of stones, rocks and sharp wood. It was more than 20 meters high. He could smell people on top of the wall.

"They should be soldiers patrolling along the wall..." Dudian thought about options as he stared at the high wall.

Suddenly he senses two different odors coming from the prison's direction at fast speed. One of them belonged to a human while the other belonged to a horse.: "Are they already tracking me?"

He sped away from the fortress wall.

He ran about a kilometer and stopped. He sensed the previous smell which was still moving the same direction. It seems the person hasn't changed and adjusted his direction towards Dudian.

"They aren't aware of my jailbreak yet." Dudian's eyes turned cold as he thought about.

Da da!

A young man was standing on the black horse as it galloped.

They were passing through small woods when a figure jumped out from inside. The horse stopped is it raised its front hoofs high and whimpered.

The youth on horseback was shocked and unable to grasp onto the horse as he rolled down.

As he landed on the ground the figured rush over and grabbed a hard stone from the ground. Dudian raised his hand fiercely to hit the youth.

The youth saw Dudian's appearance, and his pupils shrank: "You!"

Puff! The stone hit his face, and the youth fainted on the spot.

Dudian raised the stone and continuously hit back onto the youth's face. He stopped when the sound of rupture echoed out. He was breathing heavily as he checked the dark horse standing by in confusion. Dudian grabbed the horse's rope and tied to a small tree. He looked back at youth that he had killed a few moments ago. According to the armor, the youth was wearing, he should be a guard in Thorn Flower Prison.

There was a reel on youth's waist.

Dudian opened it and saw that there was a sheepskin roll in it. He shook it open and saw his portrait drawn on the sheepskin roll. Under the picture, there was information about him: “Dean. Male. Sixteen years old! Wanted by the city authorities. 100 gold coins award to anyone who will give information about his whereabouts.”

Dudian wanted to tear apart the warrant. His mouth curled into a smile, “One hundred gold coins… I’m still quite valuable…”

One hundred gold coins, it was a sum which was difficult for an ordinary person from the residential district to earn in a lifetime.

“It’s not dinner time yet. Most probably the guards have felt that something was wrong, so they have returned to inspect the cell. It happened earlier than I have expected. Fortunately, I caught the warrant for arrest half way.” Dudian knew that this world was not like the previous information age. It took a lot of time for the warrant to be plastered over the various areas. He had to get ahead of them in terms of time.

He stripped clothing of the youth. Dudian’s threw the youth’s body into the bushes and put on his underwear, but didn’t wear the armor.

“I can’t assume his identity and get through the fortress!” The difference between his body and the armor was too much. The eyes of the fortress guards would see and discern the asymmetry. So he could be easily exposed.

Subsequently, Dudian led the dark horse into the woods. He used the stone to kill it and prevent his immediate exposure.

After he had been finished killing the horse, Dudian found few silver coins in the youth's chest.

Through the sense of smell, he found that patrolling soldiers went away from the consequent part of the wall. He buckled over and climbed quickly as a spider.

Chapter 155 - We Are Waiting For You

Clinging to the crevices of the stones, Dudian climbed the wall.

“One hundred fifty meters on the right and left. Every three hundred meters or so a guard is stationed.” Dudian had used his sense of smell to pick the place to climb.

Dudian quietly waited on the wall.

A moment later, torrents of rain came down.

Dudian took the opportunity to grope up quietly and climbed down the sharp woods. He looked around and saw that the soldiers have left.

During the rain, the soldiers stationed on the wall would retreat to a place where they could protect themselves from the rain.

Dudian seized the God-given opportunity.

Although Dudian’s sense of smell was suppressed in the rain, he could still perceive the doors around seven or eight miles range. He ran all the way without stopping. Occasionally he would encounter patrol’s crossing by. Instead of avoiding them he would attack them head on.

Half an hour later.

A figure turned up in a living area at the outer edge of the commercial district. There were no pedestrians on the outskirts of the suburb because of drizzling rain.

“I am back,” Dudian’s eyes were cold as he looked at the quiet town.

He went to the town inn and hired a horse.

The boss of the inn saw that Dudian’s clothes were drenched in the rain. It was a strange sight, but when he saw Dudian deliver silver coins, he didn’t ask anything as he pulled two horses over.

Dudian rode the horse while pulled the other one.

He left the town, but still moved along the outskirts of the commercial district. He didn’t enter the commercial district as the streets inside were more complex. He would inevitably attract attention. Moreover, riding horse was prohibited unless you belong to the nobility.

Da Da…

He followed the suburban streets all the way.

Dudian would sometimes take a detour, and as a result, he occasionally would encounter attacks by wild animals. He was

ready to fight the animals as confidentiality was much more important in his view.

“It’s getting dark,” Dudian looked at the sky and began to ride the horse faster.

Two hours later.

There were six regions in the commercial district. Dudian preferred to move the region close to the giant wall as there were fewer people living in those regions.

Dudian was checking the warrants from a distance to see if his arrest notice was there. He was relieved to see that the message about him was not spread here. It was going to save him a lot of unnecessary trouble.

Moreover, you could go from the commercial district to the residential district without any inspection. But you would have to go through rigorous testing if you wanted to come back from the residential district into the commercial district.

Dudian changed his horse and released the other one. He wasn’t going to pass through one district to the other one using two horses as it would lead to suspicions. After all, sooner or later the news about him breaking out of the jail would be released. He didn’t want to be easily traced.

“I have to check Jura and Gray. It has been three years, but I

hope that they weren't falsely accused of anything because of their ties with me." Dudian couldn't help but think about them as he rode the horse. In addition to his biological parents and sister, they were the closest people to him.

However, he knew that he couldn't appear in front of them right now.

It was dark.

Dudian tried to reach the slums before the curfew time.

After a few hours, he wasn't in front of the wall leading to slums. He felt all kinds of strange and unpleasant odor that he hadn't sensed in a long time.

He went to the suburbs of the slums where Barton and the rest had bought the factory.

It was curfew time, and the soldiers were patrolling the street. If they saw a pedestrian, they would beat and arrest them for a few days.

He abandoned the horse in case of being seen by the patrol. He would be able to detour on leg much easier than by a horse.

It was very hard for him to distinct the smell of patrols as the surroundings were full of stench smell.

A few hours later he reached the abandoned factory. Weeds surrounded it.

Dudian did not smell Barton and others. His brows were slightly wrinkled. However, it was normal that they weren't here as three years had passed.

The darkness didn't affect his vision, and he passed through the endogenous weeds and went into the factory. He found some of the materials that were bought by Barton and others still being in their position that Dudian had designed.

Dudian went through wooden boxes. He found the one with coal and smeared on his face. He found a slightly clean place and laid down to rest.

It had been two days that he hadn't slept, so he was exhausted.

The next day.

At dawn, Dudian woke up and left the factory towards the place where Barton and the rest would use signals to contact each other. He saw the square engraved with special codes that were taught by him.

"Dean, we have bought something."

“Dean, are you alright? We are waiting for you!”

“Dean, we are working in the factory in Green Street in North district.”

Dudian looked at the last message written by them. It should be more than a year that it was engraved. He looked deeply for a time, then turned away and left.

Chapter 156 - Big Things

Thorn Flower Prison.

3:16 p.m.

Inside the gorgeous office on the top floor, the Warden Jones and his butler Peter were sitting in a balcony enjoying tea. A black cat was lying on the table and purring once in a while. People who were familiar with the warden knew that he was fond of raising small animals. Cats and dogs were his favorites.

He preferred kittens and puppies to a woman. One he invited a master painter to portray his cat and dog in the office.

Moreover, a prison guard once forgot to feed dinner to his hound ‘Cassie’ and a since then no one had seen that guard.

“Greedy little kitten … …” Jones touched the black cat’s head while there was a kind smile on his face.

He was just 38 years old. In addition to his huge background, his abilities were not that could be ignored by the others.

“It’s raining again,” The butler Peter sighed as he looked out the window to the rain.

Jones indifferently said: “It’s just a drizzle.”

“It will turn into a heavy rain maybe even a storm.” Butler replied.

Jones waved his hand as he looked towards the maid. The latter obediently handed over a fluffy cotton-padded jacket. “Rheumatism... Your joints and bones will be in pain so put it on.” Jones handed the jacket to the butler.

Peter quickly got up and thanked as he put on the cotton jacket: “Every rainy season the pain affects me. Unfortunately, there is no cure.”

Jones was smiling at him when a slender woman walked from the outside and got close to him. She whispered a few words into his ear. Jones smile disappeared as he listened to her. He nodded slightly in understanding. He looked out of the window and softly said: “You are right. A drizzle will always lead to heavy rain...”

Butler noticed the strange expression on Jones’s face and asked: “What’s the matter?”

“A prisoner ran away.” Jones whispered: “It’s the little guy who was brought three years ago. A prison guard has found out that he wasn’t replying to them, so they have checked his cell and found a tunnel. A jailbreak. ”

“A prison break?” Butler was surprised. “How did he get the tools? Where would he escape?”

“He should have stolen the tools while the workshops. Most probably he has planned to dig under the lake.” Jones looked out of the window as his fingers gently touched the table.: “The radius of the lake is around 300 meters… ”

Butler was shocked: “Dig out a tunnel through the lake? How could he have planned such a thing? How would he handle the soil?”

The slender woman standing next to them respectfully said: “According to the prison guards, he has mixed soil and water and smeared it on the wall and the ground. Because of dim lighting, the guards were not aware of the situation. ”

Butler was speechless.

Jones raised his hand and stroked the black cat which was eating meat. The kitten was ignorant on their conversation as it was concentrated on eating. Jones gently stroked cat’s hair and softly said: “Hand down an arrest warrant. Immediately deploy the black cavalry to trace the whereabouts of the criminal.”

“Yes.” The woman replied and was about to turn and leave.

“Wait.” Jones stopped her. He still kindly looked at the black cat and whispered.: “The guards responsible for giving them the meals. Make sure that they accompany the guard who was looking after Cassie.”

She nodded, but her body hair was erect. She quickly left.

After she had left, the butler couldn't stand anymore and said: "There shouldn't be any defect in the prison's structure. Even the drainage system for excrement is protected by the guard on the other side. How could he run away?"

Jones shook his head slightly: "There are no defects. Perhaps the biggest flaw is the construction of the prison in the lake. The walls are too thick. We always thought that no one would be stupid enough to chisel such a thick wall. Not to mention to make a tunnel all the way out of the lake. Because of the thickness of the wall, this fellow was able to dig all the way out, and no one was able to hear sounds. It was the biggest advantage of the prison, but it had turned to a drawback in this case."

Butler sighed: "If so, then it is a reminder to us. The prison guards can't be relaxed. It would take an enormous time to dig a tunnel and come back. This round-trip should be enough for him to be exposed, but the guards weren't vigilant enough."

Jones nodded, "Fortunately, the little guy was from the first section." Then he patted the black cat and smiled: "Greedy kitten! It's enough now, go and play."

There was a small factory on a desolate, remote street at the north of the slums.

Dudian bought some food from the roadside pub and hired a carriage to come here. He ate the food in the carriage. The fatigue that resulted because of non-stop running and stress of few days passed away as his body strength was restored to some degree.

He got out of the carriage and was about to enter the factory when the sign outside the factory caught his eyes. It was his arrest warrant.

“It’s been just one night. The efficiency is quite fast for the news to spread all the way to here.” Dudian’s eyes flashed. However, he didn’t avoid, but entered the factory. There was an old guard at the entrance: “I need to find a few people. Kroen, Joseph, Barton…”

The old man lifted his eyes listlessly and glanced at Dudian: “They are at work. What do you need them for?”

Dudian took out three copper coins from his pocket and handed it over,: “Help me and call them out. Tell them that an old friend of theirs has come to see them.”

The former drowsiness was gone as the old man saw the copper coins. He put them away: “Okay, wait over here. I’ll get them for you.”

Dudian quietly waited while the old man went after them. The old man didn’t recognize that Dudian was on the wanted list. His hair was cut, and he was looking totally different to the picture where he was depicted. Past three years his hair was long and disheveled. Although the prison guards tortured them over and over, they would never take a deep look to their face. After all, the

prisoners would never comb their hair, and no one was interested in remembering a prisoner's face which would die in prison in any case.

Moreover, the picture was drawn at the time of his imprisonment. There were delicate features that were depicted on it which belonged to three years ago. But in the last three years, his appearance has changed a lot. The fastest growing stage of the person is when they are between 10 to 16 years old. Now, there were no remains of childish and delicate look that he had in the past. Because of pain, hunger, and torture, his facial structure had changed a lot. His face slimmer and brows were a bit heavy. Moreover, he was a bit mature, and his temperament had changed too.

Also, he had, smeared coal all over his face. Even the close acquaintances had to carefully look for a long time to see the familiar profile.

Moments later, the old man returned. Four figures follow behind him. They were Barton, Kroen, Joseph and Barry. They had changed a lot in the last three years, but Dudian was able to recognize them at a glance.

Four of them saw Dudian and were puzzled.: "Who are you?"

Dudian smiled: "Come with me to the abandoned factory."

"Abandoned factory?" All four of them were surprised as they heard him talk. However, they revealed their surprise as Barton

spoke excitedly: “You finally came back. De…”

Dudian interrupted him by raising his hand: “We should talk later.”

Barton thought of something, and his face changed. He didn’t say anything.

The other three same as Barton hesitated, but didn’t say anything ultimately.

The old man hurriedly said as he saw four of them leave with Dudian: “It’s still working hours. Where are you guys going? Don’t you want to be paid?”

Barton said: “Grandpa, help us out with the permission.”

“I can’t help with that.” The old man shook his head in refusal.

Dudian said to the four: “There is no need to work in here anymore. Come with me. ”

Four of them looked at each other faintly guessing what was going to happen.

The old man looked at Dudian: “Boy, if they leave with you, they will not get the salary of the last two months.”

Dudian ignored him and turned away to leave the place.

Four friends hurried to keep up with him.

Dudian and the other four returned to the abandoned factory.

“What has happened to Dean? Why are you wanted? What happened three years ago? What did they find you guilty of? Was it murder? I didn’t believe in stuff like that. I couldn’t believe that you were involved in a heinous crime.”Barton eagerly asked as they reached the abandoned factory.

Dudian’s eyes swept over them one by one. There was a trace of faint anxiety on Barry’s face. He said to them: “I didn’t commit any crimes back then. But now I’m a bit different.” He looked at the four: ” Are you willing to continue with me?”

All four looked at each other. Kroen whispered: “What are we going to do?”

Dudian smiled as he gently shook his head: “Big things.”

They were a bit hesitant, but Barry had a complex look: “Dean I can’t. I may as well quit. I’m living an ordinary life, and it’s alright. Though its bitter, I’m satisfied with the everyday work. It’s enough for food and clothing.”

Dudian looked at the other three: “You guys?”

“We were helping you, but now you are on the wanted list. You are done for.” Kroen hesitated, but said whatever was in his mind.

Barton wasn’t speaking, but was staring at Dudian. As soon as Kroen finished talking, he said: “Dean, no matter what you do I’ll follow you. I’ve already said that my life is yours. If you order me to do a robbery, I will!”

Dudian looked at him as there was a touch of a smile on his face.

“Me too.” Joseph said: “I said it all the time ago. Although I was able to find work in a factory how do others treat us? Contempt! Disgust! I’m fed up!”

Kroen and Barry were silent.

Barton saw that the other two were silent, so he spoke in an angry tone: “Are you going to isolate him as Dean is a wanted man now?”

Kroen replied: “I do not want to, but what can we do? Can we even revoke Dean’s arrest warrant?”

Barton snapped: “Even if we can’t but it’s time to help Dean out. Is it how you are repaying him for bringing us out from the orphanage? By chickening out?”

Their faces turned ugly.

Dudian looked at them: “Don’t put any psychological pressure on them. I brought you guys out because you had taken care of me back then. It’s alright for you guys not to follow me. But I hope that you would not expose the things what happened in here.”

As they heard Dudian talk, they bowed their heads. Kroen clenched his fists.: “I’ve decided. I’m going all out with you. I have had enough of those foolish ridicules.”

Barry bowed down as he said: “Dean, I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I can not do it. I already have a person who I like. I want to live a peaceful life. I hope you can forgive me. I guarantee that everything that happened here will stay in here.”

Dudian nodded: “Alright, I wish you happiness. Go!”

Barry raised his hands and wiped his tears. He didn’t look at Barton and the others as he turned around and left.

Dudian quietly looked at Barry’s back as he departed the place.

Chapter 157 - Return

Barton sighed and said to Dudian after Barry left: “Dean, don’t blame Barry. He has found his happiness in the family. At the end of the last ‘black snow season,’ he had a kid. It is indeed difficult to expect him to leave his own family.”

Dudian quietly said: “I understand.”

“Dean,” Kroen whispered, “What’s the big deal that you were talking about?”

Dudian didn’t answer, but instead asked another question: “Is there any remaining gold coins from the last time?”

Joseph scratched his head and replied: “We spent some on tuition fees and bought some materials. Later Barton and I got sick, so we spent some on treatment. We spent some on eating and drinking. When we saw that you aren’t back, we rented a house. So now we should have around 19 or 20 gold coins.”

Dudian nodded: “After I was framed and sent to jail I was robbed of thousands of gold coins that were in my safe. So I’m going to borrow yours to begin our operations.”

The three were in shock.

“Thousands of gold coins?”

“So much?!”

Their eyes went wide. They couldn’t even think about thousands of gold coins. What kind of a concept was that? It was enough to make a bed out of gold coins and lay on top!

“Were you framed because of your wealth?” Barton asked.

A killing intent flashed pass Dudian’s eyes, but he avoided answering.: “You will get to know about it later on. Time is pressing down on me. The arrest warrants are everywhere. The longer we wait, the more chance that I will be exposed. We must seize the time and take action. The first step is to enter the commercial district!”

“We got to get into the commercial district?” Three were confused.

“The commercial district is not like the residential area. How can people like us get into that neighborhood?” Kroen voiced out his opinion.

“There is no place that we can’t get in.” Dudian looked at the three: “Now, let’s get the money first. ”

Three as one nodded their heads.

Dudian let the three lead the way back to their house.

The house was in a remote location. The streets were messy, and the rubbish was everywhere. There were tons of flies.

Dudian waited at the door while three went in. A moment later they came out with a luggage and coarse cloth bag. They handed the bag to Dudian.

“Dean, Barry’s share …” Barton hesitated.

Dudian waved in dismissal. In fact, he had sensed Barry’s smell. He had come in advance and just left the front by the time they had arrived. Most probably he has taken out his share of the money.

“Let’s go.” Dudian counted the gold coins. There were 14 left.

After some time, Dudian gave Barton two silver coins for him to enter the tailor shop and buy clothes for them. Dudian told him to get set of clothes with the finest quality.

Barton came back with four sets of clothes of linen fabric mixed with silk.

Dudian changed the clothes while he ordered them to put on new clothes too. They went to a nearby underground ditch to change the clothes.

Subsequently, Dudian took the three and hired some workers.

They went to the abandoned factory and moved all the pre-purchased materials out of it and discarded them.

Barton and the other two were surprised, and their heart ached as they so materials worth of dozens of gold coins to be discarded. However, their hearts were determined that it was the right choice.

“Dean, why would you want to lose all these materials? We have spent quite a big amount of money to purchase them. ”

“It will be exposed here.”

“Are you worried about the Barry? Dean, come on, Barry is not a kind of person that will inform on us.”

“I am not worried about him. The magistrate! ”

“Will they trace it?”

“Hard to say! But just in case if they do we have to be prepared.”

After discarding the materials, Dudian told them to go to the boundary wall and wait for him over there. He went back to the factory and gave give copper coins to the old man to call out Barry.

“De, Dean.” Barry was a bit nervous as he saw Dudian.

Dudian found a quiet place: “The three of them wouldn’t be enough to help me out. I hope you can come with me for help. Take your time for a decision. If you are up for it, you can come to the outskirts of Hawk Hill to find us.”

Barry hesitated: “I’m really sorry. If it was in the past and I was alone, I would be willing to accompany you to take risks. But now… I want to live in peace and safety.”

Dudian patted his shoulder: “Think about my offer.” Dudian didn’t give him an opportunity to reply as he turned and left.

Barry stared at the back of Dudian left, tightly clenched in the palm of his hand loose.

After bidding farewell to Barry, Dudian came to the boundary and through the smell tracked Barton and the others. He said: “Walk behind me and learn.”

Three looked at each other with anxiety, but still followed after Dudian.

“Stop!” The guard in front of the gate stopped Dudian. He glanced over and saw that the clothing they were wearing was valuable. So his attitude was not cold: “Please, show your identity cards if you want to enter the district.”

Dudian nodded and got close to him. He took out a gold coin from his pocket and gave it to guard.: “Thank you.”

The guard saw the gold coin and looked at Dudian's face. He was silent for a few seconds. However, he took the gold coin and impatiently waved.: "Go, go!"

Dudian was relieved as he waved to Barton and others to follow him.

Barton and the other two didn't expect that Dudian would use bribery to pass into the residential district. Moreover, he did such a bold act in broad daylight. They were stifled as cold sweat poured down their spines. Their bodies were tight and stiff until they got to the other side.

As they entered the residential district, Dudian hired a carriage on the roadside. He said to the coachman.: "To the boundary."

Inside the carriage.

Barton patted his chest and cleaned the sweat from his forehead. : "Dean you are really daring. IF the guard got angry, what were we going to do?"

"He wouldn't," Dudian replied in a calm tone.

"We couldn't do that... Yes, we couldn't." Kroen bitterly said.

Dudian smiled: "You are all law-abiding citizens. It's natural that

you wouldn't dare to do something like that." In the last three years in the prison, it was not only planning the tunnel that he learned. Moreover, everything wasn't just about suffer and torture either.

"I didn't expect that a gold coin was enough for us to enter the residential district," Joseph said. Normally, the residential district was out of reach for them.

Dudian faintly smiled: "As long as you have enough money, then everything is simple. Even a murder!"

"Wouldn't you be retaliated against if we go to the commercial district?" Barton asked.

Dudian was about to speak when he sensed a distinctive smell. He couldn't help but slightly set of the curtain to make an angle to check the place.

After a while, he saw five black uniformed people on black horses running by. They had a spear and thin swords on their waists. They passed by the carriage.

Dudian noticed that all of them had Thorn medals on their shoulders through the gap of the curtain.

"Dogs are chasing ..." Dudian watched them pass.

A moment later, five black horses came to the boundary of the residential district and the slums. One of the asked the guards: “Have you seen the person on the arrest warrant?”

All of the guards shook their heads.: “Never seen.”

“Well!” One of them one the horses said: “You gotta let us know if you get some clues.” Finished speaking, he pulled the reins of the horse and went into the slums.

After the five had left, the guards turned towards them.

“A criminal have escaped from the prison! ”

“If it weren’t that our boss ordered to look for the crossing people, I wouldn’t even care a bit. ”

“You know what is funny?! The Thorn Flower Prison is called the number one prison, and they were saying to everyone that no prisoner could run out. A sixteen-year-old kid has escaped.”

They wouldn’t dare to chat about this in front of the black cavalry, or they would be beheaded on the spot.

“Captain, the criminal will come here?” One of the black uniformed cavalrymen asked the youth who was leading them.

Frank replied: “His smell disappeared from the residential area. He had bought two horses and most probably have gone through here. Maybe he had intended to go to his adoptive parents, but he wasn’t there. So he has somewhere else to hide. The slums are where he originates from. We should check out the Meishan orphanage to see if he had some friends.”

“Yes.”

After a few hours.

In a factory at the north of the slums.

Frank sat on the dark horse and asked the old man, “Barton, Barry, Joseph, and Kroen.”

The old man knew that they were not ordinary civilians from their armor.: “Well, please wait a moment.” Then he trotted into the factory.

Moments later, the old man came out as Barry was following behind him.

Frank frowned: “Only one?”

The old man replied: “There was a man who had come here and took them away. The other three didn’t come back. It’s only him who returned.”

Frank's shouted at him: "What kind of a person? Was he looking for the man on the arrest warrant?"

The old man was scared: "This, this... I didn't pay too much attention. But I think it was a little different. That person looked very young. Maybe ten or so years old."

Frank sucked down. He shouted at Barry: "Imp! Be honest. Was that Dean?"

Barry's body slightly trembled. His mind was in a panic. He didn't think that they would catch up to him as Dudian had escaped not too long ago. He clenched his fists: "No, that person was just my friend."

Frank narrowed his eyes: "Do you know that by covering up for wanted criminals, you will get charged by the magistrate? "

Barry turned pale: "I did not cover up, I, I ... ..."

"Well, since you didn't cooperate with us I have to take you to prison. According to the law covering a wanted man will get a sentence of 30 years of imprisonment!" Frank shouted and waved: "Take him away!"

Barry shivered in fear. Yellow liquid dripped from his crotch: "Sir. Mr guard. He said that... He said that he would be in the outskirts of the Hawk Hill..."

Frank looked at him and confirmed that Barry was not lying. He reined the rope and went away.

Chapter 158 - Dudian's guests

The carriage went past a bustling street full of pedestrians and shops.

Dudian opened the curtain and asked the coachman to stop by the roadside.

He went out of the carriage and stopped in front of the florist by the roadside. The shopkeeper was a beautiful woman with blonde hair. : "Give me a bucket of your most fragrant flowers."

She noticed that Dudian had an extraordinary temperament and nice clothing. She nodded her head as she picked a bouquet of fresh roses and handed to Dudian: "That will be a silver coin. These are the most fragrant flowers in our shop. However, if you are going to give it your sweetheart, you should tell her in advance that it has lots of thorns. It's easy to get our fingers stabbed."

Dudian smiled, "Flowers with prickles are the most charming ones."

He handed out a silver coin and returned to the carriage.

His mates were surprised as they saw Dudian buying flowers: "Dean, what are these flowers for?"

"I'm going to give them to our guests," Dudian smiled.

The carriage continued to drive away.

After a few hours.

Dudian got off the carriage with the other three on the street near the boundary of the residential and commercial district. They rented a hotel room. Dudian asked Barton and the others to go to a pharmacy and buy gauze, disinfectant, and scissors.

The first thing that Dudian did was cut and shorten his hair as much as he could. The others helped him to trim down the hair at the back of his head.

His features were clearly exposed. In comparison to three years ago, he was much more handsome. His face was slimmer while his big black eyes stood out more. He was still somewhat similar to his picture depicted in the arrest warrant. However, his expression and eyes were calmer.

He sat down on the bed while he checked the new coat and trousers Barton and others had purchased for him.

“Dean, you … …”

“This……”

Barton and the other two saw Dudian’s upper body as he changed into new clothing. They were stunned at the sight. It didn’t look like a human’s body. It was like a dry field full of cracks. There

were countless whip marks, scratches, and wounds all over his body. It looked like as if a spider web had covered all over his chest, arms, abdomen, and other parts.

There were shallow scratches on his cheek and chin.

They were shocked as they couldn't grasp what kind of cruel treatment Dudian had gone in the prison. But they were surprised to see how much willpower he had to endure so much pain.

"Is this the result of prison?" Kroen stared at his body. His eyes became moist as he thought of his previous hesitant mood. His heart was full of guilt and shame.

Dudian smiled: "Not all of them. Now I need you guys to do a favor to me. Help me pull out two spikes."

They noticed the end of spikes on Dudian's shoulders as he pointed out. They had goose bumps, and Barton whispered: "How can they be so merciless?"

Dudian picked up one of the pliers they had purchased and handed it to Barton. : "Less talking... Hurry up!"

Their faces turned ugly, and they felt very complicated. Barton's hand trembled as he held onto plier.: "If I use it to pull that out... There will be lots of pain... Would you be able to hold back?"

"Well," said Dudian and gave the trio and encouraging look.

Barton gritted his teeth and used the plier to catch the spikes caps. They tried to pay attention to Dudian's expression in fear of causing more damage. Barton was a bit calmer as he saw a calm expression on Dudian's face. Barton pinched the spike with pliers and forcefully pulled it out.

Dudian's fingers tightly clenched into fists because of the extreme pain. But he still tried to keep his calm. But the pain was beyond his expectation. His lips were tightly pressed into each other as he opened his mouth a bit to squeeze out the word: "fast!"

Barton fiercely pulled it out.

As the spike was pulled out, the blood began to spew out from the wound.

Dudian's mouth twitched in pain. The trio was prepared in advance as they used the disinfectant first and gauze afterward to dress the wound.

They were anxious, but still entangled Dudian's wounds with the gauze.

"It's so long!" Joseph looked at the bloody spike in his hand. It caused his heart to shudder. The spike was as thick as his finger. He couldn't imagine how much pain it would cause for it to be nailed and kept in the body.

Dudian's lips had turned white. However, he gritted his teeth and asked them to unplug the second spike.

After a few minutes the second spike was taken out. The trio helped out Dudian to bandage his shoulder.

They collapsed down to the ground after finishing because of mental exhaustion.

Dudian relaxed his body as he laid on the bed so that his shoulder wound would heal as soon as possible.

"Dean, what should we do with spikes?" Kroen was cautious as he asked Dudian.

Dudian's eyes fell on the two spikes and whispered: "Don't throw them out. It's for our guests."

After the blood had stopped oozing out, Dudian took the other three and left the house. However, he didn't immediately go to the passage, but stopped in the middle of the street. He picked up a stone and threw it away towards a house's door.

The door opened soon, and a chunky woman looked around and saw the stones on the ground. She cursed out loud and closed the door.

Barton and the other three were puzzled.

Dudian didn’t say anything and took them to leave towards the passage.

With the crowd check, Dudian was stopped by a middle-aged guard.

“Please show your identity card,” the middle-aged guard said.

Dudian took out a gold coin and looked at the middle-aged guard’s face. The guard paled, and soon anger gushed out of his eyes.

Dudian didn’t give him a chance to speak as he said in a low tone. “Is that short, fat woman your wife? ”

The middle-aged guard was about to voice out his anger but suddenly stopped. He looked at Dudian and quickly took out the gold coin. “Sorry, sorry. My mistake...”

Middle-aged guard’s hand tightened as he grabbed onto the gold coin.: “Go.”

Dudian waved back to the other three and went into the passage.

After they had passed through the commercial district, Kroen asked: “Dean, how did you know that the woman was his wife? Did you know him?”

“The smell,” Dudian said, but didn’t explain the details. He hired a carriage.: “Now, it’s time to go and meet our guests. You must not be careless from now on!”

Chapter 159 - Hunt

North of the Commercial district.

A castle belonging to an aristocratic family stood tall on the outskirts of the town. Time to time you could see knights patrolling around the castle. There was a javelin engraved on the medals that they had on their shoulders. It represented the Ryan family.

The residents of Shang town knew that everything was under the management of the Ryan family. One upon a time, Ryan family was the top aristocratic family in the commercial district. However, they had provoked an evil alchemist. In the end, their former residence and lands had turned into a desert by the flames of the alchemist. Currently, the family was on a decline. This town was the only one left under their control.

Their total annual revenue from taxes was not as good as the remuneration of a knight working under one of the top aristocratic family's.

The old patriarch's temper was getting irritable with each year. He would increase the taxes every passing year. The residents were in miserable condition because of high taxes.

At the moment, the black carriage slowly went into the town.

Its door was opened, and the four figures went out of the carriage. They were led by a slim but tall teenager. There were a

handful of fragrant red roses in his hand. Although his clothing was plain, his spine was straight. He gave off an aura of a gentleman.

Dudian rented a room in the hotel. They closed the door, and Dudian said: “You guys will stay in this small town. It is under the management of the Ryan family. Your current task is to acquire all the information about Ryan family. Including their financial status, demographic and military prowess. Moreover, checked out Ryan patriarch’s children, hobbies, specialties and so on.”

Kroen asked: “Dean, what are we going to do with this?”

“You will get to know in a few days.” Dudian solemnly answered: “Inquire as much as possible, but the most important thing is that don’t expose your identities. Try not to do compelling things.”

The trio nodded in understanding.

Barton asked, “Dean, where are you going?”

“I got to meet the main guest,” said Dudian and grabbed two spikes which Joseph had wrapped before.

Joseph’s face change: “Are you going to retaliate against the people who framed you?”

“This is not retaliation or revenge.” Dudian smiled, “It’s a virtuous act.”

“You will have five gold coins to finish the task.” Dudian took out the gold coins he picked and gave it to them.: “Be careful and don’t rush out things. Get familiar with the surroundings and people. Afterward, try to get information!”

They took the gold coins.

Dudian left the small hotel in relief. He knew that Barton and the other two would face difficulties while completing the task. But they had to be somehow honed. This would be a good experience for them.

...

Thorn Flower Prison. In the castle.

Warden Jones was holding the envelope that the black crow had brought. There was a trace of a smile on his face as he spoke to the youth sitting in front of his desk.: “This little devil. He has been traced into slums.”

The youth wearing the black armor had a long scar on his face. But it gave more charm to his handsome face. He faintly smiled.: “Because of continuous rain his smells had been covered and his trace lost. But now he has been exposed. He won’t be able to run away. Why Frank hasn’t been able to bring him back yet?”

Jones shook his head: “The little devil is very clever. Frank

couldn’t find him directly but found a former companion of the kid. However, no valuable information was confessed by the companion. Frank couldn’t find the little devil in the location that the former companion referred to. This little devil was able to escape from here, so it won’t be so simple to catch him.”

The youth in black armor laughed. : “There will be clues no matter how cautious he is. If he is in the slums, then he won’t be able to get out. Even if he digs a pit and goes in, I will still pull him out!”

“I believe in your sense of smell,” Jones chuckled.

The youth drank the tea, got up and left: “I won’t come back until I catch the mouse.”

Butler looked at the back of the black figure which disappeared as he left the room. He retracted his eyes and looked at Warden Jones: ” This kid is just a primary hunter from the Mellon Foundation with rare juranzhi’s magic marks. Would he be able to find the little devil in the huge slums?”

Jones smiled: “Don’t underestimate the vicious dog’s hunting ability.”

The butler, Peter, nodded in silence.

...

The Commercial district. The magistrate building.

This magistrate office was responsible for dealing more than a dozen small towns and some cases of the commercial district. At the moment, the sky was getting dark. In an office building in the magistrate. The officials were in the building as they were working on the criminal cases. An apprentice knocked on the door and entered without waiting for a response. She had documents in her hand as she put them on the desk.

“Teacher, this is the alcohol case from Bohr town.”

“This is Mick’s case.”

A slender stalwart figure was sitting behind the desk. He was dressed in a dark red robe with golden embroidery. His head was bowed down reading the case in his hand. He heard the apprentice’s words and nodded: “Alright, you can go ahead.”

The young girl said: “Teacher, it’s going to rain in a while. You should go back earlier and rest.”

The man looked out of the window and saw the gloomy, dark clouds rolling together. It indicated that the rain was approaching.

He frowned slightly and nodded: “I know, you go back first.”

The young girl looked at him, but didn’t say anything. She turned around and left.

After she had left the man worked on the cases a bit more. Then he put the quill back into the pen holder. He got up and collected all the other cases. He put them in the drawer. He put on his deacon hat, took the umbrella and left his office.

“Deacon Huey.”

“Greetings deacon.”

The probation officers and knights of the magistrate who saw the middle-aged man bowed and greeted him with respect.

The man was accustomed to such treatment and calmly exited the magistrate’s building. The raindrops began to drip down and stain his clothes. He looked up and slightly frowned. He held up the umbrella, and the next moment the rain began to pour heavily.

Chapter 160 - Repayment

Huey was waiting for the exclusive carriage outside the magistrate's building. He went into the carriage and put away the umbrella. He ordered the coachman: "Go directly to the home. It's raining too heavy, so drive slowly."

"Yes." The coachman answered in approval.

Carriage slowly drove away as the torrents of rain poured down.

Huey sat on a comfortable pad while he gently rubbed his eyebrows. Because of recent affairs, he was a little tired. Huey deeply sighed as he grabbed the teapot inside the carriage. He poured a cup, but saw that tea was cold as his hands touched the cup. He frowned as he shouted at the coachman.: "You should make sure that by the time I get out of work, there is hot water in the carriage."

"Yes!" Coachman replied.

Huey sighed and leaned against the back pad. He closed his eyes to take a powernap.

The commercial district's streets were incredibly smooth. There was a bump or two once in a while that shook the carriage, but it wasn't enough to disturb deacon, Huey. The rhythm of rain made his mind calm.

After a long time, the carriage slowly stopped.

Huey slowly opened his eyes. He thought of the rain and wind, so he tightened the front of his skirt. He picked up his umbrella and opened the door to exit the carriage.

“Well?” Huey was stunned as he looked at the street in front of him. His line of sight was blurred because of the heavy rain, but he could identify that he wasn’t anywhere close to his house.

As he turned to the coachman, he felt pain from the back of his head. His eyes went black as he fainted and fell. The Rain fell over his body almost submerging him.

Coachman grabbed his arm and dragged him into an ordinary house near the roadside. He came back and picked up the umbrella and tied the carriage’s horse to a pillar next to the house. Afterward, he re-entered the house and lightly shut the door.

Puff! A bucket of cold water poured down Huey’s head and woke him up. His neatly combed hair scattered around his face. He quickly looked around. There were a few lamps hanging around and dimly lighted the room. There was a slim figure standing by in front of him. He sights gradually adapted to the dimly lit room. He also could see the other side’s face. It was a teenager. Because of his long experience, he instantly determined that the person’s age was no more than eighteen years old.

“Who are you?” Huey asked in a cold tone. He struggled a bit, but saw that his hands and legs were tied. However, he didn’t panic.

Dudian squatted down and looked at him, “Take a guess.”

It didn’t take long for Huey to reply: “Friend or family member of a criminal who was tried by me. Right?”

Dudian smiled, “It seems that Deacon Huey is aware that you have offended quite a few people. Do you remember three years ago you made a judgment on huge theft case?”

“Burglary?” Huey frowned slightly. He thought for a moment and said: “Are you one of the associates?”

“No, I am the party involved in that case.”

Huey was horrified.

“I would like to know what kind of an offer Burong family made so that a dignified Deacon agreed to work for them.” Dudian smiled: “Is it money? A privilege? Something else?”

Huey looked at him deeply: “If I remember correctly, you would have to do at least five years in prison. You didn’t have an influential background. So for you to appear in here, you have escaped! Right?”

“You just have to answer my question,” said Dudian, whispering his hair.

Huey sneered: “Do you think I will bow down in front of a criminal? You are looking down on deacons of the magistrate. I advise you to go back to the prison obediently. At least you will get to live an extra year or so.”

“You aren’t going to bow?!” Dudian smiled. He grabbed onto Huey’s hair and pulled his head down. “Why are you lowering your head now? ”

Huey raised his head in anger as soon as Dudian let him go. But the moment he lifted his head, Dudian pushed back his head again.

“Your pride and perseverance... Let’s see what is going to happen after a bit of pain.” Dudian smiled.

Huey was angered, but his body was slightly trembling. His chest went up and down.: ” Torturing me is useless. Your crime won’t change even if you kill me. Moreover, if you kill me, you will be exposed much earlier than usual. Do you know that the death of a deacon will disturb the whole judicial system? Everyone will be sent to hunt you!”

“I’m touched.” Dudian sighed: “It’s hard to find a person a step away from death to avoid snitching. But unfortunately, you are mistaken. I haven’t searched for you because I want my criminal record to be changed. I want to know who were exactly involved in my case. The names!”

Huey struggled, but his head was pushed down: “It has been too long. I don’t remember! I have to go back to my office and check

through the documents."

"I'll help you to remember. By the way, your wife is so beautiful, and your daughter is pretty too." Dudian smiled while looking at him. "What would happen to them in the slums?"

Huey shouted in anger: "Bastard! If you dare to touch them, the holy ghosts will not let you go!"

"If there were spirits, then I believe the prisoners judged by people like you shouldn't live, right?" Dudian whispered: "My patience is limited. The rain is going to stop any moment. I hope that you will cooperate with me. After all, delivering your wife and daughter to the slums will be quite costly. Don't let me go through all that trouble, okay?"

Huey twisted his neck and stared at Dudian.: "You should go to the Burong and Milan family for revenge. It was their conspiracy!"

Dudian smiled: "I'm aware of that. It is natural that they were involved. The thing is who played the decisive role. You are a deacon. Someone with a very high prestige and your words weighs a lot of credibility. That's why people would prefer to be convinced by your words instead of believing to a trivial theft suspect."

Huey was startled.

"There was no one else in addition to these two big families?" Dudian asked.

Huey shook his head, “No.” He paused for a while and looked at Dudian.: “You are not a primary hunter. So if you let me go, then I can get you out of the wall.”

Dudian shook his head slowly and turned away to the side of the room. Huey noted that there was a bouquet of roses on the table. Moreover, he saw Dudian pick up two sharp spikes from the table which were stained with blood.

“This gift is specially prepared for you. I hope you will like them.” Dudian turned back and smiled.

Chapter 161

A few days later.

A report was received about a murder in a remote street in the outskirts of the commercial district. A neighbor had found a rotten body inside a wooden barrel.

The rotten smell the body emitted was exposed after the weather had cleared. The investigators from the magistrate had come to check the scene in haste. A corpse was situated in sitting position inside the barrel. Its hands were clasped together as if praying. There were two spikes nailed through its chest.

The investigators from the magistrate had recognized the clothing on corpse from the first glance. Impressively, the person who was murdered was a deacon in the magistrate.

The news had an uproar effect in the judicial system.

All divisions of the magistrate within the entire commercial district were on alert after the identification of the body.

The judicial system was the fourth independent force. Its prestige and status was equal to nobility, military, and the Holy Church. The situation was the most serious trauma and provocation that the judicial system faced in the last five years. The people with the highest rank within the system was going to investigate the case to bring the justice.

A day after Deacon Huey's body was found, the coachman who used to be his driver was found dead in a sewer outside the magistrate building where Deacon Huey used to work.

Investigators sent by the magistrate found the owner of the house. He was a frivolous middle-aged man who had rented out his house. He was brought to the magistrate for questioning.

"At eight o'clock on the seventeenth, where were you?"

"At home. I was accompanied by my family. "

"I heard your house was rented out. Do you remember the appearance of the lessee?"

"I don't remember. It was dark, and he was wearing a hood. I didn't pay attention to his face, but I do remember that his body was fragile."

"Did not you see his identity card when you signed the lease agreement?

"I asked him for it, but he said that it wasn't with him. Later on, he said that he was planning to rent it for a week and give me ten silver coins. So I just rented out the place."

"Well, the money opens many doors. "

There was extremely limited information to be processed from the landlord's questioning. The only certainty was that the perpetrator of the crime was male. Moreover, it was a planned, premeditated assassination.

However, the magistrate wasn't going to let go of this easily as the crime concerned death of a deacon. The corpse and the scene were closely protected. Two senior knights of the magistrate were transferred to this case for reconnaissance of information regarding the murder of the deacon.

The first thing that caught their eyes were the two spikes that were pierced onto late deacon's chest. They were sent to the court for the examination. It wasn't long before they found two kinds of blood stains on the spikes. One belonged to late Deacon Huey. The second blood wasn't unknown.

Although they couldn't identify the murderer through the blood, but were able to deduce the source of the spikes. They belonged to Thorn Flower Prison.

In addition to steel spikes, there were a few pieces of rose petals on the scene. Ever since then all the flower shops and florists were closely interrogated.

...

Yard Town. Somewhere in the commercial district.

A carriage stopped in front of a hotel. A pale youth holding handful of dark red roses went into the hotel.

The door opened.

“Dean?” Joseph was surprised to see Dudian come back.: “You are finally back!”

Dudian saw that Joseph was alone in the spacious room. : “Where is Barton and Kroen?”

“They went to collect information and shall return soon,” Joseph replied

Dudian smiled as he poured a cup of hot tea. Moments later he sensed Barton and Kroen’s smells appear in his perception range. It didn’t take long for both of them to return to a hotel.
“Anything new?” Dudian asked the two.

Barton and Kroen were relieved when they saw Dudian. He was their backbone in a sense. Barton said: “These past few days we have asked everywhere. From butcher to hotel owners. The Ryan family is a declining small noble family. The patriarch is called Fulin ryan. He is 62 years old. His wife died early on. He has four children, and the eldest is a son who is 48 years old. ... ... ”

Dudian listens to them closely.

“As they are on a decline, the number of knights within the Ryan family is limited to two teams of ten. Moreover, they have around thirty squires. So they have 50 people as their military prowess. Moreover, we have heard the most of the knights are not regular knights recognized by the Knight Hall as they haven’t received their Medals of Honor. The old patriarch to protect his face and reputation has recruited probationary knights. It’s a nice façade.”

After some time, all three of them finished giving information.

Dudian nodded as he was thinking about the details of the plan. He got up and said to them.: “You should wait here for me. I’m going out for a time.”

“Where?” Barton asked.

Dudian smiled: “I got to visit the old patriarch.”

...

The sky darkened as night came.

Near the castle.

Knights and squires were extremely bored because of guarding the perimeter day after day. They have been tired of watching the same landscape for years. Everyone was aware that even the most stupid thieves would avoid coming to steal something from Ryan family. It would be stupid to look for water in the desert and fire in

the sea!

They were standing together, chatting about the interesting things they had recently heard to pass the time. They hoped that the night would pass rapidly.

The old Fulin Ryan was sitting at the table in the huge dining room of the Ryan Castle. The two rows on his right and left were full of his children and grandchildren.

A massive chandelier was hanging at the top of the table. The lamp was giving off yellow light. Their family utilized the same lamp oil, which ordinary civilians used.

The children got up and saluted old Fulin after the dinner and went back to their rooms to rest or play.

“Grandpa, did you consider the shop that I told you before?” One of his grandchildren who was about twenty or so years old asked the old Fulin.

He slowly looked at him and frowned: “I investigated. Although the street is bustling the store rent is too high. If you want to sell those broken coppers, then you won’t get enough profit. I assume you won’t even be able to earn back the rent money, let alone get a good return to subsidize the family.”

The youth’s face changed as he quickly said “Grandpa, they are not broken copper! A master craftsman forged all of the swords,

daggers, and knives. As long as I have the money and rent the shop, I will bring good result!”

“You are too young.” The old Fulin sighed: “You haven’t investigated the shops on that street. There are several who offer better quality goods at lower prices than your proposal. Do not treat customers as fools!”

“Grandpa!” Youth shout.

“Hugh, stop acting rudely!” The middle-aged man next to old Fulin raised his hand.

Youth bowed his head and loosened his grasp on the fork. He turned away and left.

Middle-aged said to Fulin: “Father, please don’t take offense. The child is not sensible and lacks patience.”

“He is still young. He will understand after a few years when he is honed. ” Fulin sighed, but didn’t continue to talk. He picked up the crutch from the table and with the maid’s help went back to his room.

They went up the stairs back to his room. Old Fulin coughed up a few times. The maid quickly removed few pills from the container and handed him a cup of water.

The old patriarch swallowed two red pills and drank the water.

He waved to maid get back to her job.

After the maid retires, old Fulin came to the edge of his working desk. He ignited the oil lamp and took out a magnifying glass from the drawer to read the books.

“Patriarch.” A voice echoed from the dark corner of the room.

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Old Fulin was startled a bit as he heard the voice. He slowly turned towards the dark corner of the room. There was a thin figure by the safe.

“I’m afraid you will be disappointed if you want to steal it.” Fulin’s eyes turned cold as he slowly put down the magnifying glass.

“No need to call the guards. I assume patriarch is smart enough for that.” The thin figure laughed.

Fulin replied: “Your skills should be no less than a regular knight if you were able to sneak into my castle without notice. I keep the dogs, and I’m aware of their capabilities. Even if I called them over, you will have sufficient time to kill an old man like me and go away. Well, since you are here, then there is something that you want to talk about?”

The person came out from the shadow of a shallow smile on his face.: “Three years have gone by. Does patriarch still remember me?”

Old Fulin’s saw Dudian face and was surprised as he didn’t think that the intruder would be so young. He said: “I’m too old and the memories fade away easily. Introduce yourself, young man.”

Dudian faintly smiles: “Three years ago at the party arranged by the Mellon consortium you invited a scavenger youth to be your

family knight. Do you remember now?”

Fulin thought for a moment, but suddenly his eyes went wide, and he was speechless for a moment: “YOU!”

“It’s me.”

Old Fulin was perplexed: “You weren’t you … …” His hairs stood erect as he was surprised.: “Did you escape?”

Dudian smiled: “I don’t have a background nor an identity. So there didn’t seem to be another way out.”

“I remember that I haven’t offended you. I heard about you going to jail three years ago. But if you want revenge then you should find Burong or Milan family!”

Dudian pulled over a chair and sat down: “Patriarch no need to be so nervous. I have no malice towards you or your family. I came so late to find you to talk about a cooperation.”

“We are a small family. We only own the small town outside the castle. The money we earn each year is not enough to cover the expenses for the clothing of the family’s youth. I can’t help you out.”

Dudian gently smiled: “I didn’t come here for the money. I’m naturally aware of your family’s financial situation. However, even though the Ryan family is in decline but after all you are a noble

family. I want you to bail me out."

"If you were in jail, I would be able to bail you out. But now you are a wanted man. Unless you are willing to be caught and put into the prison again, there is no way for me to bail on you."

Dudian smiled: "Only a small problem. As long as there is enough money a mere arrest warrant could be taken care of and withdrawn."

"You overestimate me too much." Old Fulin shook his head: "Ryan family has no savings. All the expensive antique and the other valuable things handed down from the ancestors have been sold out. We barely maintain the daily expenses. There is no extra money to help you out."

"Patriarch you should know that I am a hunter. If you bail me out, Ryan family won't be short of money later on."

Fulin replied: "But, I do not have the money to help you."

"If I'm not mistaken Ryan family has a mine in Red Leaf Hill," Dudian whispered.

Old Fulin's face changed: "You want me to sell the mine? That's impossible. It's the last lifeblood of the Ryan family. I will not sell it out even if you will kill me!"

"Patriarch, hopefully, time has not eroded your brain and eyes.

Can’t you differentiate between real treasure and a waste mine!”

“What do you mean?” Old Fulin asked.

“After you will bail me out, I’ll naturally be part of the Ryan family. ” Dudian slowly said: “If my guesses aren’t wrong the mine has long been barren. Otherwise, your Ryan family wouldn’t have declined to this level. I am different. You should be aware that what kind of wealth a hunter can create. It’s the push the Ryan family needs in this distressing situation.”

Old Fulin shook his head: “No, I can not do this.”

“I know what you are worried about,” Dudian said indifferently. “The Burong and Milan family are going to take a stand against me and that will bring a devastating blow to the weakened Ryan family. But the reality is that in another ten years would your Ryan family be able to hire a knight?”

Old Fulin’s face turned ugly. He knew what Dudian was talking about. It was the root of all his troubles and worries.

“But working with me is different.” Dudian smiled, “I can improve the conditions of your Ryan family. You may even go back to the glorious days.”

“You may have been a hunter for a while. But how can I believe that after I bail you out you won’t betray me? Moreover, you are just a junior hunter. I know better than you the capabilities of

hunters and their potential returns. How could I put the fate of my family and bet on a junior hunter who could die outside the wall anytime?" Old Fulin asked furiously.

Dudian gently smiled: "It should be lame to bet on a primary hunter. But what about an intermediate hunter?"

The old patriarch was confused: "What do you mean?

"Do you remember Linda's squad from three years ago?" Dudian asked.

Fulin naturally was aware of the hunters under the command of Mellon consortium. They were getting shares from everything that hunters had brought back. Moreover, every time a hunter was wounded, the news would spread around. Not to mention when the whole team of hunters was annihilated. At that time it had caused a great sensation. A number of teams were sent out to investigate the case. But there were no definite clues whether it was a man-made or beasts that had killed the team.

"I killed all of them." Dudian smiled.

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“Did you kill them?” Old Fulin was startled.

“You should know that my relations with Linda weren’t well... ” Dudian lightly chuckled: “Consortium wouldn’t notice a junior hunter like me in the investigation. But if you go and investigate the matter you should detect that I was temporarily transferred out with Glenn to hunt the black weaver. After the mission, I didn’t come back, and Linda’s squad was implementing the task at that time.”

Old patriarch listened to Dudian. The moment Dudian referred to Glenn and black weaver, old Fulin immediately remembered the events of that year. The all coincided with each other.

“You... You weren’t even a junior hunter back then. You should be considered as a trainee hunter. How could you kill Linda? She was an intermediate level hunter. Ah!” Old Fulin still couldn’t believe Dudian.

Dudian glanced at his desk. “If you have read the latest newspaper, then you are aware of the deacon Huey’s death.”

The old patriarch was aghast as he looked at Dudian.

“Yes, I killed him too.” Dudian nodded.

Patriarch couldn’t help but said: “He was a deacon. A high

ranking judge in the magistrate. Why did you kill him?”

“He was the guy who made the judgment in my case.” Dudian smiled and said: “I’ve told you these two things because I wanted to tell you. You should be aware that if I want, there won’t have a Ryan family by tomorrow. Please believe me!”

Cold sweat flowed down the old patriarch’s face. He was no longer able to cover his fear, and his body slightly trembled. He sat back in his chair: “So, I have no choice?”

Dudian touched his chin for a moment, then shook his head: “Hm... It seems... There is no choice...Unless... Unless you will choose the maintain the noble character of an aristocratic lineage and insist against the criminal. The genocide that will follow it will be the glory of the declining Ryan family. Maybe... Perhaps in future, the history books will write about the glorious record of Ryan family... Maybe not... The question is how are you going to face your ancestors?”
Old patriarch replied: “I know that you are not a simple youth because you were able to break out from Thorn Flower Prison. Maybe you have killed Linda’s squad too. Anyway, at the moment you have the strength to kill me. At least to save my life, I will promise you that I will write a mail to bail you out. But if you have killed the deacon Huey then the magistrate will trace you out. Even if I put out a bail for you. But you will be imprisoned again and executed.”

Dudian said: “You don’t have to worry about that. I have done it my way.”

The old patriarch was hesitant, but spoke his mind. : “Since you have your plan, I’m not going to go into details. But the mine isn’t in good condition. Even if I try to sell it out, it won’t go for a high price.”

Dudian answered: “Mine and people are similar in a sense. Dress them up a little, and the original ugly look is gone. I believe I don’t have to elaborate...”

Old patriarch deeply looked at him: “I know.”

Dudian slowly walked to the desk: “It‘s getting late so you should write down the letter and send it with a servant to the magistrate.”

Old Fulin carefully stared at the boy and whispered.: “They probably really died in his hands...” Then he took out a letter from the drawer. He filled the quill with ink and began to write.

Dudian quietly watched. The Ryan family’s badge was stamped onto the envelope after the letter was finished.

“Tomorrow I will find a way to sell the mine and raise money to help you out.” The old patriarch had the envelope ready.

Dudian nodded and patted his shoulder: “Do not worry too much! I will send you a gift after you do me a favor.”

Old Fulin bitterly smiled but didn’t say anything.

Dudian hid in the dark corner while old patriarch called the housekeeper. He handed the envelope and told them to send it to the magistrate.

Dudian carefully observed the old man so that he didn't secretly change the envelope. He sensed the old man's scent on the envelope as the housekeeper took it away. Later on, the same scent was transferred to another person, and the man rides the horse and left the castle.

Dudian came out from the darkness and said to old Fulin. : "I should go back and sleep first. I wish you can have a good dream. But I gotta tell you; it is a wonderful start of our cooperation!"

Old patriarch bitterly smiled. He would be doomed if he could sleep tonight.

...

The day after Huey's corpse was found.

Warden's office. Thorn Flower Prison.

A Youth in black armor pushed the door open in haste. He saw the warden Jones sitting by the desk. : "Warden, I heard you have news about the criminal!"

“Yes,” Jones said as he pointed to the envelope on the desk. ” The magistrate has exposed his trace. The little devil is in the commercial district.”

The youth quickly opened the envelope and took out the letter.: “He has killed deacon, Huey? Wasn’t he in the slums? How could he have gone to the commercial district?”

“Initially, he had gone to the slums…” Jones said, “It was a deliberate move by him to make sure that you focus on slums and ignore the other areas.”

The youth felt as if he was slapped in the face. Anger gushed out as he spoke: “Do you mean we were played around by him?”

Jones was indifferent as he replied: ” The moment he escaped from the prison was virtually same as playing around with us. Now, you transfer all the manpower to commercial district to search for his traces. I believe that with your sense of smell you can cover entire commercial district and dig the rat out from his hole!”

The youth’s face was gloomy as he checked the letter: ” The only thing that refers to him are two steel spikes. It is not exclusive to Thorn Flower Prison! Many blacksmiths forge it out. Isn’t it just a coincidence? If I were him, I wouldn’t do such a thing and expose my whereabouts. Wouldn’t the plan of escaping be in vain in this case?”

Jones looked at him: “Even if he is not in the commercial district, you still have to go. You have been searching the slums for so

many days and haven't found his shadow. Sooner or later you will have to move to another district. Maybe he wants to know the location of our search team. Maybe something else..."

The Youth asked: "Why should I go since you know this?"

Jones sighed: "It is just a prediction. The point is we have to jump in now. After all, a deacon of magistrate has been murdered, and the biggest suspect is the kid who has escaped from our prison. If we don't do something, how the nobles and magistrate trust us?"

The youth replied: "I'll be leading the team that will check the commercial district while I will send some staff to look for in residential district. "

Jones nodded: "Good. But you have to lead the investigation in the commercial district. You must find something. Otherwise, we won't have anything to give to magistrate."

"I know." The youth nodded slightly.

"Damned little devil... I don't know in which corner you are hiding, but there is not much time before you will be poked out from it..." Jones slightly pinched his finger: "After I catch the little devil, I will peel off his skin and douse him with water full of pepper! He will beg me to kill him!"

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Back in the hotel at the town.

Barton and the other two were relieved as they saw Dudian.

Kroen gently closed the door and pulled Dudian. He whispered: “Dean today, I accidentally saw in the newspaper that a man named Huey who was a deacon of the magistrate was murdered. Moreover, two spikes were pierced onto his chest. Did you do it?”

Dudian nodded: “Yes.”

Trio’s face changed. Barton asked: “Was he the one responsible for sending you to prison?”

Dudian nodded slightly: “One of them.”

Joseph was tense as he told: “Dean, now they are looking for the murderer. Moreover, you are still a wanted man. If you are found, you will be sent back to jail. ”

“Do not worry, in a few days I’ll be able to restore my legal status,” Dudian said to relieve the trio.

“Restore legal status?” All three of them were shocked.

“How?” Kroen asked.

Dudian smiled: “It is late. Let’s sleep.”

…

The next day.

Dudian sent Barton to continue to monitor the Ryan Castle. Dudian himself went into the castle to monitor old patriarch’s actions. There was a low possibility of old patriarch turning upon him, but he still had to be there if that happened.

Dudian was pleased as the old Fulin was an efficient and fast man. The next day he had ordered the ores mined before to be sent back to the mine. It was a disguise made to cover up mine’s efficiency and make it look like a very high production one.

Soon the news regarding the sales of mine was spread out.

However, the first ones to react were from Ryan family itself. The four children and nine grandsons exploded. There was few exception who favored old patriarch’s decisions. However, the rest unanimously opposed. To them, it was the lifeblood of the family. One sold their financial resources will be cut off.

Old Fulin was pressured by the voices of opposition.

On the third day, the transaction had occurred, and the mine was sold.

Dudian felt that he hadn't chosen the wrong person as he saw Fulin act in a vigorous and resolute manner.

The fifth day, at night.

Patriarch and his family were dining together.

"Grandpa, I have to go to a party in a few days. The best dress that I have was bought a long time ago. Would you give me money to buy a new one?" A girl in her looked up at old patriarch after finishing the steak.s

Old Fulin's brows were slightly wrinkled. He glanced at the table and saw his children and grandchildren secretly peeking at him.: "I know that you are all thinking about the money we got from selling the mine. But it's for the family! Otherwise the next time we won't be able to hire knights anymore and continue to lay off!"

"Grandpa, you are too old and confused!" One of the youth stood up and spoke in an angry tone: " What is the use of money if we keep it? If it just stays there, then you might as well lend me to do business!"

Old patriarch spoke in cold tone: "I dare you to say that again!"

The middle-aged man sitting next to the youth pulled him down

in a hurry: “Hugh, shut up!”

The youth saw old patriarch’s gloomy face. He gritted his teeth as he stood up and left.

As the youth left, a servant quickly run by him and came to the old patriarch. He respectfully said: “Master, there is a letter for you.”

Old patriarch took the envelope and looked at the badge mark on its cover. He grabbed the crutch and said to the middle-aged maid: “Help me back to my room.”

He sat at his desk and waited for the maid to leave the room. He opened the envelope and took out the letter. He looked at the content of the letter and was relieved.: “Come out. It is for you.”

Dudian’s figure emerged from the shadow: “It passed through?

The old Patriarch nodded and handed the letter to him.

Dudian read the letter. It was written very clearly. Black and white! Their bail application had passed!

“Sure enough! The nobility plus money! If you got these two together, then there nothing that you can’t do.” Dudian face smile.

Old patriarch indifferently said: “To help you out in addition to

tens of thousands of gold coins from the sale of the mine, I have spent all the savings of the Ryan family. We are almost hollowed out after removing the arrest warrant and bailing you out!”

“I will not ill-treat you.” Dudian put away the envelope.: “I have already told you that I will send you a gift. It will soon be in your hands.”

Patriarch deeply looked at Dudian. “Now we are on the board of the same ship. I hope you won’t undermine the credibility of my aristocracy.”

Dudian knew what patriarch was worried about: “I’ll go back as it is too late. ” Then he went out from the window.

Fulin watched Dudian as he left. However, he recovered his eyes after a long time. He looked at the opposite wall where a huge painting of a man hung. “I hope I will not face my ancestors as the sinner of the Ryan family… ” He whispered.

…

The sixth day, morning.

Dudian asked Barton to buy a newspaper.

Morning Post had been printed out. Dudian was eating his breakfast while he read the newspaper. One of the most eye-catching news was still the assassination of Huey. There were

many suspects such as the military, alchemists, potion masters, the family, and friends of people judged by Huey in the last six months.

After all, the deacon was in contact with too many people, and there were a lot of parties who would be interested in his death.

“The main suspect … Dean?”

Dudian saw that one of the major suspects was himself.

He wasn’t surprised as he looked out at other sections. Soon, he found the message he was looking for.

“Dean was released from prison last night after he was bailed out by the Ryan family.” There was a big smile on his face. He was new about the charm of aristocracy and money. The arrest warrant had been withdrawn. They were posted out, but now they pretended that nothing has happened. It was so easy for them to fool the civilians.

In this era, the newspaper was an aristocracy’s propaganda machine.

The newspaper had a high degree of credibility within the civilian population.

Chapter 165

Warden’s office. Thorn Flower Prison

Bang! The door was pushed up as the youth in black uniform came in. He had a newspaper in his hand while he was angered by the content.: “What the hell is this? He was bailed! I want an explanation!”

Warden Jones was eating breakfast while reading the newspaper as he sat by his desk. He frowned and was displeased because of youth’s action.: “Be very careful about your tone and voice’s pitch when you talk to me.”

Youth was displeased by the news.: “Its been many days that me and my men have searched everywhere day and night. Now that we found his whereabouts in Yard town, I get the order stop hunting him because he was released on bail. I couldn’t wait to peel this little devil for so many days. What a joke! He is criminal that broke out from jail! A wanted man”

Jones took a glance at newspaper and looked at him.: “Calm down. I’m going to explain you.”

The youth gritted his teeth and took a deep breath.: “I want a proper statement!”

Jones put away the newspaper. He took a sip of tea from the cup and spoke lightly: “It was written very clearly in the newspaper. He was bailed out by an aristocrat. In fact it’s a good thing for us as

the kid had found a noble family to help him for bail out. At least, his jailbreak was ignored and our Thorn Flower Prison wasn't put into an embarrassing situation any more."

Youth's face turned red as the anger gushed out: "That's the reason? He was a wanted man! "

Jones smiled: "If you put away the arrest warrant, then he was just a thief. However, its not surprising that nobles would show interest to him as he had planned and escaped a perfect jail break from the hardest prison. As for the warrant. It will be regarded as nothing but a mistake. A wrong print or you just name it. So at the end our prison won't lose a face and this matter will end in here."

Youth asked: "Can't we do anything? Its going to finish just like that?"

Jones sighed as he looked at the youth: "At the end we are caught in a fight between nobles. Even if you are unhappy with the current conclusion, what can you do? He was bailed by a noble family. Who can stop it? Not even another aristocrat family can come up and stop this process. Unless, he once again commits a crime and there is solid enough evidence to put him behind the bars. That's the only way and these are the rules."

Youth was speechless as he was startled.

Jones chuckled: "Although it is known that magistrate is impartial but it doesn't mean that nobles are powerless. Don't forget that the lifeblood of this world is in the hands of nobles. The

vast majority of economic and military strength is focused in their hands. They can't be ignored by anyone whether it is military, judicial system or Holy Church. Moreover, aristocracy is much more deeply-rooted as you think."

"Do you think an ordinary civilian could bail him out even if he was as wealthy as the church? Who would dare to intervene with prisoners of Thorn Flower Prison and protect a thief? But the nobles are different. Even if a declining family steps out for him then he would be taken out. They have such a right. It is called 'class.'"

Youth was silent for sometime: "Soon he will be condemned again even if he was bailed out. "

Jones smiled, " Yes. He has angered the magistrate by killing the deacon. The magistrate will dispose him one way or the other. Nevertheless its too early to come up to judgement. We will see how everything plays out."

The youth sneered: "I will personally go to watch when they will execute him."

Jones replied: "Don't think to much about him. At the end of the day he is just a toy."

...

Mount Er. Burong family. Commercial district.

The huge castle was located at the hillside of the mountain. There was a wall all around the foot of the mountain surround by the moats and bridge. The were lots of knights patrolling the perimeter by walking back and forth.

Rudolph Burong didn't go downstairs in the morning. The servants had brought water for him to rinse in his room. Afterwards he ate the breakfast in his workroom which was a majestic place. After finishing with the breakfast he began to read the newspaper.

Jenny's dad's name is Rudy but we are going to use Rudolph instead for better impression. It sounds more ruthless. Moreover Rudy originates from Rudolph.

"This kid ... ..." Rudolph's eyes narrowed as he saw the news about deacon Huey's assassination. Few days ago when the news about murder was released he was already sure that the little devil was involved in this.

"Thorn Flower Prison is made up of bunch of no goods. A group of leeches. Military is worse when it comes to taking action." Rudolph swept through the names of the main suspects. His eyebrows wrinkled.: "Magistrate is a bit better than them..."

He didn't pay much attention to the story as he checked the others news. A moment later he saw the column on the left corner of the newspaper.: "bail? Released?"

He was startled.

“The Ryan family has eaten a lion’s heart. Good courage!” He waved to the maid and indifferently said: “Buy all the newspapers and destroy them! Don’t let little Miss see it. In addition, she is not allowed to go out today. She will stay at home!”

The young maid respectfully answered.: “Yes.”

Rudolph shouted as the maid was about to retreat.: “Wait. She was recently working on some case. Go to the magistrate and get all the information regarding that case. Make sure that they are brought over so that she can work on them at home.”

“Yes,” the maid nodded respectfully.

After the maid went out of the room, Rudolph once again check the newspaper. He thought for a moment and said to the maid on his right.: “Call the butler.”

“Yes.” Maid respectfully replied.

It didn’t take long when a middle-aged man with combed hair, clothed in a suit came over.: “Good morning, master.”

“Go to that old thing’s house.” Rudolph coldly said.

Middle-aged butler was surprised but saw the newspaper on desk. He nodded and turned away to leave.

...

Yard town.

Dudian was having breakfast when a team of knights of magistrate surrounded the hotel.

“We suspect that you were involved in a murder case,” a young knight belonging to magistrate lifted his helmet and coldly said to Dudian.

Dudian glanced at the street, “Where is the carriage?

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“Hmph!”. Another knight who was next to them sneered. “Do you want to be taken in a carriage? You have killed deacon Huey! Its not going to take long before you go to prison again!”

Dudian’s eyebrows wrinkled as he listened to the knight with interest.: “Since when the knights of magistrate have become judges? Moreover, I haven’t been interrogated yet. In this case, I am just a suspect. If I’m not mistaken then according to the third criteria of Knighthood, knights have to be just and unyielding! In the absence of evidence arbitrarily slandering others is not consistent with ‘just’ part of the criteria. Or does it?”

Knight was stifled but he wanted to say something. However he was stopped by the other knight who was leading them.

“Mr. Dean please come with us. Otherwise, we will have to use force.” The other knight said politely.

Dudian smiled: “I am a normal civilian. Moreover, I have status of a trainee within magistrate. But now some people wantonly slander me in absence of conclusive evidence. I want explanation!”

“You!” the other knight said in anger.

Their leader stopped him and whispered: “Don’t forget that you are knight of magistrate!”

The young knight lowered his head.

“Mr. Dean he is unfamiliar with the case as its his first take. Please don’t be offended.” The leader then pointed to a carriage which was parked not far away from the hotel: “Please, cooperate with us.”

Dudian faintly smiled. He moved to the side and patted young knight’s shoulder: “Fighting evil is a good thing. But you better polish your eyes and don’t bite blindly. Your duty is to protect the civilians while annihilating the evil. You can’t rely on your status to oppress the civilians!”

The young knight clenched his fists and angrily looked at him but didn’t reply back.

Dudian ignored him as he turned towards Barton.: “You guys wait here for me. If you are in trouble then go to Ryan castle and find their patriarch. He is my friend and he will protect you.”

“Dean, you …” Barton paused.

Dudian cut him off: “Don’t be worried about me. I’m going for a cup of tea.” Then he looked at knight and said: “Let’s go!”

The leader looked at him deeply. He waved at the several knights and waved: “Let’s go back!”

Pedestrians stopped to look at Dudian while he was surrounded

by a team of knights from the magistrate. They were surprised to see that such a young boy was arrested by knights as normally they would go after ferocious criminals.

Dudian got into the carriage and was escorted by the knights to the magistrate building.

...

The neighborhood was much more lively than ever.

The judges from the adjoining magistrates were send to help out with the investigation. All the streets around the magistrate were crowded with knights wearing magistrate's armor. Some of them were responsible to escort and protect the judges and deacons while the others were protecting the magistrate building. In addition to the staff from the magistrate, many civilians and businessmen had gathered to see the grand event.

A carriage escorted by the knights squeezed through the crowd and stopped in front of magistrate building. A young knight dismounted from his horse and came over to carriage and unlocked it.: "Mr Dean, please."

Dudian slowly went down the carriage.

He looked around to see lots of carriages, some of which had flags and banners of different noble families.

The leader of the knights led him to the magistrate building.

“This way, please!” The knight guided him.

Dudian followed him as they went from the lobby into a hall.

“I have to tie you. Please.” The knight took out handcuffs.

Dudian smiled back and lifted his hands.

After putting on the cuffs the knight said: “Sit close to them. They are the suspects like you.” Afterwards he pointed to the table where people were sitting by.

There were four people, three men and a woman. One of them who was a young man dressed in luxury clothing saw Dudian and laughed: “You can’t find the real murderer and bring in the innocent people you have have casually picked up! It’s a joke!”

Knight’s face sank: “Shut up!”

The youth laughed: “I won’t be silenced!”

“You!” The knight stared at him.

“Oh ...” Laughter echoed from the outside. The people in gold clad robes came to the room. They were led by an old man who

seemed to be the one with the biggest authority within them. He patted the knight's shoulder: "You should go out now."

The knight's anger dissipated the moment he saw the old man: "Yes."

The old man took out the chair and sat down to opposite to Dudian and rest.: "You should be aware why all of you have been brought to here. Our judge, deacon Huey was assassinated. According to the intelligence collected, five of you are the most likely people to murder him."

The youth smiled and retorted: "Who is deacon Huey? I have never seen him. I had read about his assassination in the newspaper. At the time I was meeting with my friends and partying with them. There are lots of people who can testify for me."

Old man smiled: "You shouldn't be worried. Although we can't prove your presence in the murdering scene but according to our investigation three months ago Huey had lost a bet. He had borrowed quite a big amount of money from you. He hasn't paid you back. Its not a small amount of money so there is an option that he was killed because of debt issues."

The youth's face changed as he tapped the table: "It's nonsense. Although it wasn't a small amount but I wouldn't murder a deacon because of money. You gotta be crazy to do that! "

Old man indifferently said: "Did you say that you haven't ever

met him?”

The youth was stifled. It was as if he was slapped in the face.

“We have investigated everything. I would like to tell you know that lying is not an option and may lead you to prison even if you belong to a noble family. Of course, you could be bailed out but it won’t be cheap.” The old man smiled and looked at Dudian and the other three: “You better cooperate with us as we how much more information than you think.”

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The old man smiled as he saw all five of them turn silent: “According to our investigations you guys are the most likely ones to have murdered deacon Huey. Bart.” The old man called out a name.

The complexion of youth next to Dudian turned dark and his body trembled: “I, I didn’t kill him! I really did not kill.”

Old man deeply looked at him: “You have neither wife nor daughter. On night of 25th you went to flower shop to buy red roses. What for?”

Dudian turned his face towards the youth.

Bart’s body was trembling. : “I, I…”

“Say!” Old man shouted.

Bart’s body fiercely shook as he said in hurry: “I bought flowers… I bought flowers to give to the girl I like… I, I have crush on her.”

Old man narrowed his eyes: “Whats the girl called?”

“Lucy, Lucy,” Bart looked down.

Old man nodded and waved back at knight to go out to investigate.

The old man stopped interrogation as the guard went out. Instead middle-aged man sitting next to him, dressed in white robes said: “Time for blood test.”

Middle-aged man put the box in his hand onto the table. He opened it and there were two bloody spikes. He beckoned to the knight who was close by and the latter immediately brought up a bowl and knife.”

“If you have read the newspaper then you should be aware that these spikes were the main weapons used to assassinate the deacon Huey.” Old man’s eyes swept over Dudian and the others: “In addition to deacon Huey’s blood we found that there is another blood trace. It is likely was left by the criminal... ” After this his eyes fell onto Dudian’s face.

Dudian saw his looks and wrinkled his eyebrows: “Do you suspect that its my blood?”

“At present, the most suspicious person is you.” Old man’s facial expressions turned to hatred and anger while the previous gentleness was lost while he told: “You had committed theft three years ago. Deacon Huey had personally handled your case. You were sentenced and sent to Thorn Flower Prison. Later on you had escaped from the prison which is the first prison in terms of everything. Because of resent that you held towards deacon Huey’s decision you had used the torture instruments from the jail to murder the deacon. Its nothing but a assassination for revenge! ”

The four sitting next to Dudian were stunned as they listened to the judge. The most astonished was the youth who thought that Dudian was an ordinary civilian because of his simple clothes. He wouldn't think that Dudian was a super criminal who was able to break out of brutal Thorn Flower Prison.

His eyes pumped as he thought of his previous words. Subconsciously he began to move towards the left.

Dudian calmly looked at the old man's eyes: "I was in prison when the deacon was murdered. There was no jailbreak. I don't understand what you are talking about."

"Well! Boy, less bullshit!" The middle-aged man next to the old one snapped.: "Now, when we get the conclusive evidence, do you think you would be able to fool others with your sweet talk? After the test is over the aristocrat who has bailed you out will be arrested to. As they have been covering up the criminal. Because of being involved in the conspiracy their aristocratic identity will be abolished!"

Dudian coldly staring at him: "The officials rely on evidence. The results haven't been verified yet but you have been slandering me non-stop. Actually... Who have you received money from? Who wants to use me as a scapegoat to cover this case? "

"Darn, what did you say ?!" Middle-aged man hit the table in anger.

Dudian leaned back and his eyes moved to the old man: “Since you have yet to find evidence then everything you say right now is nothing but nonsense. I recommend you to begin the test and verify whatever you going to do. But also keep quiet as I want to rest my ears.”

Old man said in a cold tone: “You don’t have to remind us. We will verify.” He ordered the middle-aged man: “Let’s start.”

Middle-aged man looked coldly Dudian: “The first one shall be you. You arm!”

Dudian stretched out his hand.

Middle-aged man was confused as he saw Dudian lift his arm without care. As soon as Dudian lifted off his sleeve everyone saw his arms full of whip marks and scars. There were some marks left by the fire. Their face turned ugly at sight.

The judges knew about the work routine of jails. But the four sitting next to Dudian couldn’t help but suck back their saliva. Their scalps turned numb as they saw countless scars.

Middle-aged man used the knife to make a shallow cut on Dudian’s wrist. The blood dropped out and slipped into the small bowl.

The four next to Dudian secretly glanced at him. They saw that Dudian didn’t even wrinkle his brows when the cut was made. The

youth sitting next to him said to the middle-aged man: “Your honor, are you going to somehow compare our blood with the one on spikes?”

Middle-aged man coldly glanced at him. “You wouldn’t be able to do the murder if you didn’t have the motive…”

Youth stare: “What do you mean?

Middle-aged man didn’t respond to him as he waved and made a hand gesture.

A moment later, a knight holding a palm-sized box came in from outside. He put the box on the table and went out.

Middle-aged man opened the box. There were worms laying in the box. Their bodies were crystal clear and chubby.

“These are bloodline worms.” Middle-aged man coldly smiled as he looked at Dudian.: “Although the blood on the spikes have long dried and can’t be test but Bloodline worms can identify the same blood. After it eats up your blood it can identify if the dried blood on spikes belong to you or not.”

Later on he put the small bowl near the box.

A faint smell of blood was emitted from the bowl and soon attracted the attention of bloodline worms. They crawled out of the box. Their small sticky claws caught onto bowl’s smooth

surface as they went into it to eat the blood.

As they ate the blood their body colored change to red.

After they were finished eating the blood, middle-aged man put the blood-stained spikes near them. He was nervous as he was observing the worms.

The worms body turned upright as they gently sniffed the spikes. However, the next moment they retracted their bodies and went back to the box.

Middle-aged man was confused.

Old man who was sitting next to him was also perplexed. He ordered: “Try again.”

Middle-aged man reacted and once again put the spike close to them.

Nevertheless, the worms lazily laid around twisting their bodies. They didn’t respond to spike.

The middle-aged man and the old man couldn’t help but look at Dudian. There was alarm in their eyes. Although they had called five suspects but the most skeptical was Dudian. The blood on spikes was an excellent evidence. However, it seems the blood stains on spikes didn’t belong to Dudian.

Who could they belong to?

Is it really just a coincidence?

Chapter 168

Dudian glanced at worms then turned towards the two: “I believe no sane person would be stupid enough to murder a deacon after being bailed out. Moreover, there are obvious signs that there are people with ulterior motives who try to frame me. Those people have ‘inside’ information. After all, usually you don’t see a person killed with spikes. ”

The old man and the middle-aged man glanced at each other as they heard Dudian say ‘inside’. They naturally knew that this inside story refers to Dudian’s escape. Although it was covered up after the aristocrats had come forward regarding this matter but if they went for a little investigation they could get solid evidence that Dudian had escaped. However, they didn’t want to purse this matter as it was covered. Their main aim was to investigate murder of deacon Huey.

It seemed that Dudian wasn’t the murderer from the current blood test.

“Nonsense!” The middle-aged man snapped: “Have you killed someone else with these spikes before the assassination of deacon Huey?”

Dudian smiled: “I’m really innocent. Although I dislike deacon Huey but I would never do such a crazy thing. I just got bailed out and wouldn’t like to be bothered with stuff like that. ”

Middle-aged man and the old man exchanged glances. Old man

waved: “Test others.”

Middle-aged man nodded slightly. In accordance with the previous test, he collected blood of others.

“It takes about 12 hours before they would be willing to eat different type of blood. So you all will be under temporary custody. You can leave after the results came out. ” Middle-aged man coldly said.

The four looked at each other. The previous youth couldn’t help but say: “What is this? I’m just a suspect, how can you limit my freedom?”

“You are quite talkative!” Middle-aged man shouted.

The youth bit his lips but didn’t reply.

Dudian said to the old man: “My blood has been verified. Can I go now?”

The old man glanced at him: ” Remember as you are currently on bail. If there is something else, please cooperate with us on call. Or we will have to arrest you. ”

Dudian nodded: “Of course, I hope you can arrest the murderer as soon as possible. Moreover, I would love to know whether it is just a coincidence or there is someone who wants to frame me.”

The old man nodded.: “This case isn’t just an ordinary one. Send these to headquarters for better investigation.”

Middle-aged nodded and said: “I know.”

Old man ordered guard to take Dudian out. The other four were brought into a special detention room. The old man said to the middle-aged one: “Immediately go and investigate the recent deaths. Check out if their bloods someone relate to the sample on the spikes.”

Middle-aged man’s eyes lit up and immediately nodded in agreement.

...

Dudian wasn’t escorted back to the hotel by the knights. So he had to hire a carriage and return to Yard town.

Barton was pleasant as he saw Dudian safely return. He stepped forward to ask about details of the investigation.

Dudian said a few things to make them feel relieved. Then sat into the carriage as he went to Ryan castle.

This time he didn’t sneak in but went through the main entrance. After the guard at the door informed the patriarch, the

carriage went into through the main lane to the castle.

Old patriarch was sitting in the hall waiting to see Dudian. There was smile on his face as he saw Dudian come in.: “Welcome! It a rare occasion. It has been so long that a hunter had come and visited our Ryan castle. Please sit down.”

There was a young man and a girl in the hall. Their eyes brightened up as they heard their grandfather introduce Dudian. They knew what hunters meant. Large sum of wealth and money!

“Hello, my name is Hugh!” The young man hurried up and shook Dudian’s hand.

Dudian shook youth’s hand and smiled: “Don’t hesitate. I’m here to find Mr Fulin to talk about cooperation.”

“Cooperation?” Hugh was surprised as he heard Dudian.

Although Ryan family was part of the Mellon consortium but there were many noble families that were under its wing. Moreover, the resources brought back were commissioned according to the proportion of shares. After the Holy Church took its inherent commission the rest were mainly divided by Mel and Burong families. They were the founders and so got the big pieces of the pie. The rest had to be sufficed with a small part. The declining families such as almost didn’t get anything.

Ryan family was in the bottom within the Mellon consortium.

The money allocated to them was close to nothing. Unless the hunters of the consortium had brought back a large harvest, Ryan family wouldn't get anything valuable.

However, if the hunter worked only for their family. It meant that after the Holy Church's commission was taken out as well as hunter's own income the rest would belong to their family. Although a single hunter wouldn't be enough to feed a noble family but for Ryans it was more than enough to improve their living conditions. Over the years they may slowly accumulate wealth.

"Hello Mr Hunter. So young, ah! " The young girl was surprised as she saw Dudian.

Hugh quickly shouted. "Stop with nonsense."

The girl stuck out her tongue and went behind him.

Fulin politely smiled and said: "Dean, please come with me." The middle-aged maid helped him to move as old patriarch led the way.

Dudian followed him as they went upstairs to patriarch's study room.

As they came into the room, patriarch ordered the middle-aged maid to withdraw and shut the door.

Old Fulin sat down in his chair and said to Dudian: "I was

surprised to hear that you were taken by the magistrate's knights today."

Dudian pulled a chair and sat down: "They had to let go of me as they couldn't find evidence."

The old Fulin's eyes narrowed: "Didn't they investigate it properly or what? Aren't the spikes from Huey's murder not enough of evidence?"

Dudian looked at him with interest. "Do you mean the blood on spikes or the smell?"

Fulin's eyes retracted: "What do you mean?"

Dudian smiled: "Did you think that I used to kill deacon Huey with steel spikes because of revenge and retaliation?"

Old patriarch was startled:" Did not you?

Dudian smiled: "Today I'm not here to talk to you about this matter. I came to find you to talk about cooperation with you."

"Oh?" Old Fulin's eyes slightly opened.: "What kind of cooperation?

Dudian smiled. "You got to create a new consortium under Ryan family's banner."

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“Registering a new consortium?” Old Fulin was shocked as he shook his head.: “Its useless for us to act alone. Although we are eligible to apply to register a consortium but no one would like to join us.”

Dudian replied: “No you are misunderstanding. We don’t need other people to join! Only nobles and wealthy businessmen can apply to register a new consortium. Even if they are wealthy but the application process is too long and the procedures are too cumbersome for civilians. However, its totally different for aristocrats. Its enough to produce proof of identity to register a consortium. Later on we have to rent a separate underground passage from the Holy Church and clean out our own area. This is what I was talking to you before. Its my gift to you!”

Old patriarch slightly smiled: “I don’t know where you have inquired and learned about these things. But you don’t even imagine how much money we need to rent a separate underground passage. Even Mel and Burong family need to have a partnership and draw other aristocrats and wealthy businessmen to share the burden. It is impossible for the Ryan family to cover the rent on our own.”

“I have already told you that I will solve the money problem. That’s not a problem.” Dudian smiled: “You should apply for registration. After few days I will get you the sum of money need for rental. ”

“You?” Old patriarch was stunned. He suspiciously looked at

Dudian.: “Are you planning a robbery?”

Dudian smile, said: “Its not only by looting that you get that much money! ”

Old patriarch sighed: “Don’t make too much of a trouble. Our Ryan family is just a small boat. We can’t afford to toss you out!”

“There will be nothing but enlargement of ship’s size!” Dudian smiled.: “Have Burong family looked for you in the past few days?”

Old patriarch nodded slightly: “I have to credit you for their visit. Not long ago they had come over and I was drenched in their spittle.”

“Then moisturize your skin.”

“I wish! Mellon consortium has decided to kick out our Ryan family. Both Milan and Burong family have certain degree of power within the consortium so I believe that it won’t be long when the news about our dismissal will be out. ” Old Fulin sighed.

“That’s right,” said Dudian.

Old patriarch bitterly smiled: “If it was just about being kicked out, then I wouldn’t be worried much. But they will certainly think of secret ways and pull few strings to pressure our Ryan family. So I assume most of our resources will be de-evaluated in the next few weeks.”

Dudian shrugged: “Its not as if you were ruling over the giant wall. You won’t lose much.”

Old patriarch’s mouth twitched as he saw Dudian’s ‘I have nothing to do with his’ appearance.

“Now, whether you want or not, you are tied to me. We are on the same but and hopefully we will have good time together!” Dudian said an looked at sky through the window. “I’m going back.”

Old Fulin sighed. He suddenly thought of something and asked: “What will be the name of the consortium? Ryan consortium? ”

Dudian immediately answered: “It shall be called the New World consortium.”

“New World consortium … …” Old Fulin murmured.

…

Dudian left the Ryan castle to the hotel as old patriarch personally sent him off.

Hotel’s owner was alert as he saw Dudian. There was a faint trace of anxiety on his face. Apparently, because of the knights who had taken Dudian in the morning he remembered Dudian’s

appearance.

“It’s all right,” said Dudian to him and returned to his room. He said to Barton, “In the following days go to Ryan castle and tell them that you are my friends. They will give you accommodation there.”

“The castle life?” Trio were stunned.

Dudian smiled and said: “I hope that you can learn wisdom. The thing is our future will be very hard. We will be covered in wind and rain however if we are exposed to them we will be beyond redemption. In the near future, we will face more problems. You guys are my right hands. So I hope you will strengthen up!”

Barton and the other two looked at each other as the joy in their hearts faded away. Dudian’s hadn’t hidden deacon Huey’s assassination from them. They knew that Dudian had made a surprising move. They knew that they will have to overcome rough days but didn’t expect to fall into such a dangerous situation at the beginning of their journey.

In the past, their life was bitter but it was relatively comfortable. But now they are at the brink of destruction any given moment.

“I know.” Barton nodded softly.

Joseph and Kroen bowed their heads in silence.

Dudian was satisfied as he saw that trio was aware of the crisis. The wolves could be trained in dangerous environments. However, you could only teach a dog in the comfortable environment.

...

Dudian entrusted Barton and the other two to Ryan family and returned to the residential district alone. In the past few days, through Ryan family he had inquired about Jura and Gray's fate after his imprisonment. They had been expelled from commercial district and were sent back to their residential district house.

Fortunately, their residential district house has not been give to anyone else or they would be homeless.

Dudian's mind was full of concern as he sat in the carriage while it drove to Lynn street. He got of the carriage and walked to Jura couple's original house on foot. He saw that the house was clean. There were no leaves on grass. At the moment it was too early. There was Gray and Jura's smell floating from the house. But Jura's smell was more rich in comparison to Gray's. She should be at home.
In addition to Jura's smell, Dudian sensed an alien smell. It was mixed with Jura's smell.

He was startled. There was no one around so he gentle bypassed the outside fence and went into the house. Through the window's gap he saw the inside. It was familiar scene. Jura was sitting at the table wearing glasses. Next to hear a seven or eight years old boy was playing around. She was rubbing his head and it seemed that the kid was well-behaved.

Jura smiled. She would stop from time to time to stroke little boy's head.

Dudian was silent for some time as he felt touch of sorrow and grief in his heart. He slowly turned around as he stepped over the lawn and jumped over the fence to the street.

After strolling around aimlessly for a bit Dudian stopped. He had to go to the hidden alchemist lab.

Three years had gone by. The back alley was still as dark and dirty as before. There was fabric which camouflaged the entrance. However, Dudian sensed that there was no residue of activity coming from the lab. It seems they have transferred its location.

At this time a carriage passed behind him. The breeze blew the carriage's curtain and a faint fragrance floated out.

Dudian was startled as he turned around to look at the shadow who was sitting in the carriage.

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“Is it her?” Dudian recalled the smell floating from the carriage. A moment later, he departed along the direction the smell was coming off.

After an hour.

Dudian followed the smell left by the shadow from the carriage. He had come to a nearby town where the streets were more dirty and rats were roaming free in the dark alleys. There were few pedestrians checking out the shops.

Dudan traced the smell and came to the front of a huge manor. He saw the previous carriage parked in a corner streets by the manor. Moreover, there were seven or eight carriages that were parked by. He checked the exterior design of the carriage. Most of them were not made by professional companies but were privately build carriages. The fabrics used to cover them and the sizes of carriages varied.

Dudian stood by the corner and monitored the manor. The lawn in front of the manor was wel kept. There were four guards by the door. There were smells floating from the others sides which moved in a fixed route. They should be the guards who protected the manor from the other sides.

Dudian carefully check the smell: “It turned out to be her!” He went back to the town and strolled around until he found a tailor shop. He went into the shop: “Give me a set of robes. I need them

now!”

The tailor was a curly and beautiful woman. She warmly invited Dudian to the shop: “Please sit while I make it. The robes are very convenient and couldn’t be finished immediately.”

Dudian nodded.

He was looking around the store when he felt a touch of smell. He looked towards the direction where the smell was hailing from. It was a very subtly smell that was emitted from behind the main wall. Moreover, same smell happened to be emitted from woman’s body.

The woman turned around and asked: “What color do you prefer?”

Dudian’s eyes twitched: “Black.”

“Good!” Woman turned and picked out black fabric. She used scissors to cut it according to Dudian’s size. As there was not electricity or industrial revolution has not happened the seweing machine naturally wasn’t invented yet.

Dudian was quietly observing the woman. He found that her nails were colored pink. There were some residues in the crevice of her nails. Although there was a distance of few meters between them but his eyesight was good enough for him to detect dregs of meat pieces in those crevices.

“A murderer? Or an alchemist from life faction?” Dudian was shocked as he would never expect to encounter such a situation in the tailor shop. As he thought about the number of carriages parked behind the manor he faintly felt that he had entered a town which was an alchemist stronghold.

The woman did a good job with the black robe. She handed it to Dudian: “Please put it on so we can check how it fits.”

Dudian didn’t wear as he just looked at it: “How much?” He paid the money, picked the robe and left the shop. As for the mask, although the shop had masks but he didn’t want to purchase it from the same shop. If the other side was alchemist the she would have guessed his identity. He didn’t want to anyone know about his real face.

Dudian went to the other shops in the town as he bought ink, quills, pens, plush dolls, masks, flowers and other objects.

Later on he rented a room in a small hotel. He threw aside the plush doll as he dipped the pen in the ink. He depicted the alchemy tattoo on his chest. Moments later the tattoo was again branded. Moreover, he crushed flowers and took out their juice. He mixed them with coal as he once more went over the tattoo. As he finished with the current issue, he took one of the masks and a robe as he left the hotel.

Dudian went to the corner to change wear black robe and white mask as there was no one around. Afterwards he went to enter the

manor from the main entrance.

“Who are you?!”.The guards stopped Dudian as they noticed him.

Dudian replied.: “Step aside.”

The guards looked at the man with the white cat mask. They glanced at each other after they heard his commanding tone. One of them asked: “Do you have an invitation?”

Dudian’s brows wrinkled. However he replied instantly.: “I did not bring.”

“No invitation?” The guards were alerted, “Please leave. This is a private property. You aren’t allowed to enter if you don’t have an invitation!”

“I came over with a friend. I would like to bother you to inform her that I have come. She should be inside. She is called Nightingale. She had an invitation and she could prove my identity.”

As if they were one, all the guards shook their heads. One of them replied: “We are guards not messengers.”

Dudian lightly shouted in a cold tone: “If I’m delayed into today’s event you won’t be able to shoulder this responsibility!”

The guard sneered: “Stop speaking nonsense. It is a private party held by house owner only open to friends. There is no big event happening. You are quite the talkative one! Don’t force us to use strength to make you leave!”

Dudian didn’t think that the guard will be difficult to handle: “Ohh. How many stars the house owner has so that even the guards don’t give face to guests?” He spoke in an angry tone.

The guards were perplexed. The previous man looked carefully at Dudian: “You said you are looking for Nightingale, right? I’m going to check if there is someone called Nightingale in the house. If not, you are going to get it!”

Dudian said: “Tell her that its an old friend from three years ago called Dog.”

“Dog?” The guards eased a bit as they heard Dudian’s nickname. They were aware that most of the guests used nickname. The previous guard turned and entered the manor.

In about ten minutes the guard returned. His attitude had become polite as he modestly said: “Please wait. She shall be here soon.”

Dudian quietly waited.

The manor’s door was opened. A tall figure wearing skirt came out. She was wearing an owl mask. She was dressed brightly. If a

normal person checked her dressing, they would think that she was attending an masked party.

Nightingale came to the door. She looked at the person wearing a white cat mask: “Are you dog?”

Dudian heard her voice. Although it had slightly changed in comparison to three years ago but it had become more clean and mature. However, it was still that familiar sound. He knew that his nose wasn’t mistaken: “Mouse, Snake, Nightingale, Hound!” He consecutively named the code-names.

Nightingale pondered for a moment: “Let me look at your tattoo!”

Dudian nodded.

The guard opened the door as they entered the manor. Dudian lifted the black robe and revealed the black cross tattoo on his chest.

Nightingale was relieved: “I didn’t expect to see you after so long. How did you find me?”

The guards were relieved as they saw Dudian’s identity was confirmed.

“I’ve been in this little town for sometime. I saw you today! ” replied Dudian.

The bright eyes behind the owl mask looked at Dudian with interest.: “Its been three years and you could recognize me so easily. How are you going to explain that?”

Dudian heard the ridicule in her tone. He brainstormed quickly and scratched his head as he anwered: “Well! Actually, I heard from a friend that you are going to be here. I wasn’t sure the nightingale he had mentioned was you so I took the risk to test out. It happened that it was really you.”

Nightingale said in interested tone: “Friend? Which friend? Tell me, maybe I will recognize him.”

Dudian slightly smiled: “For fear of provoking trouble my friend doesn’t want other to know his name. So I hope you can forgive me.”

Nightingale glanced at him as she smiled and said: “Anyway, I’m convinced about your identity. Moreover, no knight of light would be stupid enough to come to this town for an investigation. Let’s go, I have lots of questions to you.”

Chapter 171

Dudian nodded. They were walking through the corridor when he asked: “ Is this the new alchemy lab?”

“Kind of” replied Nightingale with a vague answer. She suddenly remember something as she asked. “I almost forgot to ask you. Are you still an apprentice? Or, Have you joined the dark church and became an official alchemist?”

Dudian truthfully answered: “An apprentice.”

Nightingale hesitated as she said “Oh.” She changed the subject: “Anyway, its almost four years that we haven’t seen each other. You just left like that. Did you go through trouble?”

Dudian nodded, “A little bit. But everything is behind.”

Nightingale smiled: “That’s good. Do you have your own alchemy lab now?”

Dudian’s eyes flash: “There is one. What about it?”

“Nothing. If you have time I’ll take you to meet Mouse. He comes to this little town too, not far from here. If you need him you can join their circle too.” Nightingale smiled.

Dudian was perplexed: “Isn’t Mouse with you?”

Nightingale shook her head. At this time, two people came face to face with them. Nightingale recognized and nodded at them.

“Come with me but try to keep quiet. There are lots of great people in here.” Nightingale whispered to Dudian as they closed passed by another door.

They had entered a large dark hall. There were no oil lamps on the walls but instead diamond-shaped crystals. It is said that these are taken from a special monster. They grow in that monsters body and crystallize there. It is high value monster that is target of hunters.

There was a huge painting on top of the wall they were facing. Nightingale and Dudian walked towards it. There were four attendants under the painting waiting for them. One of the attendants asked: “Who is he?”

“My assistant,” Nightingale replied.

The attendant looked at Dudian but didn’t say anything. He turned towards the wall and pressed onto it. A slight sound echoed out as the wall slowly cracked open and revealed a dark passage.

Nightingale head in but attendant stopped Dudian.: “We have to eliminate your smell. Please close you eyes.”

Dudian looked at nightingale and slowly closed his eyes.

A powder was spilled onto him. It had strong smell as the earth soil which covered his body odor.

“Go in.” The attendant’s voice sounded.

Dudian opened his eyes and saw that the nightingale was waiting in front. He followed up.

After he entered the dark passage the secret door slowly closed and the wall’s previous appearance was restored.

The passage was dimly lit but Dudian was able to clearly see. He followed after Nightingale who was walking along the curving passage. It got brighter and brighter as they moved. They came out to a huge square surrounded by big rock walls. At the top there was a dome. In front of them there was a building. It was designed with the same grandeur as the magistrate. However they had this ‘dark’ touch and atmosphere radiating off.

“It is a division of dark church.” Nightingale whispered.

Dudian was shocked at the sight. He didn’t expect that the seemingly ordinary manor would be the entrance to the passage through the underground caves that would lead to such a structure. This kind of a project was beyond his imagination.

“Nightingale.”

A clear voice echoed out.

Nightingale and Dudian turned around and saw two figures in the square. From their hair and figures it could be understood that one was man while the other was woman. The man was wearing gold robes and had a dog engraved on his mask. The woman was wearing dark red robe. Roses were depicted on her mask and robe. Her eyes and cheeks were covered while her lower face and lips were exposed. She looked very eye-catching.

“Gold, Rose.” Nightingale laughed as she saw the two figures.

Both of them came close to them. They looked at Dudian. The man wearing the golden robe smiled: “A new friend? How come you haven’t introduced us?”

Nightingale seemed to be a bit troubled: “He’s a friend from long time ago. He is called Hound.”

“Hound?” The woman wearing a rose mask glanced at the golden robed man.: “Everyone is nicknamed after their studies. So it’s a bit hard to get what he is researching. Is he also majoring in metal research as you are? ”

Nightingale turned to Dudian: “I remember that you were researching metals too, right?”

Dudian nodded: “A bit of everything. However, I don’t have a major direction. ”

“What are you researching?” Gold looked at Dudian: “The knowledge of alchemy world is vast and profound. Even if we had hundred lives we wouldn’t necessarily have great success. Too much of miscellaneous information, so you have to master a direction.”

Rose asked: “How many stars?”

Dudian shook his head: “I’m still an apprentice and in probationary stage.”

“Apprentice?” Gold and Rose were surprised. They turned towards nightingale: “Is he still an apprentice?”

Nightingale looked around and whispered: “Do not be so loud.”

Rose couldn’t help but said: “Why have you brought an apprentice to here? The rules can’t be so easily broken even its your friend. Only the official alchemists come here! Quickly get him out!”

Nightingale whispered: “Stop panicking. He is here as my assistant!”

Gold smiled: “If he is just an apprentice you should have let him wait outside.”

Nightingale looked at Dudian and later turned back and professionally changed the topic: “Did you come here today to submit a report?”

“Yes.” Gold patted the box in his hand: “This experiment has prospect. I hope I will be able to pass!”

“Me too.” Rose sighed: “I hope the direction of my research was right. I just need 12 points to get a star medal!”

Gold looked at Nightingale: “The alloy method that you had come up with had inspired me a lot. Did you have any new progress?”

Nightingale nodded: “It’s a bit fruitful.”

“Then go with it.” Rose urged.

The Nightingale hesitated and looked at Dudian. “Will you wait here for us?”

“If I want to get an official alchemist status I gotta submit a research to the holy church? Am I right?”

Chapter 172

“The thing is even if you don’t have a complete result as long as you can propose a reasonable framework you should be able to pass and get points. It should be enough to get a certificate. After all, apprentice alchemist have limited knowledge. Opening up a new direction or coming up with a new theory is very difficult. As long as an innovative idea or creative conjecture is brought forward you will be able to pass through and get points.” Nightingale explained.

Dudian nodded as he analyzed Nightingale’s words. Actually, this system wasn’t taking into account limited knowledge of the apprentices. The dark church was running behind the shadows. Their consumption was more than the Holy Church. Only by relaxing the requirements they could gain more followers.

Rose looked at Dudian: “However, a complete process and relative integrity of the formula is must. Because with just little ‘creative’ idea you can’t do much. ”

“Yes,” Gold nodded confirmation.

Dudian thought for a moment and said to the Nightingale: “I happen to have a proposal and would like to take this opportunity to apply so that dark church can evaluate it.”

“Oh?” Nightingale was somewhere surprised. There was a smile on her face as she said: “It seems you haven’t given up the pursuit of alchemy in the past few years. I wish you success!”

Rose and Gold were a bit hesitant but held back and didn't say anything. After all if they continued to question him it would be rude towards the Nightingale as the Hound was her friend."

All of them passed through the square and went into a hall.

There were two magnificent stone carvings in front of the hall. They were similar to the sculptures you would find in front of the cathedrals of Holy Church. They were four-winged angel sculptures. One of male while the second was female. They had handsome faces and their hands were around their chests. They were looking at sky as if praying to God. The only difference of this angels from the Holy Church's depiction was that these ones had a little less compassion and a bit evil charm. The color of sculptures were black. Moreover there were chains wrapped around them.

Dudian knew from Rosyard's notes that these were the purgatory angels of the dark church.
They walked over the stairs between the ten meter tall angel sculptures.

The hall was very spacious. There was a huge sign on the left. Dudian glanced to see that under the sign there were written variate of alchemy materials, information about potions. Moreover, recruitment information to alchemy groups and so on.

Nightingale stopped and turned to Dudian: "You are an apprentice so you can't personally submit your research to dark church. You gotta find your master or another official member to help you to submit."

Dudian knew that the alchemist who were with him had their own masters. Most of them would train, learn and experiment under the mentorship of the master until they get their own official status within the dark church.

“Can you help me to submit it?” Dudian asked Nightingale.

Nightingale smiled. “Can you trust me?”

“You are an old friend. Trusting you isn’t an issue.” Dudian knew that if she was an average person then he wouldn’t trust. But alchemists wouldn’t try to take credit for someone else research. Even the mentors wouldn’t do that to their students. As it will be found out one day or another.

Nightingale smile.: “Alright, give it to me.” Her white delicate hand was taken out form the black gown and lifted towards Dudian.

Dudian knew that she belonged to a wealthy family as her small hands belonged to someone with a pampered identity. There were not slightest sign of a heavy work in her palm.

“Do you have paper and pencil?” asked Dudian.

Nightingale, Rose and Gold were surprised. Nightingale recovered her hand: “Do you want to write it down now?”

Dudian coughed: “It is all in my mind. Don’t worry you will not be delayed for too long.”

“Is it?” Nightingale doubtfully looked at Dudian. She hasn’t seen anyone who would be coming to submit their research not prepared in advance. Like her, everyone would write it down, revise, change and check for several times to confirm that there were no typos or omissions before daring to submit the research.

Rose suspiciously asked: “Are you really ready for submission? You are not doing it specifically for entering, right?”

Nightingale asked Dudian.: “Can you really write it down in short time?”

Dudian nodded to confirm.

“Okay,” said Nightingale, “We will go ahead and submit our research while you write it down and submit afterwards.”

Rose and Gold were silent. They wouldn’t be ashamed so there was no need to offend nightingale.

Dudian and the others came to stay in a line towards the counter. There were lots of potioning and alchemy materials next to the counter. Every time someone came out form the door by the counter, the next in line would go in. It was clear that the test was happening inside.

“Nightingale, do you see ‘zircon’? My God!” Gold saw the material near the counter and whispered in surprise.

Nightingale looked past: “It is indeed expensive. Even if I buy it my poor refining platform wouldn’t be able to melt it.”

Dudian looked at the rare metal ore called zircon. It was as big as fist and in silver-gray color. The price was twelve gold coins. It was almost equal to most family’s yearly income.

“Zirconium …” Dudian’s eyes flashed. This material had a high resistance towards corrosion. If he could add it to his hunter armor then the quality would rise by several times. If he would encounter a monster whose spit would corrode the armor, then it could resist for an attack or two.

Suddenly, Rose pointed towards a tall and handsome figure who was standing in queue. The man’s gown was different from the others. IT was made out of fine fabric. The robe was decorated with golden patterns. He was very eye-catching as he stood in the crowd.

Nightingale looked towards the direction Rose had pointed. There was a trace of fear as she said: “Is he an alchemist from that forbidden family?”

Chapter 173

“Forbidden alchemist family?” Dudian was surprised. He looked past at the young man. He saw that on his shoulder there was a badge. A mushroom explosion pattern was engraved on the badge.

Gold opened his mouth and spoke in a low tone: “Geez! Inferno family member. We are lucky to see one. They are really extraordinary. Look at their dresses, even that is totally different from our. By the way, I have heard that there is a powerful force which shelters their family and backs them up from the shadows.”

“Naturally, we can’t be compared to their family. Their legacy is out of this world.” Rose’s eyes were full of envy and glory as she looked at the person.
Nightingale whispered: “I would love to see Inferno family’s original inflammation research thesis!”

Dudian heard their chat and was curious: “What is their research?” He hasn’t read anything about this family on Rosyard’s alchemy notes. Does a three-star alchemist had no way to contact them?

Nightingale lowered her voice and answered to Dudian. “It is literally forbidden. I mean they are forbidden to use alchemy. Historically, there are many great alchemists who had come up with experiments which ended in unimaginable power. The legend is that there were some which could boil a lake while the others could blow off ground or turn the land into desert. These alchemy research thesis, due to their excessive mass destruction capabilities, have been forbidden by the dark church. So the

research papers wouldn't be available at all."

Dudian was startled.

Make lake boil? Is it about usage of sodium and calcium oxide?

Turn a normal land into desert?

The last part was no news to him. He had heard that Ryan family had once provoked such an alchemist. As a result the family's fiefdom was burned down and turned into desert. Since then Ryan family was on decline.

"The founder of the family had come up with a method called 'Inferno burst'. It is said that the method could raze a small town into ground as a result of big explosion." Gold whispered.: "That's why it is banned by the dark church. If a person comes into contact with their research results, no matter what you do but you will explode. Every time I think that such a great result could be achieved, I do nothing but concentrate on my research!"

"Me too," Rose said as she nodded in approval.

Nightingale said: "You will be awarded with a lifetime medal as long as you can come up with a research reserved for a bad by the dark church. You could even participate in the discussions held by the parliament of the dark church. It is something out of our reach thou. Moreover, the dark church would restrict the usage of the thesis but would compensate through other aspects. The Inferno

family has come up with their ‘Inferno burst’ about two hundred years ago but they still exists as the dark church helping them out too… ”

The trio looked at the youth from Inferno family with full of longing.

Dudian thought about the explosion pattern engraved on youth’s badge. Later on he thought of trio’s words and after a bit of speculation in his mind Dudian asked: “Is it possible to glance at the research?”

Nightingale shook his head: “Its been sealed by the dark church. It will never be leaked. Even the family members are forbidden from the research information. If they somehow leak the information that’s passed down by the ancestors they will be subject of strict penalties!”

Dudian nodded: “What if unexpectedly someone else comes up with the same research? ”

“This is easy.” Gold replied: “Throughout the history there have been several such things. Dark church will repeated investigate the person who has invented the method. They will make sure that it is not result of plagiarism caused by the leakage. If they are sure that the method is original to the inventor they will give him alchemy points as incentive but no other medal.”

Dudian nodded slightly, did not say anything.

The queue in front of them gradually decreased. Soon it was their turn to go in. The person who came out from the door sighed as it seems his theory was dejected.

The youth from the Inferno family came out from the room and left. Trio's eyes were on him and watched him until he left the hall.

After few people it was finally their turn.

"Go in." A man wearing a white mask who stood by the counter said in an indifferent tone.

Four of them went through the door.

The room was dark but looked like an old office. There were three or four desks. Several people wearing the same masks were sitting by the desks going through some information. A slim figure wearing black silk skirt which was sitting behind the desk close to the door looked at them.

"All of you sit down. Who will be the first?" The sound echoed out from the masked person.

Nightingale and the other looked at each other. Rose said: "I'll be first". She took out folder from under her robe and respectfully handed to the woman.

The ghost mask wearing woman opened up the folder and quietly

checked the research.

Nightingale pulled Dudian and pointed to an empty table. She leaned over and whispered: “Write over here.”

Dudian’s body instinctively slightly bent backwards as he felt her breath. He nodded and took the pen from her hand. He began to write down his own ‘research’.

“The use of multi-layered network to filter the water has been used before. The key is to filter through the equipment that you have come up with. But there is no innovation. Charcoal and cotton have been in use for long time. There is nothing new. I think you should check out last ten years of research.” After few minutes the woman checking Rose’s folder looked up and spoke in cold tone.

Rose was stunned as she took the folder with her research data and head back in loss.

Gold patted her shoulder to show encouragement. He handed out his folder.: “It is my research.”

The woman checked out the information and shook her head: “The extraction of glue from plants. Although the formule seems feasible from your point of view but it is wrong. There is lack of information regarding temperature contrast. The decomposition process is not explained in your theory and the formula is flawed! There is no creativity. Its not fresh idea.” Then she gave back to the folder.

Gold picked it up in embarrassment.

The woman saw Dudian lying on the table writing down something through the gap as the trio weren't standing close to each other: "Why are you doing temporary change right now?"

Chapter 174

Although Dudian knew the basic alchemy symbols but after three years term of prison life he had forgotten a lot. He remembered some of the fuzzily.

The woman wearing the ghost mask saw that Dudian was in a daydreaming state and wasn't responding so she looked at Nightingale.: "Be quick, stop delaying time."

Nightingale handed out her alchemy notes.

The woman took the folder and quickly swept through the information.

"Manganese and ferroalloy?" The woman slightly raised her brows. Her eyes swept through the material as she pondered for a while. She nodded: "Yes, its reasonable..."

Nightingale's eyes lit up as her heart was full of surprise and excitement.

Gold and Rose were envious as they said: "Congrats!"

The woman put the folder away and said: "Show your alchemist medal."

Nightingale was in joy. She took out a triangle medal in elliptic

shape which was hidden under her robe. She gave it to the woman. The word ‘Nightingale’ was engraved on the medal.

The woman turned over and checked the name on the medal.: “According to the research you will get 10 alchemy points. Do you have any problem with my evaluation?”

“None.” Replied Nightingale as she shook her head.

“Take this entry to the inventory.” The woman waved to a purple robed figure. The figure took Nightingale’s folder and her identity information.

“Hey! We can’t wait for you for eternity!” The woman looked at Dudian who was writing down the information on paper.

Dudian stopped and gently blew the ink on both sheets. He turned away from the table and walked towards Nightingale. He handed out two papers to the woman.: “Sorry for the wait.”

Her eyebrows wrinkled: “Two pages?” She picked up both pages from the table and stared at them: “The ink hasn’t dried yet. Did you write them down just now?”

“I’m sorry, he is my assistant and just am apprentice,” said Nightingale who was standing next to Dudian.” He had forgotten to bring the documents.”

The woman wearing the ghost mask listened to her but didn’t

reply. Instead she checked the paper.

The woman quickly swept through the first piece of paper and glanced at Dudian. She checked the second paper which still had the wet ink. The alchemy formula was very small.: “Sulfur, fluoride, and fire?”

She slowly swept down.

Although the woman was wearing the ugly ghost mask but Nightingale, Gold and Rose felt her short pause.

Dudian stared at her tightly.

After a short silence the woman slowly looked up at Dudian.: “Both of your papers are related to the flames. Do you know people from the Inferno family?”

Dudian’s eyes lit up as he shook his head: “No, I don’t.”

“Really?” The woman’s eyes narrows as she recovered her eyes and looked at the papers: “The first paper is about ignition analysis and the melting points of materials. It is enough to get official alchemist qualifications. The second paper is more special. It will be under temporary retention until the confirmation. We will give the results later on.”

Dudian nodded in understanding.

“More special?” Nightingale, Gold and Rose were impressed with woman’s evaluation. They were startled and surprised to see Dudian to get an evaluation which was marked as ‘special’. No matter what kind of results would be deducted form the experiments the value of the second paper won’t be small. Even later they speculate that the theory is wrong but it could inspire many others.

“It is your first time so you have to submit your own fingerprints, age and nickname to symbolize your identification within the dark church.” Woman pulled out a form from the drawer and looked at Dudian.: “Fingerprints are unique to each individual. We have professionals who can distinguish each person’s fingerprints. So once you are registered your identity couldn’t be hidden and no one could pose as you. I hope you treat this information with caution.”

Dudian replied with an “Oh”. He knew that there was no eye recognition or dna identification. So to avoid the situation when someone killed an alchemist and impersonated him they must be using the fingerprint identification.

“I can give you few tips regarding the code name. Black bat, beak and so on.” The woman held pen and looked at Dudian.

Nightingale to Dudian: “The hound sounds good to ears but it is a very common code name. It should have been taken already.”

Dudian nodded in understanding. He looked at the woman

wearing the ghost mask. He thought that he had to choose an alchemist identity. I meant that he was going to be part of the dark forces. According to Holy Church he would be reduced to be a devil. Once his identity was exposed it would be like night meeting the sun. He would be instantly purified.

It was a road of no return.

But he has already chosen this road. Even if there was another choice he would not retire from this path.

“After all a hound is a dog.” whispered Dodian, “Since this is the path of darkness then the nickname should be something which is appropriate. I chose ‘The Devil’.”

The woman and Nightingale were stunned. “The Devil?”

“Has it been chosen by someone else?” asked Dudian.

The woman couldn’t help buy said: “Aren’t you afraid of claiming to be the devil? ”

Dudian smiled: “Why would I bother to do these shady things if I have determination to become the devil?”

“Oh!” The woman exclaimed: “It seems you are looking down upon the identity of others. Your tone gives that vibe. Did you join the dark church because of darkness it represents?”

Dudian quietly looked at her, said: “Knights honor their codex, the nobility take pride in their rituals, the businessmen take pride in their wealth, the Holy Church honor the divinity and I take pride in my path!”

“Your path?” The woman snorted as she saw Dudian reply so.

Nightingale, Gold, and Rose were relieved as they feared that Dudian would say something wrong.

However, no-one realized that by using the word ‘path’ Dudian was not referring to the identity of the dark church but his own self.

“I wrote down your identity. It will take about three days to clearly investigate if the code name was registered by someone else. If it is not, then it will be engraved on your medal.” Then she asked Dudian’s age and saved the fingerprints from all of his ten fingers.

Chapter 175

“You should come back after three days.” The woman told to trio.

They left the room. Nightingale looked at Dudian. Her eyes were shining brightly as the light flashing could be seen behind the owl mask: “Congratulations. You were able to become an official alchemist from the first try.”

“Congratulations.” Gold said.

Rose blinked her eyes as she curiously asked: “What have you submitted that she called it ‘special’?”

Dudian smiled and replied: “It was an ordinary subject.”

Rose didn’t ask for more as she saw Dudian avoiding to directly answer.

Nightingale said to Dudian: “I should take you to meet Mouse. Maybe his laziness will be cured if he knows that you have become an official alchemist.”

Dudian thought for a moment and shook his head: “No, I’m sorry but I have other things to do. Maybe another day.”

“Alright.” Nightingale nodded.

Nightingale and the other didn’t immediately leave the place. They walked around the square to check the shops. Occasionally, they would see rare materials that would be hard to get somewhere else.

Dudian accompanied them while they visited the shops. He noted that dark church wasn’t only about alchemists only. There was another profession which was very popular. Magic potioners.

If alchemists were equivalent to the scientists of the old era then potioners were the group that developed variate of toxins and potions for the personal interests. In a sense they were as crazy as alchemists from life faction. In history of giant wall of the Silva there have been quite a few mad potioners who had gone to kill noble families, erased whole towns and went for terrible destruction.

According to Rosyard’s alchemy notes Holy Church tried to not to offend magic potioners as their methods were more ruthless and nontraditional. You wouldn’t know that you have been poisoned unless you would feel extreme pain at doorsteps of death.

“Potioners … … Toxins could play a great role as a weapon if used outside the giant wall to hunt the monsters.” Dudian secretly thought in his mind.

After some time, he left the cove with the others.

“Would you like me to take you back?” Nightingale asked Dudian

as they came out of the manor.

Dudian shook his head.: “Thanks, I’m good.”

Nightingale nodded. In fact, she asked out of politeness. In reality, she has never been in the compartment of the carriage alone with anyone but her close relatives and family members.

Gold and Rose went to their carriages and departed.

Dudian came to a dark corner of the town. He confirmed that he hasn’t been followed and there was no one in the surroundings. He took off his mask and put away the robe. He quietly left the town.

...

In a secret hall.

At the dark office a person was sitting by the table. He was busy going through the documents on the desk. He suddenly heard the vibration sound coming off the metal pipe close to the desk. He turned around and saw a snake covered in black scales slowly coming out of the metal pipe.

The figure slowly stretched out his hand and touched snake’s head.

Black snake slowly opened its mouth. There was a black reel in

between its fangs.

The person took out the reel and took out the message from it. He rolled out the paper and read the letter. He murmured.: “ ‘Inferno burst’? Almost the same method?” He knew that recently there were many alchemists who were closely connected to nobility.

He pondered for a while and wrote a letter. He put it into the reel and put back into black snake’s mouth.

Black snake swallowed the reel and wriggled its body. It retracted its body back to the metal pipe.

...

Mount Er. Burong family.

Two people were sitting around a table in a spacious room. There were lots of documents on the table.

“According to our investigation, the murderer is likely to be his friend.” A judge wearing golden robe gently tapped onto the paper.: “We should focus on this information.”

A pretty, slim figure was sitting across the table. She was wearing a pale green skirt. Her eyes were focused on plants that were growing up on pots next to the window. She recovered the instant she heard judge’s words. She glanced back at him and suddenly

asked.: “Teacher, is our family in trouble?”

Judge Jason was surprised. She looked at alluring and pretty girl.: “Why do you think so?”

“Recently, my father deliberately hasn’t let me go out of the castle. He has recited that there is trouble lurking outside. It seems that someone wrong has happened and my father doesn’t want me to know about it.” Girl looked up at him.: “Can you tell me what’s happening?”

Judge Jason looked at her bright eyes.: “Your family is an old aristocratic lineage controlling huge industries. How could something affect your family? But recently there have been some alchemists running wild. So most probably your father is worried that something may happen to you if you go outside.”

“Is it all?” The girl stared at him.

Judge Jason put down the document onto the table: “We had found some clues today. Surely, you are tired too. I’ll go to send someone to investigate.” Having said that he left the room.

Her room was big enough to be called a hall. She sat quietly for a while then felt tired. She got up and went towards the window. Looking at fruit trees and flowers relieved her mood. Suddenly, she saw a carriage coming down. A dark red distinctive flag was stuck on top of the carriage.

Her eyes brightened as she quickly went down.

The carriage came to courtyard and stopped. A tall, white-skinned, dark red haired girl with slender body got off the carriage. At the same time she saw the green skirted girl to ran out from the castle. She was surprised. : “Jenny!”

Jenny looked happy: “Sarah, thanks for visiting me! ”

“I knew that you will be suffocated by being alone so I came to play with you.” Sarah Mel laughed.

“Good, let’s go in.” Jenny grabbed her hand and led her into her room.

The sun was setting down.

Sarah Mel was holding to one of Jenny’s plush dolls as she was standing by the window and looking at sky.: “It’s getting late, I should head back.”

Jenny said: “Why don’t you stay at my house tonight?”

Sarah gently shook her head. “I gotta go today. Tomorrow there is a party I have to attend. Ah, yes, I’m here to tell you good news.”

“Good news?” Jenny was surprised.

Sarah Mel chuckled: “You know, the poet hunter from before. Recently he was released on bail. Tomorrow, I may meet him at the party.”

“Hunter …” Jenny was startled and looked at her. “Y-You, you’re talking about Dean?”

Sarah shrugged her shoulders: “I don’t remember his name but I know that he was released on bail. I think he is going to face a lot of trouble as the noble who got him bailed out also wants to set up a consortium.”

Jenny was startled: “My father said that he couldn’t be released on bail because of what he had committed.”

“What? Come on, it was just a theft. It’s very easy for us to bail him out. Especially families such as mine or yours.”

Jenny bowed her head. “Yes, but jail time was fair to him. He was a trainee in magistrate so he could understand that he had to go to prison for theft.”

Chapter 176

“What is fair? What is unfair?” Sarah poked Jenny’s forehead: “You! Ah! You are just too honest. As my father says, there is nothing in this world that can’t be exchanged for money and power. Well, besides great artists.”

Jenny sighed and shook her head slowly. Although Sarah was her playmate since childhood and she had a lot of fun with her but their beliefs didn’t cross at some issues.

“I will head back.” Sarah Mel didn’t continue to talk but just waved.

Jenny nodded but she suddenly said: “You said you might see him? That… Can you help me to give him a letter?”

Sarah raised her hands and pulled Jenny’s cheeks as she laughed: “This lady won’t act as a messenger. If you want to say something then go on and say to him. Aren’t you brave enough?”

She blinked her eyes, turned and left.

…

Yard town, Ryan castle.

A carriage went into the castle. Dudian got off the carriage and

followed a servant as he led him into the castle.

It was dusk so the chef was preparing the dinner at Ryan castle.

Although the Ryan family was on decline but they still held and maintained the etiquette. The servants were standing respectfully on both sides of the table. Old Fulin's children and grandchildren had come over in advance. Most of them were chatting with each other.

Hugh was talking to his sister when he saw Dudian come in. He quickly got up and greeted: "Hello, Mr Dean."

Dudian simply shook his hand.: "Hi. How are you?"

Hugh laughed and said: "I'm alright. Mr Dean should be hungry too. Would you like to eat together with us?"

Dudian did not decline.: "I would love to. Please tell them to add pair of chopsticks. "

"Chopsticks?" Hugh was stunned but didn't ask what they were.

Dudian touched his nose as he saw Hugh's suspicious reaction. He knew that he didn't get what he meant. Old patriarch was in the second floor and had yet to come to join them. Barton, Kroen and Joseph were also waiting in the dining room as they saw in the corner. Nobody cared about their existence.

They immediately got up to meet with Dudian as they saw him enter the dining room.

Dudian smiled and nodded to the three.

At this time, a white bearded middle-aged man asked Hugh: “Who is that?”

Hugh quickly introduced: “This is the hunter hired by grandfather.”

Middle-aged man was surprised but soon his mouth curled into a smile. He shook hands with Dudian. “Hello. I’m Fulin’s second son, Jake.”

Dudian gently shook his hand: “Hello.”

Other people sitting in the dining room also approached to greet Dudian.

“Mr. Dean is so young. Which consortium did you work formerly?” Jake asked.

“The Mellon Foundation.”

“Recently, my father founded a new consortium alone. IT’s called New World consortium. It is gratifying to see that he was

able to win over such a young and promising hunter."

Dudian smiled. Although there was a smile on his face but he knew that most of these children and grandchildren were against such a move. Fortunately, old patriarch was able to keep them in place while going through the procedures.

After a while, Old Fulin came to the dining room. He saw Dudian and greeted him.: "Mr Dean you have joined us early."

"Early birds eat the worms." Dudian got up and smiled.

Old Fulin waved his hand to indicate the family members to sit down. The middle-aged maid helped him to get to his seat.: "Mr Dean, you should sit next to me."

Jake and the others were surprised by Old Fulin's words. They didn't think that old patriarch would value Dudian so high.

Dudian nodded and moved past to sit besides old Fulin.

The original position belonged to Jake and his face was stifled but he still squeezed out a smile and moved to another place.

Old Fulin order the meals to be brought up.

Middle-aged maid nodded and turned towards another maid and whispered something.

After a short while, the servants carried the dishes to the table.

Old Patriarch laughed as he looked over at Dudian: “If I knew Mr Dean would come I would have ordered some good dishes to be prepared. Sorry for such a shabby dinner.”

“Save for a rainy day.” Dudian smiled back.

Old Fulin wiped his mouth with a towel as he finished eating.: “Mr. Dean, Ryan family has set up a new consortium. Tomorrow we are going to have a grand opening ceremony. Mano of our old acquaintances will come over to congratulate us. At the moment, you are the only hunter belonging to our consortium. I hope you will be attending the party.”

Dudian nodded: “No problem.”

“Grandpa, can I attend too?” Hugh who was at the end of the table shouted out.

Old Fulin looked at him: ” You are not ready for such a party yet. After you get your honorary certificate of knight you will be considered good enough.”

Hugh’s livid face turned ugly.

After dinner old patriarch asked Dudian to go to his room to

discuss things in private.

"Most of the attendees would be from the declining aristocracy." Old Fulin said to Dudian as the middle-aged maid left the room.: "They will come because of the courtesy. Some will check the situation of our consortium and may want to join in to rake some benefits. In any case, it is going to be our consortium's first appearance so I hope to have a good impression."

Dudian nodded, said: "It's not just them, the eyes of all the noble families will be focused on the gathering."

"Yes." Old patriarch nodded. He felt that he hadn't made the wrong decision by choosing Dudian.: "There are many noble families who are on decline. Even if they gather together to show some muscle within the consortium they belong they wouldn't amount to anything. After all, they are in a mess and too fragmented."

"Moreover, application fee for a consortium isn't low. As a result, our Ryan family is in desperate situation. Other families will investigate clearly. Anyway, whatever is going to happen will happen. Now, I intend to declare you as an intermediate hunter so we can improve the foundation of our consortium."

Dudian pondered a little, nodded: "Alright."

"We are likely to be suppressed by the Mellon Consortium in the future." Old patriarch sighed. "I hope we will be able to stop all the attacks however cunning and hard they will be."

Dudian smiled.: “After we get enough funds to rent an underground passage to outside nobody will be able to stop our enlargement.”

Old patriarch smiled. He didn’t knew where Dudian get so much self-confidence. In a sense, he didn’t want to refute him too. So he prayed a lot.

“Is there any alchemist support behind big aristocrats?” Dudian suddenly asked.

Old Fulin froze up for a moment but answered.: “Yes, an alchemist master can create wealth much more faster and bigger than hunters.”

Dudian nodded. He had seen in the square of the dark church’s division a lot of rare and expensive materials. It would be very difficult to buy them alone so most probably some alchemist relied on noble families for financial support.

Chapter 177

Old patriarch looked at Dudian.: “It seems you are not surprised.”

Dudian smiled: “Why should I be?”

“Alchemists are evil and belong to darkness. The aristocracy can accept a knight allegiance. But exchanging with an evil force... Aren’t you surprised?” Old patriarch looked at him.

Dudian faintly smiled: “Everyone has a dark side to them. Not to mention the nobles even the Pope has a shady secret. So there is nothing to be surprised of. The worlds resources are limit so without dirty means accumulating wealth would be very very difficult. If you are going to be on the light side and act like a good person then too bad for you but naturally your possessions will be taken one by one.”

Old Fulin looked at him silently: “Did you learn all of it in jail?”

“This is a very simple rule that we all know. There is nothing to learn.” Dudian said indifferently.: “Do you know which aristocrats have alchemists backing them?”

Old Fulin lightly sighed: “Basically all of the upper nobility has one way or another have secret connection with an alchemist or dark church. Even the military is not an exception.”

“Do you know which alchemists are behind Milan and Burong families?” asked Dudian.

Old Fulin shook his head.: “I don’t know that. Each family communicates with the alchemist very secretively. In addition to the patriarch of the family very few trusted people would know about such a connection. Even the children of the family may not know, let alone someone from outside. But if you want to know who has relation to them you can find clues from the various industries they are involved in. Alchemists help aristocracy to develop new products. If you can find the alchemists in dark church who are having similar research then you can trace the identity of the alchemist. Of course, it is going to cost a lot of money.”

Dudian asked again.: “Does the Holy Church aware of the secret communication between nobles and alchemists?”

“They are not fools so they naturally know.” Old patriarch sighed: “But the main point is that Holy Church has wide range of believers. If the economy supported by the aristocrats collapses then the loss will be greater. As it will affect civilians too. It will cause a chain reaction. In our circle it is called currency turmoil. A situation like that may lead to riots and slaughter. Holy Church wouldn’t want to see something like that.”

Dudian knew what he mean by currency turmoil. It was the same idea as financial crisis of the old era.: “So, will Holy Church close eyes to such a cooperation?”

“If there is no conclusive evidence, then they would never point

fingers. As it will lead to a collective rebound from the aristocracy. Holy Church fears that. Although they know that all of the upper nobility is involved with alchemists but it is almost impossible to come up with evidence. However, once if they find a clear evidence then even an old family such as Mel must be exterminated!”

Dudian’s eyes narrowed. It seems they are underestimating the power of Holy Church.

“Your family has its own shop in the Yard town.” Dudian changed the topic.

Old Fulin was surprised: “Do you want to borrow it?”

“Well, I would like to rent it at market price.”

“What for?” Old patriarch looked at him suspiciously.

“Hmm.” There was a trace of smile on Dudian’s face as he said: “I know an alchemist who would be willing to cooperate with out consortium. Why?”

“You know an alchemist?” Old Fulin’s pupils shrank as he looked at him with surprise. “How do you know him? Did you met him in prison?”

“This is my private matter so let’s keep it that way.” Dudian cautiously replied.

Old Fulin retracted his eyes but he was still alarmed. However, he still asked the question which was ultimately tensing him up: “Your alchemist friend. Which faction does he belong?”

Dudian was surprised as it seemed old patriarch knew quiet a lot about alchemists.: “He is from material faction. You shouldn’t be worried about that. He will come up with a formula which will help us to earn a lot of money.”

Old Fulin was relieved. Aristocrats were fond of alchemists who belonged to material faction. However, they dreaded and were frightened by the alchemists who belonged to life faction.

“Is this the gift you were talking about?” Old patriarch exclaimed: “I didn’t expect that you had such a background. What level is the alchemist.”

“High,” Dudian replied briefly.

Old patriarch didn’t find it strange and said: “If he is a two-star or a three star alchemist then our Ryan family may get a chance to face suppression of other consortia. At least we won’t be naked in our fight. ”

Dudian knew that Old Patriarch was testing him and trying to get information out of him: “It’s getting late so I should head back.”

Old patriarch saw that Dudian’s expression didn’t change as he

mentioned the level of the alchemist. He secretly though.: “His face didn’t change when I said a three star alchemist. So even if the alchemist isn’t three stars then he would be at least a two-star alchemist.” He began to think about plans for the future.

…

The next day.

Dudian went to several nearby towns to buy yellow and red phosphorus, wood and other materials. He came back to a remote town and rented a temporary small workshop for a gold coin. Then he brought all the materials to that shop.

Dudian thought that old patriarch would send people to track him but didn’t expect that along the way no-one was following him. He remembered that old patriarch and Mellon consortium were aware of his ability so they didn’t go for useless work.

By the afternoon materials were ready but Dudian thought about the opening party of the consortium in the evening. He stopped every and went to slave market to hire few workers to start.

The night came quickly.

A lot of work had been done to change the atmosphere. The normal oil lamps in the walls have been replaced by white-oil ones which were more valuable. There was even a touch of aromatic smell floating around in the castle.

The lawn has long been trimmed. The road was particularly clean. Knights has also washed of their armor. Because of repeated polishing their armor almost reflected the light.

Chapter 178

One exquisite carriage after another entered the Yard town's main street and passed by each household in the town as they went towards Ryan Castle. The residents of the town were astonished. Since the Ryan family had moved here and became their lords, they had never seen so many nobles come to visit the Ryan household.

All of the carriages stopped in front of the Ryan Castle.

The butler of the Old Fulin personally stood in the doorway to greet all the guests.

Dudian had come early in the afternoon to discuss issues with the old patriarch. At the moment, both of them were standing by a window on the second floor of the castle. They were looking at the carriages that passed by the main road of the castle. Each of the carriages had the respective family's banner, or flag stuck on them. The old patriarch Fulin was introducing them one by one to Dudian so he would be aware of their background, origin, and status.

"Almost everyone has come. As the hosts of the party, we can't be too rude. Let's go." Old Fulin said to Dudian.

Dudian nodded slightly in approval.

Both of them went together down the stairs into the hall. Originally there were four oil lamps, lighting the hall, but at the

moment there was more than a dozen. Dudian saw the nobles dressed in exquisite suits accompanied by their wives or children. They were eating snacks, drinking wine and chatting.

The people stopped talking as they saw Old Fulin and Dudian walk down the stairs. Apparently, their eyes were focused on them.

“Old Fulin, you look so outstanding.” A middle-aged noble standing close to stairs complimented old patriarch.

Dudian looked at a middle-aged noble. He had earlier told by the Old Fulin that the middle-aged man belonged to a small noble family from the adjacent town. It was also a noble family, which was on a decline. However, Daniken family’s difference from Ryan family was that since their establishment they were a small family who struggled to survive.

The old Patriarch smiled: “Do you like the wine?”

“I would have visited you frequently, if I knew you had such a good quality wine.” The middle-aged man laughed.

The old patriarch replied: “You are welcome at any time.”

The aristocrats began to surround old patriarch to greet him. There were total of eight families represented in the party. However, none of the patriarchs were present instead the oldest children of the respective families were sent over to congratulate

Old Fulin.

"The old proverb which says 'a thin tiger is stronger than a wolf' is true." A graceful lady said with a smile: "I assume Ryan family wants to make a big move as you have founded a consortium."

The others smiled as they looked at old patriarch to see how he would reply to her words.

Old Fulin gently smiled: "The aim is to make a lot of money since we have created a consortium. Wouldn't any of you agree?"

"Oh?" The middle-aged aristocrat from Daniken family spoke in an interesting tone.: "Do you have enough resources?"

Old Fulin replied: "We could talk about stuff like this later on. The night just began. I have specially invited the group from the St. Peter Institute of Music to play for us. So please, enjoy the music for now."

They didn't press for an answer as they saw the Old Patriarch sway from the topic. All of them came to the corner where the music group was seated.

"Who is this?" Another obese middle-aged noble asked, as he was puzzled because Dudian looked almost inseparable from old Fulin.

"He is our consortium's hunter, Mr. Dean." Old patriarch replied.

“Hunter?” The nobles who were close to the old patriarch subconsciously swayed a bit to make the distance. Soon they realized that it was rude of them, so they recovered their original positions. The obese middle-aged man continued with a smile: “You are fast to win over a hunter as you have just founded a consortium. The old patriarch is ferocious, ah!”

Dudian noted the fear in depths of nobles eyes even though they looked calm. He knew from Old Fulin that the hunters were favorite existences for nobles. But likewise, they were frightened. They loved hunters because they could accumulate wealth for them. Their fear and hate were rooted, as there have been some hunters who have lost control because of rage and have killed the nobles on the spot.

Although the hunters were executed by the magistrate but death of a hunter wouldn’t revive an aristocrat. So most of the nobles tried to stay away from hunters. Most of the time they would use envelopes to notify the hunters by the help of messengers. Occasionally, when there is a need to talk to a hunter’s face to face, secretly knights will be arranged for security purposes.

In the eyes of most of the nobility, the hunters had a similar look to a human, but they were monsters inside.

Their smiles stiffened, as they knew the identity of Dudian.

Dudian felt a little familiar as he saw their smiles. He remembers the party held by the Mellon Consortium all those years ago. He

had seen Glenn and the other senior hunter in that party. Moreover, he had observed that aristocracy took the initiative to greet them in ‘friendly’ manner. He was too young and inexperienced back then, so he hadn’t noticed vague fear mixed with the smiles. He clearly felt this now.

“The concert is beginning.” Old Fulin smiled.

Dudian looked at the old patriarch’s wrinkled face. He began to look up to stage to enjoy the concert quietly.

Old patriarch made a signal for the 20-member music group to begin the concert. Slowly the music began to float within the hall echoing around. The children of Old Fulin and other families were indulged in music as they listened to it.

The hall’s door creaked open by sudden push. A group of people entered the hall. One of the males sneered.: “Old Fulin, you are quite impatient! How can you begin the banquet as not everyone has come yet?”

The smooth music that was floating around halted with a screech.

The peaceful atmosphere in the hall turned cold on a whim.

Everyone looked back at the group. Their faces slightly change. The obese middle-aged noble whispered in panic.: “The Mel and Milan family. Why are they here?”

Dudian also recognized the slim and elegant girl who was leading the group. She was wearing an exquisite cloth, which distinguished her from the other females. A step back from her a youth wearing a gorgeous armor was standing by. His posture was straight. A proud and imposing aura was radiating off him.

There were about six knights and two attendants behind them.

Other nobles who noticed the family insignia on knights turn ugly. They didn’t need to see the family emblems. The female and male youth leading them was enough to recognize their origins.

Chapter 179

Old Fulin's face darkened, but he calmed down soon. He slowly stood up using his cane: "Old man's guests came long a time ago. What's the purpose of you two by coming here so late?"

"Oh? Do you mean to say that we are unsolicited guests?" The youth's mouth curled up into a smile.: "Is this how an old family with a heritage like Ryan house shows hospitality?"

Old Fulin replied coldly with a question: "Is this how the Milan family visits the others?"

The youth turned stiff as he replied: "I heard that Ryan family has applied to set up a new consortium. We have come especially to visit to congratulate you. If we have been presumptuous, then please forgive us." Although the words uttered by the youth was about modesty, his expression and tone had no trace of it. There was a bit of ridicule.

Old Fulin indifferently said: "I wouldn't expect much from a family with less than a century of heritage. I can understand you."

The youth's face sank. However, he laughed the next moment as he talked: "Our Milan family's history may not be as long as Ryan family's. But unfortunately for you, the giant tree is too old. The leaves and flowers have dried up. You haven't been able to retain your fortune."

Old patriarch's tone was indifferent as he glanced at him: "Today

its dusk for our family. But who knows when tomorrow at dawn the new sun won't shine at our footsteps?"

The youth's face slightly changed. He was going to continue to wrestle words with the old fox, but the girl cut him off.: "We aren't here to sour the party. Old patriarch, please don't be offended. This time we have come over on behalf of my father to congratulate you and wish your consortium a smooth and bright future."

Old Fulin faintly smiled: "Both of your fathers are busy people. I have 'bothered' them by remembering and worrying about our 'little thing.'"

"After all, you were part of our Mellon consortium." Girl smiled.

Old Fulin glanced at the knight behind them. "It seems that your father hasn't taught you well. It is forbidden to bring knights into the banquet."

The youth next to her narrowed his eyes and sneered.: "We are certainly aware of this. But we have heard that there is a hunter who attends the party. I believe that with your teachings the hunter would still be obedient. When the dog lacks loyalty, then there is a chance that it could rebel and go mad at any time. Isn't it?"

Old Fulin glanced at Dudian from the corner of his eyes. He saw Dudian look calm as if he hasn't heard the youth's words at all. He was relieved.: "Hunter is our guest and partner. I didn't think that

Mellon Consortium would think and treat so the hunters under their command. I hope your words won't fall on their ears or there will be a lot of trouble."

The youth's eyes were full of anger. He wanted to continue to attack, but the girl standing by him made a gesture with her eyes to stop.

"I heard that the hunter you have recruited was under Mellon Consortium. His name was Dean, wasn't it?" The girl looked at him.

Old Fulin's eyes narrowed. He could see through the intentions of the girl: "Yes, but Mr. Dean joined the Mellon consortium because he was friends with our Ryan family. He knew that we were part of the Mellon consortium, so he had joined it. Now, Ryan family has left the Mellon consortium, so he hasn't abandoned us and followed after."

The girls cunning rhetoric to press the old Fulin into the corner wasn't successful. She knew that she was facing an old fox.

"Is that it?" The youth slightly sneered: "I heard of him. Three years ago, he had committed theft. He had stolen our Milan family's Longshan Ruby and was sentenced to a prison term. A deacon had personally reviewed the matter back then, and there should be no falsification in the accusation. Aren't you worried that he will secretly clean out the warehouse of your consortium?"

Old Fulin replied: "Mr. Dean was wronged. There was an error,

and Mr. Dean will appeal the decision made by that deacon. The Longshan Ruby is one of the three family treasures of the Milan family. It is worrying that your family treasures are being so laxly guarded."

The youth was stifled. He clenched his fists.

"He is an old fox." The girl whispered to him. Afterward, she looked at old Fulin. "I think it's about time the dinner to start. Will you welcome us?"

Old Fulin indifferently smiled: "Since both of you had come all the way, I'll welcome you to join us. But the knights have to stay outside."

The youth looked around before talking: "We were in a hurry so we haven't brought any gifts. I have an idea. How about we watch a small show?"

Other nobles looked at each other, but no one answered.

Old Fulin's eyes narrowed: "I wouldn't expect gifts from the younger generation."

The youth smiled: "I have heard that Hunter Dean is an intermediate hunter and has extraordinary strength. Why not let him fight with one of my knights? He could show us his skills."

Old Fulin's face was cold. He had announced that Dudian is an

intermediate hunter. It was to give momentum to the consortium. The other party clearly has seized this point and tried to use it to their advantage.

Dudian saw that Old Fulin was hesitating.: “Well, since it can add fun to the occasion, then I’m more than willing.” He stepped out. He looked towards the handsome youth and smiled.: “You are from the Milan family, aren’t you? You should be aware that hunter’s practice skills to kill not for simple performance. Moreover, I’m not that much skilled in controlling my strength. So if I accidentally hurt your subordinates, please forgive me.”

There was killing intent in the youth’s eyes as he looked at Dudian.: “Likewise, if our knight hurts so, I hope you won’t be offended.”

Dudian glanced at the sword on his waist: “It seems that you are a knight yourself. It would be a significant show of sincerity from your side if you acted.”

The youth’s smiled was stiffened. He was indeed a knight. But he went through with knighthood through the help from his family. After all, being a knight was nothing more than a status for him.

He had learned from the Mellon consortium that Dudian was a rookie hunter three years ago. Dudian hasn’t yet mastered the skills of primary hunters. Moreover, he was imprisoned and tortured for three years. But after all, a hunter’s physique has its advantages. He may not be an opponent against Dudian.

“Nobles never fight with the hunter.” The youth spoke with a refined manner.

Dudian smiled: “Aren’t you a knight? Don’t you have the courage of a knight?”

Chapter 180

The youth's face changed. Dudian was forcing him into a corner by pushing the codex of Knighthood. Although he is a noble knight's identity wasn't just for show. Though he had passed the tests with the help of his family, he still knew a thing or two about the honor of knights. If he backed down right now, the others will think that he was a coward.

His heart was full of anger and was about to accept when the girl next to him suddenly said.: "Vick has come to congratulate you as a guest. If you hurt him, it would be taken as rude behaviour towards the guests of the Ryan family."

Dudian's eyes narrowed as he saw the girl cleverly turn around the topic.: " Beautiful lady is right in a sense as if I wounded him it would be against the etiquette. Moreover, it wouldn't a fun show as it was going to be a one-sided assault." There was sarcasm and ridicule in Dudian's tone as he talked.

The others were standing behind him, so no one had noticed the changes in his expression.

Vick, the girl and the others who had come with them were clearly able to see Dudian's face expression. The girl frowned and was about to say something when Vick stepped forward.: "I would like to experience it since you are so confident of your strength. Are hunters as powerful as it is in rumors?"

Dudian waved his hand while he shook his head: "You will get

hurt. The young lady can see that you won't be much of an opponent. Why are you trying to act so brave?"

Vick's eyebrows wrinkled. The girl came up with an excuse for him to avoid the fight, but Dudian has misinterpreted her words to attack him. Vick was excited as if he was a tiger who was after its prey.

"We will know at the end if I will be able to win or not." Vick's hand touched his sword's hilt. : "It's to make the occasion a bit fun. IF you get stabbed by my sword, I hope you wouldn't blame me as I have reminded you."

Dudian shook his head: "I won't hurt you. Just a slap."

"You have said it before its normal to get injured in a spar." Vick slowly pulled out the thin sword from the scabbard.: "Get ready!"

"Master, don't!" The middle-aged knight behind him whispered.

Vick's face sank: "Don't stop me!

The middle-aged looked at him and sighed. He knew that Vick was impulsive. There was hatred towards Dudian as the opposite party forced his master into this situation.

The girl saw that there was no return for Vick. She deeply looked at Dudian and retreated a few steps so that Mel family knights could protect her from accidental injury.

Dudian smiled as he quietly looked at Vick. He bowed a bit as he made a gentleman's gesture.: "Please!"

Vick saw that Dudian's armpit was exposed and rushed forward to stab with the sword.

Dudian's body flashed and bypassed Vick's sword with a simple move. He strode forward and approached in front of him. Vick's eyes narrowed. He knew that hunter's physique was unusual, but didn't expect that there would be so much difference between them. He was going to swing his sword, but saw Dudian's palm approaching his face.

Pat! A loud sound echoed out. Vick's body almost stumbled as he walked a few steps backward. His skin was white, so at the moment a palm mark was clearly visible on his right cheek.

"Bold!" The middle-aged knight rushed out and stopped in front of Vick. He pulled his sword and pointed at Dudian.: "Damn civilian! Kneel!"

Dudian quickly said: "Are you alright? Is there any injury?"

Vick's head was dizzy for a moment, but he regained his consciousness. As he heard Dudian's questions, he felt the burning pain coming off his cheek. His rage topped up. He almost spewed out blood as he saw Dudian's face in front of him.

Dudian looked at Vick with a ‘worried’ expression. He repeatedly said: “Are you hurt? Sorry! Sorry. I should have gone easy on you!”

What is provocation?

What is deception?

There was a burst of anger in Vick’s heart. Especially all the nobles and their children had seen Dudian acting so boldly. Vick’s blood was boiling because as of tomorrow he would be called as a clown. He could imagine how shameful and embarrassing the situation was.

“Kill, kill him!” Vick growled in anger.

The middle-aged knight clenched his sword and stared at Dudian. He strode across and swept his sword continuously as he heard Vick’s order. His stabs were so fast that the sword left shadows.

Dudian’s eyes narrowed. He didn’t expect that the middle-aged knight’s strength would be closer to a silver level hunter’s physique regarding strength. He didn’t know if the middle-aged knight had any magic marks on his body.

Dudian knew that he had to solve out the problem quickly. His body was retreating when he raised his hand in faint then lifted his foot.

The middle-aged man had made the sword to attack Dudian’s

wrist, but saw him to feint and attack with his foot. However, his experience was rich, so he knew that Dudian was feinting. The idea instantaneously passed in his mind and he instinctively backed the sword to attack Dudian's foot.

Dudian didn't go with the attack, but rushed forward. The next instant he grabbed the middle-aged knight's arm and grasped onto it.

"Let go of me!" The middle-aged knight was startled. He was late to block Dudian's palm. Moreover the moment Dudian grasped his arm it felt like his fingers were spikes which were nailed onto his arm. The knight lifted his other hand to rescue his arm.

Dudian responded quickly as he used his right hand to seize the knight's other hand. Dudian's took the opportunity and hit the knight's nose.

Bang! The knight's nose began to bleed. Dudian took advantage of the situation lifted his right hand and severely his knight's arm close to his elbow. Kacha! A clear, crisp sound echoed. The knight's arm bent in the opposite direction.

The Middle-aged knight screamed in pain. His finger lets go of the sword, and it fell to the ground.

The other three knights didn't expect that their captain would be defeated so quickly in a one-on-one spar.

Dudian punched at knight's chest. The middle-aged knight flew back and hit the ground. The other three rushed to help him. However, they didn't fight with Dudian as there was a trace of fear in the depth of their eyes.

Chapter 181

“Stop!” The girl and Old Fulin shouted at the same time.

The three young knights couldn’t help but look at Vick for further instructions.

Vick was horrified. He knew better than everyone else the power of middle-aged knight. He was an intermediate knight who had served their family for a long time. The knight was in top five hundred lists within the giant wall ranking. He was overwhelmed and defeated in a matter of seconds. Dudian’s strength seemed to be much stronger than an intermediate knight’s.

Vick was aware of the gap between knights and hunters as the young master of the Milan family. Hunters would fight monsters outside the giant wall. So their fighting skills were much more ruthless in comparison to knights. Even though both of them seemed to have same careers, but the paths they took were different. The knights took glory in their Knighthood codex and guarded aristocracy. Bands in their songs would praise them. However, hunters were existences that had to stay in the shadows. Even the ordinary civilians were not eligible to know the existence of hunters.

“He is not a primary hunter as he could quickly beat Uncle Mo!” Vick was horrified as he stared at Dudian. The hunters didn’t have a commendable place in the eyes of the nobility. They would be labeled as ‘crazy,’ ‘madmen’ and ‘tyrants’ by the nobles. Aristocrats would prefer them for accumulating wealth, but these existences would be the source of fear in their hearts. That’s why

senior hunters would get extraordinary treatment by the consortium. Even the nobility would have to greet them with smiles.

The girl, Fulin and as well as the various nobles and their children were secretly scared. Most of them were stunned and speechless.

Most of these small nobles have never seen hunters in action. They have heard that how powerful and dangerous hunters are but all of it were words, they have heard from the mouths of others. In their eyes, the most powerful existence was undoubtedly knight. But they would never think that the teenager would defeat a knight so fast and neatly.

Old Fulin was scared, but he was most pleasantly surprised. He had heard from Dudian's mouth about his strength. But he wasn't fully convinced. After all, he knew that this teenager was considered a junior hunter by the Mellon consortium three years ago. Old Fulin knew that the kid was cunning and ferocious, but after all, he thought that Dudian's power wasn't up to silver level hunter's.

Moreover, the kid hasn't got 'blessings' in prison, only misery, torture and pain.

He used his cane to move to the front quickly. He looked at Dudian and lightly shouted.: "Stop acting rudely."

Dudian nodded in approval. Nevertheless, on the surface, he was

hired as a hunter by the consortium. He had to behave and comply with Old Fulin's orders.

"It was an accidental injury." Old Fulin was the first to apologize to Vick: "Are you alright?"

Vick's chest was stifled because of anger, but there was no place to vent it out. He knew that Fulin wasn't apologizing, but giving them face. He stared at Dudian and waved.: "Let's go."

Presently, Vick was not planning to show false courtesy as everyone knew their aim very well.

The girl sighed and looked at Dudian: "I didn't expect to see so many unpleasant things tonight. It is between consortiums, and you are a hired hunter. Why did you have to intervene? Moreover, I was here to ask poem from you!" She shook her head in regret and disapproval.

Dudian's suddenly remember that the girl seemed a bit familiar. The girl was the 'birthday girl' from the party. He had met her all those years ago. She was Sarah Mel.

"You should have brought a hunter..." Dudian stared at her: "In your 'noble' eyes hunters are just a dog to make money. But you should not forget that the hunters risk their lives time and time again outside the wall to bring all the wealth. The lamp that you burn, the coat that you wear are more or fewer materials brought by hunters from the hunt."

“Yes,” said Sarah, “but that’s the job of the hunter. It is your choice. Moreover, you can make a fortune at the same time.”

Dudian quietly looked at her beautiful face,: “Since it is a cooperative relationship, then there should be respect between the parties.”

“You are right about that. The thing is I have never looked down on hunters. This is a matter between consortium and nobility. No one can force their worldview onto others.” She continued: “By the way, there is something that I have to tell you. Jenny knew that you had been released, but her father didn’t let you go out. I’m doing it for her sake. If you want to send her a message I can help you with it.”

Dudian replied indifferently.: “If there is a determination to surround your heart with a giant wall, then no one can get in.”

Sarah looked at him.: “You are still thinking about the things that led you to prison? It was not her fault.”

“I know.” Dudian looked at her quietly. “I was no one’s fault. However, I would like to thank some people for waking me up. For letting me know what reality looks like.”

“How does it look like?” Sarah frowned. “Is it full of hatred?”

Dudian glanced at her.: “You should go back.”

Sarah snapped: “It is very impolite to dismiss a woman. ”

“I’m not a nobleman,” replied Dudian.

Sarah almost choked.: ” I don’t know how Jenny can chat with you. One sentence from you can lead to death!”

“Walk slowly.”

“…”

Old Fulin took Dudian back to the hall after Sarah and Vick left. He said to the crowd. “Please sit down. Let’s continue.”

The nobles looked at Old Fulin first, then looked back at Dudian. Afterward, they looked at each other. Most of them wanted to withdraw early as they were worried about Mel and Milan family’s revenge. But it seems that Old Fulin wasn’t giving them any face. Moreover, Dudian had done some brutal things to the knight. The scene has caused a deep shock in everyone’s heart. So for fear of causing displeasure to Dudian they stayed.

They had come so they would stay until the end of the banquet.

“Please continue.” Old Fulin raised his hand to order the band leader to continue the music.

The musicians were hesitating a bit because of the previous

scene. They took deep breaths to restore their state of mind.

Melodies reverberated in the hall. Old Fulin and Dudian who were sitting in the front listened and enjoyed the music with the smile.

Some nobles who were sitting behind them would look at Dudian once in a while. Many ideas were passing in their minds.

The sky darkened.

After the banquet had finished, the nobles sat back in their carriages, and went back to their homes.

Fulin and Dudian stood by the door and looked at the carriages that disappeared in the darkness of the night. Old Fulin looked at Dudian.: “Let’s go upstairs.”

Dudian nodded.

Fulin ordered the butler to change the oil lamps to the old ones and clean up the hall. Middle-aged maid held onto his arm as he helped him to get to study room on the second floor.

Old Fulin looked at Dudian after the maid left.: “Were you hurt?”

Dudian slightly shook his head.: “The Milan and Mel family didn’t come to suppress the consortium. Especially Vick Milan’s

target seemed to be mean. Are they afraid that I would take revenge? Are they acting so early because of that?”

“It shouldn’t be so.” Old Fulin shook his head. “I ‘marketed’ you as a middle-level hunter, but after a little investigation, they would categorize you as a junior hunter. They shouldn’t be worried about anyone less than a middle-level hunter.”

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“What do you think is the reason for their attacks?” Dudian asked.

Old Fulin pondered for a moment before answering: “If I’m not mistaken, Milan family was preparing for a marriage with Burong family two years ago. Would it be because of that?”

“Marriage?” Dudian was startled. He was silent for asking: “What was the result?”

Old Fulin shook his head. “The little miss of the Burong family didn’t agree to the marriage. Moreover, the Mel family secretly intervened to prevent the marriage too. After all, once the Burong and Milan families would get connected by marriage, then they would be the biggest force within the Mellon Consortium. The side that would be affected most would be the Mel family. Although the Mel and Burong family are interconnected in more than one way, you never know what is going to happen after the other two sides get blood relations.”

Dudian looked at him.: “No wonder both of them came to make trouble today. Moreover, the young lady of the Mel family is not a simple and ignorant girl.”

Old Fulin smiled: “She is a little cunning fox.”

Dudian nodded in approval.

“However, you have humiliated Milan family today, so they won’t just sit by and watch.” Old Fulin sighed: “We are independent now and have no connections to the Mellon Consortium, but for now we should tolerate some mischievousness.”

Dudian replied.: “They didn’t deserve that today. It would end up as self-disgrace if we continued to play according to their tune. Milan family won’t be interested in spreading out today’s situation. There is no way to sue me as a person who has offended aristocracy too. Nevertheless, the other side harbors hostility, so there is no point in being polite. We don’t know when they launch the next attack.”

Old Fulin looked at Dudian as he secretly thought about the teenager. It seemed that he wasn’t facing a teenager but a 30 years old adult who was cunning and ferocious like a fox. It made him think of some of the outstanding figures in history. Most of them had shown extraordinary abilities and talent when they were at his age.

Perhaps, this youth too will grow up to become an outstanding person in the future. But he won’t be a good person for sure.

Old Fulin stared at Dudian:” The news about you being able to beat an intermediate knight easily would be spread out by tomorrow. Although it won’t be reported in the newspaper in close circles, you will become a celebrity. However, being famous isn’t necessarily a good thing.”

“The Mellon Consortium will take an immediate action to silence me,” Dudian said. “We have to make enough money as soon as possible to rent an underground passage so that we can hunt outside the giant wall.”

Old Fulin smiled: “I can rely on you about this matter.”

Dudian nodded as he thought about the workshop. He got up and said.: “I will go back.”

…

It was curfew time as he left the Ryan Castle.

However, the soldiers guarding the streets didn’t block Dudian’s carriage as Ryan family’s banner was plugged to the carriage.

Dudian checked the materials again to confirm that there was no error as he got back to the workshop. Then he lay to sleep on one of the boxes.

The next day.

Dudian went to the slave market of the commercial district. He spent twenty silver coins to buy twenty slaves. Most of the were dark-skinned and physically fit. Ten of them were male, while the other ten were female. They were aged eighteen to twenty-five years old.

The slaves were sold by the aristocracy, businessmen, and knights who could not support them anymore.

Dudian didn't take the ownership of the slaves onto himself, but transferred the slaves under the command of the Ryan family. He brought the slaves back to his small workshop. He had to teach them the production procedures.

The slaves were intelligent. Dudian selected the oldest around them called Harry to manage the workshop. He had worked as a steward in a knight's family.

All day long, Dudian taught the slave how to make the products and supervise the production line.

In the evening, Dudian counted the number of finished products. There was a bit less than thousand boxes.

"It is going to cost me two silver coins to make matches. If I want to sell them quickly, then the price has to be low. I should sell one thousand of them for twenty silver coins. The income would amount to one to ten ratio."

The first product that he had come up with matched.

Although it would be classified as alchemy, it isn't classified as an explosive so that they won't be banned. Moreover, its structure was relatively simple. He needed yellow, red phosphorus and few

basic materials. Because of simple combination, he could come up with a perfect product which could be used in this era. There was no electricity, so the matches could quickly replace the fire sickle!

Nevertheless, the fire sickle's ignition efficiency was bad, and its weight was huge in comparison to a box of matches. Because of these two points, the matches had an advantage over fire sickles.

Moreover, matches were consumable items. There would always be a demand. After it would replace fire sickles, then the money he would be earning would be significant.

"If I earn twenty silver coins a day, then it would take me ten days to earn two gold coins." Dudian was calculating the profits. He thought about the work efficiency of the twenty pieces. It was their first time producing, so they weren't skilled but as the time passes they would be more productive.

"If I could use a machine to produce the matches." Dudian thought about the machinery. "If the era of machinery emerged then the production speed would increase many folds. However, right now the other consortiums would rely on their powerful financial resources and channels to pressure the inventors."

"In that case, I have to speed up the process a bit." Dudian's eyes were firm as he thought about the details. If the others copied his products, he would let them do so. He would check how they would be able to catch up with his invention speed!

Dudian rented a few dilapidated houses for the slave to live and

went back to the Ryan castle for the night.

The carriage was about to enter the Yard town when suddenly the horses began to neigh in confusion and wag the carriage. The driver was worried about disturbing Dudian, so he whipped the horses in anger.

Dudian moved the curtain of the carriage to look out. There was no one around.

Dudian sniffed to check the smells, but there wasn’t anything particular. However, there was a trace of doubt and chill in his heart. He sprang to the other side of the carriage in a rush.

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puff!

As Dudian jumped from one side to the other, a sharp dagger came out from behind the seat crushing the carriage's board.

An extremely slim arm belonging to a woman was holding the dagger. It rapidly contracted back out.

Dudian quickly went out of the carriage.

"Uh," a painful moan came from the front of the carriage. Dudian turned to see a woman wearing black armor had used a dagger to pierce through the coachman's throat. The dagger rapidly swept across the driver's throat and brought to his end. The body softly falls as no screams or moans echoed.

The horses were frightened as they pulled the carriage forward and ran away.

Cold wind massaged his face.

Dudian and female assassin were confronting each other face to face.

The female assassin's sweet voice echoed: "Do you remember me?" She pulled down her mask at the same time.

Dudian saw her face and his heart palpitated.: “Glenn?”

“The assassin is Glenn…”, Dudian recognized her.

“It seems you have a good memory.” Glenn smiled as she put away the dagger.: “The consortium sent me to assassinate you. But I owe you one from that time, so I’m returning the favor now back to you.”

Dudian was startled, but he still didn’t relax and was on alert: “If that’s the case, why did you kill him?” Dudian pointed to driver’s corpse.

“Him?” Glenn looked down at the corpse of the driver who was lying in a pool of blood. She smiled as she answered.: ” The people in the top will know that I was lenient if I didn’t kill him. You are alone aren’t enough for me to offend the consortium. If I wanted to kill you, then you wouldn’t be aware of my attack in advance. I think you should be aware of my assassin abilities after I got new magic marks from the black weaver.”

Dudian was silent before he talked: “According to you the personnel of the Mellon consortium will investigate today’s matter. Are there people from Ryan family who are co-operating with the Mellon Consortium?”

“Do you think it is abnormal?” Glenn looked at him as she gently smiled: “There is nothing that money can’t accomplish. Even a son is ready to kill his father for it. The question is how much!”

Dudian's heart turned cold.: "How are you going to explain the people in the consortium that you let me?"

There was a hint of a smile on her face as Glenn replied: "It's very simple. The consortium has added you to the list of intermediate level hunters. The juranzhi is a very rare beast. So they are not aware what the results will be after second or third evolution. So, I'll faint that you were able to avoid my attacks just like that."

Dudian thought back to monster Atlas as he heard her words. There were abilities, descriptions, habitats and other information regarding the monsters. There was information about juranzhi too, but there were not many details.

"Thank you," Dudian whispered. He believed Glenn's words. If she used her abilities that she got from the black weaver then most probably he would be dead. Even if she failed at killing him in ambush, but he wasn't her opponent in one on one frontal combat.

"You are lucky." Glenn laughed: "There are two senior hunters in the consortium. First is me while the second is a knight. You are lucky that they have sent me or there wouldn't be a chance to survive."

Dudian stared at her.: "I did a small favor for you all those years ago. Why would you go through such a risk to protect me? If the people at top blame you what are you going to do?"

"Those aristocrats look at us as if we were tools to make money

for them. In their eyes, we are just dogs that they support. The most tragic part is that they even dare to make pit fights between the dogs."

Dudian deeply looked at her: "I will note down this favor. If in the future an opportunity will arise then I'll return it back to you."

"No." Glenn waved: "Let's call us quits. You don't have to repay me. This time it was me, but you and the aristocratic family behind you are going to go through a catastrophe." She didn't say anymore more as she turned back and quickly left. She was lost in the shadows of the buildings.

Dudian was silent for a long time as he looked at the direction Glenn had left. He had expected that the Mellon consortium would take actions for revenge, but he didn't think they would be so fast. Moreover, he didn't think they will use a senior hunter for the assassination.

He knew that individually the senior hunters were the strongest force within the giant wall.

If they would use a senior level hunter for the assassination, then the magistrate wouldn't have traced out anything. They wouldn't act so that the assassination could be traced back to them.

The Ryan family had no background as they were just a small noble family. After they would kill Dudian, it would be enough to exert a bit of pressure to immobilize them. The Ryan family wouldn't have any chances to rebound not to mention to through

the trial.

“Because of Glenn’s failure, they won’t go with the assassination again. But I should be alert.” Dudian’s thoughts become clear as he walked back to the Ryan Castle: “If they don’t go with direct assassination, then they are going to use various industries, channels, and other affiliate forces under their control to combat Ryan family.”

“We need money as soon as possible!”

There was a chill in his eyes. If he were able to go out and become a senior hunter, then he would become a thorn in the Mellon consortium’s throat!

Nevertheless, power was fundamental!

Dudian tore off his clothes and made it so that he should appear as he had gone through a fierce battle before he returned to the Ryan Castle.

Although Glenn didn’t tell him to act so because of her arrogant character he knew that if he didn’t look like this, then there will be lots of questions that will be raised.

Old Fulin and his children woke up from sleep when they got the information that Dudian had come in such a situation.

Old Fulin quickly took Dudian back to his study room so that his

servants and children didn't see what had happened to him. Moreover, he prohibited them to let rumors of this to leak out.

"Is it the Mellon Consortium?" Old patriarch quickly asked in the study room: "Are you injuries serious?"

Dudian's expression turned to normal: "They had sent Glenn for assassination."

"Glenn?!" Old Fulin's eyes narrowed: "That Glenn?"

Dudian nodded.: "Don't worry. She owed me a favor, so she didn't act. However, this is the notice! I need to use all the resources of your family or we are going to die without even knowing what happened."

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Old Fulin said: “What are going to do?”

“You should know the list of places from where we can get looms,” said Dudian. “I need a textile factory. Do as much as you can get to a bigger place. We will go into textile business. The Alchemist has given me some tips about textile and other producst. We have to produce and sell them as soon as possible to get enough funds to load an underground passage.”

Old Fulin was surprised: “Clothing? The funds and manpower that we have won’t be enough to make a lot of money.”

“There is a way.” Dudian stared at him.: “I’ll give you a list to buy the things that I need. Get them, and we will be ready to make some money. Moreover, I remember that the cost of annual rent for an underground passage is 100,000 gold coins per year. Am I right?”

“Yes,” Old Fulin smiled slightly. “I got 10,000 gold coins from the sales of mine. However, we had expenses too. 100,000 gold coins is an amount which our family may not earn in my lifetime.”

A normal noble family might not get that much of money even if the taxation from fiefs and the fields were included. A senior hunter such as Glenn would be able to earn such a big amount, but she would go through life and death experiences to kill rare monsters. It was possible for them, but this amount was out of touch for small noble families.

Dudian said in a low tone: “We can make good money. The production of textile would be based on new technology. The old one’s efficiency is too slow, so making money in the short-term is difficult. But if the efficiency of the production is increased ten times, then what I’m telling you is not a dream but reality.”

“Ten times?” Old Fulin stared back at him: “How are you going to improve?”

“I will improve the looms.” Dudian said: “You have to hire some tailors to be ready to start any moment. We must act rapidly. The Mellon consortium will start to suppress us economically after the failure with the assassination. If we can’t raise money as soon as possible, then all the future moneymaking channels will be blocked by them. The situation is going to be dangerous. So I hope you can keep my situation as secret.”

Old Fulin looked at him and naturally understood the current situation. It was the situation that had him worried the most. The Mellon consortium was a giant and facing them was going to be very hard. There was a slim chance that they would succeed.

“I will respond as soon as possible.” Old Fulin agreed. But there was a bit of hesitation: “Improving the looms? Is there any way to improve them?”

“You will know when the time comes.” Dudian said: “Also, tomorrow send you people to my workshop. There is an alchemy product that is ready to be sold. Although it is inefficient, it will

slowly sell and get popular. It would be enough to get recognition, trust, and fame in the market. ”

Old Fulin said: “Recognition? Trust? That is going to be difficult.”

“Trust me.” Dudian encouraged old patriarch.

Old Fulin sighed. He believed that there was no other way out but going with Dudian’s plan.: “I may win other aristocrats. Although the ones who showed interest were declining families together we may amount to something. After the end of the last meeting, there were two families who were interested in joining our consortium. I haven’t given them an answer, but they have put out the request. I should talk to them and reduce the requirements.”

“We don’t need other nobles to join in now unless they are comparable to Mel family in status and wealth. The others would make excessive demands while will provide little to no help. It will affect our efficiency. Sometimes more people doesn’t mean the power is big too. Trash is trash. Together it’s just a heap of trash, but nothing more.”

Old Fulin smiled as he saw Dudian’s decisive attitude.: ” I can only pray that the alchemical products that you will come up with can create good wealth!”

...

The next day.

Old Fulin called up his butler to lead the servants and guards to Dudian's workshop. Then he called up his most trusted three sons.

Sander, who was his third son and the third successor to the Ryan family was sent to clean up their factory that was originally used to package fruits. They were going to turn it into a textile factory.

Everyone in the Ryan Castle was aware of the severe and urgent orders of Old Fulin that something fishy was going on. Especially, the four children of Old Fulin were told by Old Fulin's trusted maid that Dudian was brought injured yesterday night. Old Fulin's second son Jake and third son Sander were more concerned about the family's situation. They faintly speculated that the family was facing some crisis.

Dudian was lying in the room claiming to be wounded while the whole Ryan Castle was moved into action.

...

Mellon Foundation, Hunter Headquarters.

A young man and a woman were sitting relatively close to each other in the dining room in a castle. They looked like an ordinary couple, but at a closer look, you could see the scars on their fingers and wrists. All of them were shallow scars of strange shapes, not

the smooth and intact one you would see on ordinary people.

“I heard that the consortium sent you to assassinate an intermediate level hunter?” The youth said as he casually cut the steak with a knife.: “The result was that you failed. No wonder the people at the top didn’t want to believe. Even I don’t believe that such a thing may occur.”

The woman was Glenn. She picked up the glass of wine and took a sip.: ” Whether anyone believes or not the result is on the table. I don’t feel like I have to prove myself in front of anyone!”

The youth helplessly smiled: “Don’t forget that we are depending on the aristocracy. Occasionally we have to care about their problems. But Glenn doesn’t forget that they do not just love money. Their sense of arrogance is more dominant than others. Try not to anger them.”

Glenn’s face sank, and the kitchen knife in her hand was pinched and broken into two.

The youth decided to change the topic as he saw Glenn’s reaction.: “There is this recent news that an unknown monster appeared in the Huasheng consortium’s territory. It has caused heavy losses to them. Two intermediate hunters were killed, and a senior hunter was seriously injured. Do you think they have met with a rare adult monster?”

“We’ll have to be careful.” Glenn indifferently said.

The Youth shrugged his shoulders.: “Anyway, it’s not in our area or else the madmen controlling us would have mobilized us to hunt it.”

Glenn replied: “The beast shouldn’t be dead. We can check out when we go out.”

“I pray to the God of Light that it passes through our territory.” The youth smiled. A maid brought them a newspaper. He reached out and grabbed it. He had read through few pages before he said.: “The hunter under the Ryan family’s command is wounded?”

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“Did you hear that?” the youth said. Glenn’s eyebrows slightly wrinkled, then she came to understand what Dudian had done. Her heart was warmed, but her face looked indifferent.

The youth looked at her: “If this is true, then the people on top had been misinformed. You made a shot, but didn’t kill him?”

Gladly glanced up at him.: “No?

“How could he escape from your grasp?” The youth had an incredible look.

Glenn lightly said: “He was a rookie in our consortium. You should know that he got his magic marks from the juranzhi. He has a very strong sense of smell. I’m not sure what other abilities he has perceived. Unfortunately, the Atlas is incomplete when it comes to describing the juranzhi.”

“You have magic marks from rare black weaver too. So your hidden assassination characteristics are high. Moreover, you are a senior hunter who has gone through two evolutions. How could he be on par with you if he has gone maximum through a single evolution?”

Glenn replied: “The gap between the magic marks could be great. The evaluation by the people within the wall could not be entirely accurate. Sometimes it would be tough to figure out what kind of abilities may appear as the monster itself would be a variant.”

The youth sighed: “That’s also possible. Even if the attack failed how couldn’t you kill him afterward?”

“Yes, but the kid is very cunning. If I continued to pursue him, then my identity would be revealed.” Glenn said indifferently.: “I couldn’t take the risk.”

The youth didn’t agree with her.: “The exposure is nothing. Without an intermediate hunter, our consortium would be emboldened to deal with Ryan family. The Mellon consortium would pressure them through industries and economic means. Ryan family would go bankrupt before they would know what had happened.”

“The top has already criticized me. Are you getting fun in continuing to do to so?” Glenn glanced at him.

The youth was surprised.: “Alright, let’s eat!”

…

The Ryan Castle, a simple room.

Old Fulin slowly pushed the door and entered the room. He saw Dudian lying down in bed.: “The things that you have told us has been solved. The textile factory will be ready by tonight. However, it is difficult to recruit tailors. At the moment it is difficult to get adequate manpower unless we hire at higher prices.”

“It doesn’t matter.” Dudian looked up at him.: “What happened with the Mellon Consortium?”

Old Fulin slightly smiled,: “As you expected the Mellon consortium will not continue with the assassination, but would use economic pressure to dwindle with us. A news agency under the consortium reported that you had been seriously wounded in the morning newspaper. The previous two noble families who wanted to join our consortium also sent people to recover their requests. Moreover, the other nobles have begun to discredit our reputation which was instigated by the Mellon consortium too. Right now, we don’t have a positive image.”

Dudian looked at the vase by the window and whispered.: “They will investigate industries that Ryan family is involved in. They will try to take away our customers by trying to strangle us completely.”

Old Fulin looked at him.: “Since you have expected all of this. What are we going to do now?”

“Do not panic! They will try to take away the shops under the command of your family. It will require a little time. We have to take this opportunity to take orders regarding textile business. If they intervene then just take the orders below the market prices. Even if they are a gigantic consortium, they won’t be able to expulse the economic interests.”

Old Fulin wryly smiled.: “The orders will be stopped if they want

to intervene.”

Dudian looked at him.: “It should be enough for us to make a small fortune. ”

“Uh … ” Old Fulin choked up a bit. He sighed.: “It seems I’m getting old.”

“Don’t even think about retiring. ” Dudian continued.: “Take as many orders as you can before they can react. ”

“Well.” Old Fulin nodded, turned and left.

It was getting late.

In the evening, after the dinner.

Dudian came to the factory on the outskirts of the Yard town under the leadership of Fulin and his three sons. The plant was spacious. There were dozens of newly purchased looms in the workshop.

Forin to Dudian said: “What you want tools, although that, give you ready.”

Dudian glanced at Old Fulin’s sons then turned towards him.: “After I improve them and the looms are transformed then no information can be leaked. Everything has to be kept confidential.

Otherwise, improved looms will appear in various factories under different consortiums. We will lose the advantage."

Old Fulin nodded and said: "I know. I will work on the issue of confidentiality."

Dudian didn't say anything as he saw the serious look on old patriarch's face. In this era, in addition to the dark church, no one took care of protecting and patenting the information. People had to rely on secrecy to protect their inventions.

In the old era, the company would try to encrypt its core technology when the product was released. Or else a devastating disaster would occur.

Dudian opened the toolbox and took out a few things. He began to adjust the spinning wheel of the textile machine while he added spindles. He added in total five spindles to a textile machine.

He spun the cotton threads through five spindles and began to spin the wheel. The spindles began to rotate five times faster than the original single spindle.

"This ..." Old Fulin and his sons were stunned at the sight. They incredible looked at loom which was working in front of them. Dudian's improvement was fast, and the effect was amazing.

"Is this the improved machine?" Old Fulin stared with wide eyes. As a man with a sense of business making, he knew that how much

money they could earn using this new loom.

Dudian nodded. He had gone through some information before learning the recipe of black powder. This modification to loom was a prelude to the steam era. The people began to use machines instead of manual power after this invention showed that capabilities of machines were much productive than humans.

“It’s amazing!” Sander said.

“An addition of a spindle means it can double the efficiency of a loom,” Dudian said.: “If we can add about ten spindles then it would be worth as having hundreds of old-fashioned looms at hand.”

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“Can we add a hundred spindles If we can go through some serious improvement?” Old Fulin was a man with foresight. He knew that if the body of the machine would be large enough, then it could accommodate hundreds of spindles. Then the efficiency would increase by hundreds of times. This was a miracle. One machine could be equal to hundred people’s workloads. Their textile efficiency would raise to an appalling level within the giant wall.

“We have to rebuild a new textile machine to accommodate two hundred spindles. We can’t afford it right now.” Dudian said.: “It would take a lot of time to complete such a machine. We would need at least ten days to complete one. For the time being, we will use this improved version of the loom. Twenty spindles are this looms limits.” Then Dudian squatted down to continue to transform the machine.

Old Fulin sighed.: “I didn’t think that you are such a clever person. If a large consortium cultivated you, then you would certainly reach a high position.” There was a feeling of some regret mixed into his tone.

Dudian was working on the improvement while he said: “No need to rely on others to grow wings if I have the ability. We would be able to fly high on our own.”

Old Fulin smiled.: “There is some truth in your words.”

Sander, who was next to them bitterly bowed his head.

Dudian asked.: “What about orders?”

“Today I traveled to most of the textile mills and went to few Chambers of Commerce. I have made few deals.” Old Fulin continued.: “However, after I saw you new improved loom, then I’m confident to take a lot of orders after tomorrow.”

Dudian frowned slightly.: “Continue to pick up orders tomorrow. We have to receive all of them.”

Old Fulin said.: “Even with the new looms, we won’t be able to finish the orders. We will lose money if we can’t make them on time if we go for more orders.”

“No, believe me, we will not make a loss.” Dudian said.

Old Fulin and Sander were at a loss as one. They didn’t know where Dudian’s confidence was coming from. Was he going to change the pattern of a textile machine?

“Well, I try my best.” Old Fulin knew that he wouldn’t be able to beat Dudian down by wrestling words, so he promised to take orders.

It was getting late.

Old Fulin's age was old, so he was getting tired. He went back to rest while his three sons stayed back.

Dudian was focused on transforming the machines. Sander stood aside, but didn't know to get accustomed to the situation. He wanted to sit down and rest, but he saw Dudian work so hard. As a result, he stood by his side, even though his legs were in pain.

Dudian transformed the sixth machine and glanced back at Sander.: "You are tired, get some rest."

Sander was sleepy, but reacted the moment Dudian talked to him: "No, I'm all right." He knew that Dudian as a hunter or inventor would be treated as a blessing by another family. That's why he tried to be as polite as possible. However, as the next successor to be the head of the Ryan family, Sander knew that the new consortium was planned single-handedly by Dudian. On surface, the Ryan family seemed to be the dominant force, but it was just a cover.

Dudian saw his attitude so didn't say anything but continued to work hard.

The night passed by.

Dudian improved twenty-three looms which were ready to be used at the moment.

The sky was bright. Dudian accompanied the exhausted Sander

to call the tailors to start working. He was planning to improve another 20 machines so they could be put to work as soon as possible.

Sander leads more than 30 tailors who had been recruited by the Ryan consortium into the factory.

Most of the tailors were twenty to thirty years old. Seven or eight of them already had white hair. They were impressed the moment they entered the factory. The new textile machines had caught their eyes.

“Huh?” An experienced middle-aged tailor approach and carefully looked at the machines in surprise. He spun the wheel and as the rotating began twenty spindles began to spin the cotton.

“This … ” The other people were completely shocked by what they were seeing.

Sander saw the expression on their faces. He knew that his father and himself had the same mood last night. He clapped his hands to attract the attention of tailors. He spoke in a serious tone.: “This is the new textile machine made by our family. According to the contract, you can’t secretly leak the information regarding the machine!”

The tailors were startled. However, they came to understand the reason behind such a strange contract that they had signed.

“What if we want to go back to home?” One of the tailors asked.

“It was very clear in the contract. You can naturally go home after six months. ”

“Isn’t half a year too long?” Some of them voiced out their opinions.

Sander frowned and spoke indifferently: “You can get the opportunity to write back a letter if your performance is good.”

They calmed down after they heard his words. They knew that the other side is a noble family so they can’t provoke them and accept the terms as they have already signed the contract.

Everyone entered the textile machines and began to work under Sander’s arrangement.

Cotton and other materials were brought into the factory by a carriage.

“Who is that?” A young tailor saw Dudian fixed on the textile machine as he was fiddling with it.

Sander wailed: “Do your job! That shouldn’t be your concern.”

“Yes, yes.” The youth was scared and quickly continued to use the textile machine. However, he secretly looked over at Dudian

after Sander left. He found that the kid who was several years younger than him was able to improve the textile machine.

The others were surprised as they also noted Dudian. They didn't know if the boy was a genius tailor hired by the Ryan family.

Another day passed. Dudian has modified all the textile machines.

He left the textile factory, dragging back his 'sick' body to the castle to heal his wounds.

Old Fulin came in with the middle-aged maid into his room. The latter was carrying food which she gently put onto the table by the bed.

Dudian immediately grabbed and wolfed down the wood as the middle-aged maid left the room. It had been a night and a day, which he spent to improve the textile machines. He had no time to eat anything.

"You have done a great job." Old Fulin saw Dudian's appearance as he ate the meal: "You should slow down a bit."

"Anything new on today's newspaper?" Dudian mumbled.

Old Fulin gave him the newspaper: "The Mellon consortium has noticed our movement but hasn't reacted yet. I think they assume that we won't be able to finish those orders and make a loss."

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“It’s alright,” Dudian replied as he grabbed the newspaper. “Make sure that the information about the modified looms doesn’t get out. The longer we hide them, the more returns we will get. ”

“I will.” Old Fulin nodded. After he had seen the new textile machines, he had sent all the attendants and guards to patrol outside the factory. Even the knights guarding the castle who has been used to the four-shift system have been decreased to two people for all day.

Dudian opened the newspaper. The first headline was about the Mellon Consortium investing in gold through the Chamber of Commerce. So the conversion ratio of gold to silver should rise in the future?

The second headline was: the Sterling Consortium is overvalued. They seem to have cash flow problems which could cause the industries under their command to collapse.

Dudian swept through the pages and asked: “Which news agency operates this newspaper?”

“It’s owned by the Mellon Consortium.” Old Fulin guessed the intent behind Dudian’s question.: “The news agency’s sales are the highest. The Mellon Consortium has a lot of industries under their command. The Huasheng Consortium’s and military news agency’s newspaper are second and third regarding sales numbers.”

Dudian nodded in understanding. No wonder most of the news was in a way or another related to the Mellon Consortium. Although they mention, a lot of the surface sources were hidden which means that most of the information given are the speculations of the Mellon Consortium's interests. They tend to damage the Sterling Consortium's image, so that wealthy businessmen don't join them or leave for good.

Although the Consortiums are mainly opened to noble circle, but there lots of wealthy businessmen, who reside in the commercial district. Some of them have accumulated wealth as much as normal noble families.

" There are no aristocrats and businessmen who have joined 'New World. They rely solely on the Ryan family's support, will they be able to maintain their operations for long?" Dudian read the title and could grasp the general idea behind the content. The content was analyzed by the professionals as they have pointed out the drawbacks and weaknesses of the Ryan family.

Dudian skimmed through the content. Even he had to nod in recognition, not to mention other people.

"It seems from the Mellon Consortium's perspective their real enemies are the Sterling Consortium and others. We are just a small fry in their eyes. Even the newspaper didn't give us a page only a small section. Most probably there is a small faction within the Consortium which is an enemy to us. But maybe they didn't give us much of credit as to prevent campaigning for us." Dudian put down the newspaper and lightly said.

Old Fulin sighed: “We will be reported in the headlines if we were an obvious problem for them. Even the negative reports should give us fame, so they are satisfied with a title only for now. However, the news agency had been set up by the Mellon Consortium for many years. They are well aware of the public opinion and essence of momentum. They wouldn’t do anything that will harm their reputation.” Old patriarch couldn’t help but look at Dudian after he said all of it. The kid’s mind was extremely keen and adaptive. It was hard to imagine that such a person had grown up in a common civilian family.

“What is the situation between the Scott Consortium and the Mellon Consortium?” Dudian said.

“They are old rivals.” Old Fulin said.: “Scott Consortium began their business by mining. They have chains of mines throughout three regions and hundreds of small towns. It’s been a few years that the Mellon Consortium has gone into the mining business. They want a piece of the cake, so contradictions appear.”

Dudian nodded slightly.

“What about the alchemy products? Were they sold?” Dudian asked.

Old Fulin smiled widely.: “I have totally forgotten about that. It is a very useful product. The potential market for matches is huge. It should completely replace fire sickle as it’s something that every household must have. Today we have sold more than 200 boxes. It

has spread around the town. I assume in a few days it will spread around to other towns. At that time we won't have enough supply."

"Ah." Dudian nodded.: "It will be troublesome then as the other alchemists will buy a pack to analyze. If he had funds, we could buy all the raw materials and monopolize the market for some time. Even if the other Consortium's had the formula to manufacture they wouldn't have the resources to do so. People would get used to our brand so they would buy our product out of habit. Unfortunately, we wouldn't be able to do something like that at this moment."

"Yes, unfortunately." Old Fulin felt sorry. His heart ached as the matches were cheap to produce. They were consumable products so people would buy when they run out. The value of this product was comparable to a large industry engaged by another Consortium. Unfortunately, they didn't have enough money to get into this business. It would not take long before this piece of cake will be snatched by other people.

"Don't be worried. As we get more capital, we will get into many profitable businesses. "Dudian replied as he saw the sadness reflected on Old Fulin's face. Moreover, he couldn't explain to Old Fulin that in the short-term his original goal was to be self-sufficient.

However, he wasn't going to act like an idiot. If he can't eat the whole cake right now, then he was going to have a piece of it for a long time.

“You should contact Scott Consortium and talk to them about our alchemy product. Tell them that this is called ‘match.’ They can buy the materials in bulk and begin producing them. Let the big Consortium’s fight with each other while we stay in the shadows. Afterward, no one would be able to shake us!” Dudian leaned back on the bed as he said to Old Fulin.

Old Fulin’s eyes lit up: “This is a good idea that Scott Consortium will accept. Since we can’t eat and forced to lose the profits in the future, then we should try to maximize our benefits.” Old Fulin looked at the boy. Initially, he thought that Dudian was just a con man who was able to break out of the prison. Yesterday, he thought that the kid is a natural tailor. But now he found out that the kid is clearly a treacherous businessman.

“At this age, your heart is darker than mine” Old Fulin said emotionally. Suddenly he thought of something: “The military newspaper makes reports on the prisoners, wanted people and trials. There is information about the latest investigation into the assassination of deacon Huey.”

Dudian replied: “Show me.”

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Old Fulin handed him the military newspaper. Dudian skimmed through the paper as a large column caught his attention. The court had sent people to collect ropes of horses to collect the fingerprints from them. They were going to find out the evil murders soon.

Dudian glanced at the title: “Fingerprints on the rope?”

Old Fulin saw Dudian’s expression: “You shouldn’t be worried. After the rain, the fingerprints should be washed away. They can’t find the key evidence. In a sense, they are trying to blackmail the murderer so that he or she could try to destroy the rope.”

Dudian shook his head and laughed: “This trial is fascinating. The ropes were not leather, but linen so even if I acted as his driver... Perhaps you don’t get it, but fingerprints can’t be identified on the fabric with the technology they use to collect the fingerprints.”

Old Fulin smiled: “No wonder, the investigators wear gloves when they investigate the murder scene. I though it was over the top as they didn’t want to dirty their hands or the scene, but didn’t expect such a thing.”

Dudian smiled, it was common sense in the old era, but in this era where the information was blocked not many people were aware of anything. The aristocracy was enjoying wealth and fortune so they wouldn’t ponder about this stuff. The move made

by the court was undoubtedly made to pressure murderer into action. They thought that the murderer would try to destroy the evidence so they could catch the assassin when he tries to eliminate the ropes.

“This is why the nobility makes the hunters obey the rules and act by them,” Dudian said.

“Are you sure you have not left any evidence?” Old Fulin asked Dudian.

“I do not think I have any left, but now I think it is time to give evidence to the court.” There was a wide smile on Dudian’s face as he said.

“Give them evidence?” Old Fulin was confused.

…

The next day.

Old Fulin brought good news to Dudian. He had discussed the match business with the Scott Consortium and had settled an arrangement. They were assigned 1.5 percent of the revenues while the rest would go to the Scott Consortium.

Dudian couldn’t help but look at Old Fulin. He is a clumsy negotiator. 1.5 percent was the extremely low fee that anyone could get out of this deal. After all, it won’t take long before the

Scott Consortium gets their hands on the match's formula. They would be able to manufacture it own their own.

Maybe it was because the Old Fulin didn't have much of bargaining chips.

In the future, they could occupy a great share in the market unless they go into a price war.

"The contract has been signed. You got to give me the structure of the match so I can get back to the Scott Consortium. They will pay us a thousand gold coins as the initial sum." Old Fulin was excited: "After getting thousand gold coins from them, we can expand the size of the factory. The income will double afterward."

Dudian nodded. The Scott Consortium was going to make full use of the match business to create a new industry.

"The Mellon Consortium should be aware of our movements. We now have to concentrate on protecting textile factory and get as many orders as we can. Don't be afraid. We will earn profit out of it. I guarantee that!" Dudian said to the old patriarch.

"Oh." Old Fulin smiled. He could see faint traces of the path that would lead them to survival.

Time went by.

Old Fulin received as many orders as he could as the new textile

factory was working well. Fulin's third son Sander was responsible for the factory. He was in charge of that business while the second son Jake was responsible for Yard town, match sale stores, and publicity.

Old Fulin himself was focused on the orders of textile business. He would meet with old acquaintances or wealthy businessmen to get the orders.

Even though their family was on the decline, butOld Fulin had a large network and used his seniority to make personal visits to get the orders. His prices were low, so the people would find it difficult to refuse him. He had received a large list of orders. Some of them were worth thousands of gold coins.

Dudian didn't continue to stay in the Ryan Castle. After a few days, he went to find Barton, Kroen and Joseph: "Do you guys remember the man who I slapped in the party?"

"Of course we do." The trio immediately nodded in approval. They were impressed when Dudian slapped the aristocrat. Their blood would boil when they often thought of that picture. They were aware that Dudian was their companion from the orphanage. He had grown to the point where it was very difficult to look up to him.

This reason increasingly strengthened their determination to follow after Dudian.

He was also an orphan.

Dudian was able to do something grand as that, so they also desired to be in a position to do so!

Dudian handed them a piece of paper: “This is his address. I want you guys to help me track him. I want to know his whereabouts, hobbies, the places he goes. In short, everything about him. This is ten gold coins to each one of you to spend. If it isn’t enough, then let me know.”

Kroen’s foresight was a bit more than others: “Dean, do you want to make sure that he ends up as the assassin of the deacon Huey?”

Dudian glanced at him: “Don’t mention anything about Deacon Huey when you work outside. Be careful as even the walls have ears. Moreover, in this world, there are people with incredible powers. They can hear sounds from thousands of meters away, and they can see hair on your head from thousands of meters away. You got to be more cautious. Do you understand?”

“See from thousands of meters away?” The trio was scared. But as they thought about the strength of the knights they gradually understood Dudian’s point and were aware of their mistakes.

“Go,” said Dudian.

The three nodded and left the Ryan Castle.

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Mount Er. The Burong family.

In a spacious room in the castle.

Rudolph's brows wrinkled as he read the letter: "This damned old fox. How come he relies on textile business? He has received so many orders." He looked up at the butler who was standing next to him:" Investigate everything. Have you checked how many factories do they possess?"

The middle-aged butler respectfully said: "Only one. The Old Fulin has transformed the fruit packaging workshop into a medium-sized textile factory."

"It would be very difficult to meet the ends with this factory alone. It is certain that there are secret factories somewhere else." Rudolph continued: "Immediately, send out people to investigate. His bones are tough even though he is old. He won't do stupid things because he is old. If he dares to take so many orders, then there should be hidden factories where he can produce the textiles."

The butler nodded: "I will send people to check them thoroughly."

"I heard that the Scott consortium wants to get into a new business?" Rudolph looked at him.

“It is said that they have developed a new product,” The butler replied. “They have been renting small shops in various places in the commercial district. The rents are not high. It should be a small business.”

“It has to be smashed even it’s a small business!” Rudolph said coldly: “The Scott consortium is pressing us to step by step in the mining industry. We have to ease up the financial crisis through the other industries. Their business plans must be fully interrupted.”

“Yes,” The butler replied.

“And…” Rudolph continued: “Have Sarah been to here recently?”

The nutler was surprised: “She has come to see Little Miss to play.”

There was a trace of coldness in Rudolph’s eyes as he said: “Playing? Don’t think that little devil is so simple. She has been very close with the Milan family in recent days.”

The butler was startled as understood the meaning behind his words. He spoke in hesitation”Master. Does the Mel family plans to … …”

“They won’t allow it. The consortium will keep the balance of

power. Our family's industries are too strong compared to Milan family. Moreover, that Milah house's kid had the identity of a knight, but is a simple person. He is destined to be eliminated. " Rudolph coldly said:" Send people to check them when Sarah comes over. Don't let her fill Miss's mind with nonsense. Sarah doesn't have good intention."

"I know." The butler nodded.

...

Half a month passed in the blink of an eye.

In the training ground behind the Ryan Castle.

Four arrows hit the target that was two hundred meters away.

Poof! The next arrow whistled and hit the target's head, which was colored in red.

Dudian put away the bow and arrow. The attendants brought a towel, and he wiped the sweat from his face. The injuries from the spikes that were pierced in prison hasn't healed properly, but he has been nursed back to health. Occasionally he would feel dull pains. It was the result of injuries to his bones as spikes have hit past by them.

"I can shoot a target which is three hundred meters away. My arm strength is enough for that. But if I want to shoot farther than

that then the bow isn't suitable. The bow he was using was made of normal materials. The bows for primary hunters were made from beasts. The more advanced bows were made from the tendons of special monsters. Their pulling power and toughness were very strong. Unfortunately, such a good bow would cost at least thousands of gold coins which he couldn't afford right now."

There was a feeling of regret as Dudian put away the bow. The Ryan family was able to get him a bow which was used by mid-level knights. He regarded it as barely handy.

"I feel a little rusty as I haven't used the bow for a long term. Fortunately, my foundation is good." Dudian looked at the target which was two hundred meters away. His identity was a hunter who worked under the Ryan family so on weekdays he practiced his archery skills.

Servant served him tea back in the castle.

Dudian drank a few cups and afterward came to the second floor to find Old Fulin. He shut the door: "How's the progress with the factory?

Old Fulin was holding a magnifying glass as he went through the reports on the table. He heard Dudian's words and his face saddened a bit: " It's very slow. Although you have improved the efficiency of the new textile machine, we lack manpower and new machines. We have forty-three big orders and have completed sixteen of them. We have earned about eight thousand gold coins. I think we won't be able to complete more than a dozen of the remaining in within the specified time."

Dudian smiled: “It is not that urgent. You should rent a new factory and send a few servants and a guard to protect it for secrecy.”

“The number of guards isn’t enough to protect two factories. I’m afraid it would be very difficult to stop the leakage after we rent another factory.”

Dudian smile: “The leak is going to happen sooner or later. In just half a month a single factory was able to cover sixteen orders. Mellon consortium is certainly aware of this. At this point, they will send out a hunter to inquire, or they will bribe a guard to get the information. They have smelled the strange movements, so it is about time they made their move.”

Old Fulin sighed: “Indeed.”

“That’s why to take the chance to seize as many orders as you can. The more, the better.” Dudian said.

“More?” Old Fulin was stunned.

Dudian smiled: “It is all profit. Don’t you want to make money?”

Old Fulin was startled, but suddenly came to realize. He couldn’t help but laugh.

The next day in the morning Dudian received a letter from Barton and others.

Almost once every three days they would send a letter report about the situation.

Dudian skimmed through the letters as he ate the breakfast. However, his eyes lit up as he finished all three of them. He took out a match and burned all of them.

He quickly finished the breakfast and ordered the servant to prepare a carriage for him.

Dudian told the address to the coachman, and the carriage slowly began to move.

...

Lido Avenue. The Commercial District.

Lido Avenue was a very bustling area. Everyone living in the commercial district knew about this place. Most of the top cabaret was on this road. Especially the Moulin Rouge, which had music, dance and so on from morning to night. As soon as you stepped in, you would feel a warm atmosphere.

This place was the paradise for male nobility.

A carriage stopped by the street where Moulin Rouge was built. Dudian jumped off the carriage and saw brightly dressed Barton across the street.

Barton quickly ran over as he noticed Dudian: “Today is a holiday, so he came over again. He is inside.”

Dudian nodded and glanced at Barton’s dress: “Very good.”

Barton’s face turned red: “I had to spend some money on them to get inside. ”

“Knowing how to use money is an ability,” Dudian said as he patted his shoulder to comfort Barton. Then he walked down the stairs into the Moulin Rouge.

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“Sir, please.”

A few exceptionally beautiful and sexy women dressed in bright colored dresses were by the door as they invited them into the Moulin Rouge. It seemed that they were specially trained to hook people’s mind.

Dudian looked towards the ticket office that was in middle of the hall. He glanced at the prices and looked back at Barton.

Barton understood what Dudian was searching for and whispered: “Second floor of the ballroom.”

Dudian looked at the young girl behind the counter: “Give me two tickets to the party held on the second floor.” Afterward, he paid her four silver coins which were worth an ordinary resident’s monthly salary.

The young girl quickly collected the money.

“Here, sir.” Said the maid who was waiting for them as they paid the money.

Dudian thought that the service was quite satisfactory. The maid took them to the second floor.

“Inside,” Barton said as his face turned red.

Dudian smiled: “You are the most honest.”

Barton scratched his head. Both of them were going upstairs the wooden steps to the second floor. From time to time they met young nobles who had sexy companions by their arms. They were chatting and laughing as they left the place.

“Young Masters, this way please.” The maid came over and used her slender arm to push the heavy door.

The music echoed out the moment the heavy door opened.

Dudian and Barton entered together. Dudian saw a counter set up at the entrance of the music hall. There were many masks placed behind the counter. It happened so that party was a masked ball.

“Welcome young masters.” Another two sweet girls smiled at them: “Please choose your favorite masks.”

Dudian glanced behind the counter and chose a green mask while Barton selected an eagle mask.

The place was extremely large. At the moment few noble youths were accompanied by slim figured women in the dancehall as they danced while the music resounded.

Barton raised his hand and pointed. “That’s him.”

Dudian has long noticed Vick because of his odor. Dudian saw that Vick was wearing a white gentleman suit. He was dancing with a girl in the corner. One of his palms had grabbed behind the girl while the other stroked and kneaded up and down from the front.

There was a trace of a smile on Dudian’s face as he said: “We have to go to the bathroom and wait.”

Barton was stunned but still nodded his head. He turned around and disappeared into the crowd.

Dudian waved to a waiter who held a fruit plate and wine. Dudian got a glass of red wine and chose a corner to observe Vick Milan. He couldn’t hear them, but he could see from his body language that Vick was a bit drunk. He slowly walked towards them and concentrated a bit to make his move. He closed them and by ‘mistake’ hit Vick’s arm.

Vick was fascinated by the smell of the beauty he was holding. Suddenly he felt that his armpit felt cold. He looked back and saw that his clothes were wet. Moreover, a figure wearing a green monster mask was holding an empty glass.

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry.” Dudian said as he lowered his head.

Vick was angered: “Are you blind?”

“Sorry, I’m sorry.”

“Damn” Vick was anxious to teach a lesson to this bold person.

The enchanting woman in his arm who wore a white colored cat mask looked at Dudian. She saw that he was apologizing non-stop. Although she was unhappy in her heart, she still held Vick and whispered to his ear: “My dear count. Don’t make this affect our lovely mood.”

Vick’s anger gradually was suppressed down by her persuasion. He fiercely stared at Dudian and turned back to the woman: “I got to clean up. Wait for me in here.”

“Ah, come back quickly.” The woman kissed his face.

Vick shook his wet arm and whispered back: “I’ll be back in a moment.” He pushed the crowd as he made his way to the bathroom.

Dudian mixed into the crowd and quietly followed up.

It was a public bathroom. There were few tubs inside, and each other were separated as they were made into a compartment.

Dudian saw that Barton was waiting while Kroen and Joseph were next to him. Although they were wearing masks, Dudian

could recognize them because of their body odor.

Vick took off his coat and began to wring of the coat to squeeze out the wine.

At the moment there was no-one in the bathroom. Dudian winked at three of them to make sure that one of them stayed by the door. Vick was concentrated on his close and didn't notice that there were others in the bathroom.

Dudian made a decisive attack as his hand hit Vick's neck.

Bang! Vick was caught off guard. After a simple hit, he lost his consciousness, and his body softly went down.

Dudian quickly holds onto his body. One of them held onto Vick as he stripped his coat and mask. Later on, he rapidly wore Vick's coat and masked as a replacement.
He closed the compartment as he left Vick's body in there.

Barton was scared as he saw 'Vick' come out. Dudian immediately said: "It's me." He looked at the trio: "I'm going to pretend that I'm drunk and you guys will escort me to leave. One of you should go and bring the carriage."

Barton and the other two were frightened. However, after they found out that Vick's body was warm and there was no wound they were relieved.

Dudian straightened his clothes and returned to the wall. He soon found the woman wearing a white cat mask.

“At the end.” The woman wearing the white cat mask smiled: “Are we going to continue to play around?”

Dudian’s finger pointed above to the third floor.

The woman looked up.

At that moment, Dudian’s other hand swept and removed the gold necklace from her neck. He took it, retracted his hand and threw the necklace into his pocket in a single move. He had learned this kind of pick-pocketing in prison.

The woman was not aware of Dudian’s theft. She glanced up and then recovered her eyes and gently beat Dudian’s chest: “We can’t go upstairs. Don’t be so mischievous. “

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Dudian didn’t speak as he quietly senses the smell of Barton and the other three as they went out of the the Moulin Rouge. He pointed his wet coat to the girl and turned around to leave without giving any explanation.

The girl was stunned and angry. She stomped and continued to wait.

Dudian dived into the crowd and bypassed the girl’s sight. He left the ballroom and exited the Moulin Rouge. He noticed the Milan family’s flag on a carriage parked outside the Moulin Rouge. There were a coachman and two knights waiting for their master.

The ballroom was dimly lit, so the girl was not aware, but outside was bright. Dudian knew that it would be hard to conceal himself from the eyes of two knights using coat alone. He quickly descended the stairs and reached the carriage that was waiting for him.

“He is inside.” Barton saw Dudian get onto the carriage and asked in a nervous tone: “What should we do next?”

Dudian didn’t speak, but looked at the Vick, who was lying inside. He looked at Kroen, who was sitting in coachman’s position: “Let’s go to Artemis street!”

“Artemis street?” Kroen was scared as the court was there. He saw that Dudian didn’t explain the details, so he raised the rope

and whipped the horses to move the carriage.

The Artemis street was far away from the Lida avenue. It took about two hours to arrive there. On the way, Vick woke up once, but was hit by Dudian and lost the consciousness.

On the way, they found a remote alley where few people were passing by. Dudian grabbed Vick by his arm and took him off the carriage. He slapped his back few times. The others who saw the scene thought that few drunk aristocrats were vomiting outside because of binge drinking.

Dudian brought Vick into an alley which was far away from the main road. There was a low chance that Vick would be found by pedestrians as there was no-one passing by at all.

Dudian laid his body in a comfortable position so that Vick could sleep more. This way it would take a bit long for him to wake up.

Dudian turned back and went back. There was no one watching him, so no one noticed that two people went in while one got out from the alley.

Dudian wore Vick's coat and said to Barton and Joseph: "You guys should wait in here. In case he wakes up make sounds to attract the attention of passer-by people."

"What is it?" Barton curiously looked at the porcelain.

Dudian explained and taught several ways, and Barton and Joseph firmly remembered his instruction.

“Why would we need to get the attention of others?” Joseph asked.

“He is going to feel ashamed and try to leave away.” Dudian continued: “However you shouldn’t be too entangled with him. He will leave away, but just make sure that others notice that he had appeared in here.”

Barton and Joseph looked at each other and nodded: “Alright.”

They got off the carriage when Dudian said to Kroen: “Let’s go to the sixth street.”

Kroen had fully assumed the role of the coachmen, so he didn’t ask anything but focused on driving the carriage.

“To the 12th house,” Dudian said.

The carriage was parked in front of the 12th house in the Sixth Street. It was a small manor. There was a huge tree with red fruit on the lawn.

Dudian sensed two odors in the house. However, he could faintly feel deacon Huey’s odor floating from the house.

Dudian wore a mask and approached the house. He knocked on the door, and a moment later the door was pushed open. A beautiful woman of thirty or so years of age was looking at Dudian. She was scared as she saw the masked man: “Who are you?”

“I’m sent by the court for investigation.” Dudian spoke in a low tone: “I have to borrow some stuff belonging to the late Deacon.”

The beautiful woman was puzzled, but she still said: “Come in.”

Duddian nodded. He put on the slippers and went into the house. There was another smell coming off from the second floor. It seems the odor belonged to Deacon Huey’s youngest son.

“What kind of documents do you want?” The beauty looked at Dudian. She felt a bit strange and suspicious as she asked Dudian.

Dudian looked back to her and whispered: “Weren’t you the most valuable thing belonging to your husband?”

Beauty was alarmed as she looked at Dudian: “Y-you. Aren’t you from the court?”

“Your husband has done something wrong,” Dudian said. “He made up for it with his life, but unfortunately there was a hole left because of his death wasn’t enough to cover everything. I have to fill in the hole.”

The beautiful woman began to retreat step by step as he heard

Dudian's words. There was horror in her eyes as she watched the figure wearing the mask. She didn't expect that the murderer of her husband would be standing in front of her in her house. Her body trembled because of fear: "I-i...I... Why-why did you kill my husband!? You demon! Aren't you afraid of sanctions by court..."

Dudian didn't wait for her to continue to speak or scream. He rushed out and covered her mouth. Dudian whispered: "I will give you a happy and rapid death. It won't be like your husband's which was so painful. He begged me to kill him." As soon as he finished talking his arm twisted her neck. Kacha!

Dudian's expression was gloomy as he slowly put her body to the ground. He was about to go upstairs when he heard a humming sound of coming from the stairs. He turned around and grabbed a cloth and wiped woman's chin and lips. Then he took out the necklace from his pocket and threw it onto the ground.

He was preparing to leave when the child's footsteps echoed from the stairs. The kid stretched out his head and shouted: "Hey!" It seems the kid was trying to prank his mother.

Dudian's body stiffened as his eyes met the kid's.

It was an eight-year-old male child. His face was full of a naughty smile, but solidified the moment he saw his mother lying on the floor. He was stunned as he saw the man wearing a strange mask.

Countless of thoughts flashed through Dudian's mind. The first reaction was to kill the kid, but he remembered that he was

wearing a mask. He turned around and quickly left. He opened the door, put on his shoes and took the slippers with him. The next moment he was in the carriage and Kroen was driving the carriage away.

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The boy recovered as he saw the stranger leave in a hurry. He rushed down the stairs as the tears began to flow out of his eyes. He lifted his mother and spoke in a nervous tone: “Mother! Wake up! Wake up!”

The woman’s head softly swung as the kid shook her body.

The boy’s heart was full of fear. He raised his hand and touched his mother’s artery. He wasn’t going to continue the steps of his father and become a judge but instead was planning to become a doctor. The teacher had taught them simple methods about identifying whether the human was alive or dead. Checking breath, touching arteries and so on were the basic methods. If there were a serious injury, then it would be very difficult to detect by checking the breath. However, by touching the arteries, you could accurately detect the person’s condition.

The kid’s brain buzzed as he felt no heartbeats as he touched the artery. He trembled as he tried to check the breath. But the result was same. All of the vital signs were gone. The tears flowed out as he held onto the woman’s body.

He thought of the stranger after crying for a while. There was a strong hatred accumulated in his heart because of his mother’s death. He quickly got up and trotted out. The murderer had long gone. He clutched his fists as he went back into the room. He saw a glimpse of the gold necklace, but hesitated to touch it.

He knew about jewelry in her mother's box. There was not a necklace which was similar to it. He was about to pick it up when he thought of what his father had said to him about the destruction of evidence and fingerprints.

He stopped as he thought of that and turned around. His mother was lying on the floor while the kid went out of the house.

...

Dudian took off the coat and pants while he put his jacket and clothing while Kroen drove the carriage to another suburb.

They drove to the wilderness. It didn't take long before they met a small pond filled with rainwater.

Kroen parked the carriage by the pond. Dudian threw Vick's coat and pants into the compartment and checked the carriage to confirm that no other evidence was left. He went towards the horse and punched its head. Bang! The animal's head burst, and its body shook before it staggered and fell.

Dudian sent the carriage with a horse's body into the pond.

"Let's go." Dudian glanced around once more to confirm that no one had noticed them. He told Kroen to leave with him.

Kroen was surprised when he heard Dudian talk about footprints. They walked on top of small stones and returned.

They rushed back to the street where Barton and Joseph were waiting for them. Dudian whistled as he saw both of them wait for Dudian and Kroen. Vick's smell had long faded from the alley.

Barton and Joseph came over towards Dudian and Kroen. They were about to say something when Dudian made an eye sign for them to stop: "Let's hire a carriage now. We should talk about details later on."

"When did he go?" Dudian asked Barton in the carriage.

Barton replied. "About an hour before you returned."

Dudian knew that there was a small flaw in the timing of deacon Huey's wife's death. He frowned as he hoped that the court wouldn't be too careful while tracing the death. He had to rely on his luck that this issue would be overlooked.

Dudian ordered them to replace their clothes and wash properly as they reached the Ryan Castle.

...

The next day.

Dudian and Old Fulin were having breakfast together. The middle-aged maid came in as she handed the newspapers that were

given by the postal service a few minutes ago.

Dudian took over and glanced at the newspapers printed by the agency under the Mellon Consortium. The headlines were full of ‘attacks’ to the Scott consortium, but the real goal was to question the validity of match products launched by the Scott consortium. Their main aim was to propagate that the match would never replace the position of fire sickle.

Dudian checked the newspapers by other publishers. There were reports on the match, but the evaluation was more neutral.

Additionally, two newspapers pointed out his name as the inventor of the match. However, his title wasn’t published as a hunter, but trainee of the magistrate. After all, the hunter was a job class which was hidden from the civilian population.

“You are famous now.” Old Fulin smiled as he read the newspaper. “You will have a new title added to the list. Mr. Dean, the great inventor. ”

Dudian faintly smiled: “It is strange to see that Holy Church hunts after alchemists but products such as matches and others which are based on alchemy could be sold through formal channels. Moreover, the inventor is given credit for his or her development. Is it not alchemy?”

“Isn’t it very normal?” Old Fulin asked: “You can find wildflowers grow freely in the wilderness. But they are worthless. However, if you moved them to the flower shop, then you can

make money by selling them. Again, if we strip me and your clothes, then we would be normal humans. However, after we put on the clothes, I'm a noble while you are a civilian."

"So if the Holy Church is aware that these inventors are alchemists. Why would they allow them to exist?"

"Because the Scott consortium is going to produce and market the product on behalf of the Holy Church on the surface. You have invented the match, but it will be written as you have followed God of Light's will to create it." Old Fulin continued: "According to the doctrine of the Holy Church, the God of Light has created all things. The inventions marketed by the consortiums have to mark that all the products were created according to God's instructions."

"So the inventor is an alchemist who has succumbed to Holy Church?!" Dudian asked.

"There are lots of alchemists who would seek refuge with the Holy Church. I assume you are aware of the 'Temple of Elements' which had gathered all the great inventors."

Dudian naturally was aware of the temple's existence. All the resources brought from outside would be taken to the 'Temple of Elements' to be evaluated and defined.

"So to speak the Holy Church has a lot of power within its grasp as it controls the underground passages to outside," Dudian said.

Old Fulin shook his head: “Never underestimate the dark church. There are more advantages when you do business behind the closed doors.”

Dudian nodded in approval.

“It seems that you are not a good believer.” Dudian laughed.

Old Fulin replied: “You are wrong. My faith has always been firm and strong.”

“Do you still have faith?” Dudian asked.

“Is money not a belief?”

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Dudian smiled and took the newspaper published by the military.

“The incident related to the assassination of deacon Huey. Murderer acted again. Deacon Huey’s wife Mary was killed!”

“The magistrate has searched all night long, and there is solid evidence regarding the identity of the murderer!”

“Yesterday afternoon, late Deacon Huey’s wife, Mary was murdered in her home. According to the investigation, few neighbors had seen a masked suspect enter the late deacon’s family house.”

“The magistrate has solid evidence regarding the identity of the murderer, and he will be arrested.”

There was a wide smile on Dudian’s face as he saw the final summary.

“What are you so happy for?” Old Fulin who was sitting opposite to Dudian noticed his facial expression. He had checked up the newspaper, but as he hadn’t used glasses, he wasn’t able to read the content.

Dudian handed the newspaper over.

Old Fulin checked the newspaper and looked at Dudian as there was a surprise on his face: “Did you do it?”

Dudian replied: “No, it was done by a member of the Milan family.”

Old Fulin was stunned.

...

The castle of the Milan family.

The dining room was made of granite. The members of the Milan family came one after another and took their seats.

Seven or eight maids were at stood close by to the table which was a dozen meters long.

The old patriarch of the Milan family was sitting at the head of the table as it represented the chief’s position. This year he was going to be sixty-three years old. It’s been some time that he has retreated from his position to enjoy the later years of his life. His eldest son Abel managed all the industries and companies under the family’s command.
Abel was a forty-year-old middle-aged man with a refined temperament. He was sitting in a correct position by the right side of the old patriarch.

“Let’s pray for the meal.” Old patriarch Alex said.

All the people sitting on both sides of the table stopped chatting the moment the words were uttered by the old patriarch. They clasped their hands, closed their eyes and began to recite the teachings from the book of light: “Thank the Lord as he gave us the food. Thank the Lord as he blessed us with wealth. Thank the Lord…”

It didn’t take long before they finished the prayer.

“Let’s eat,” Alex said as he opened his eyes.

Everyone began to eat.

After they had started dining, a young figure rushed down from the stairs and sat down on the chair by the table. He began to recite the prayer and eat afterward.

“Vick! Why are you so late?” Abel, who was sitting on Alex’s right shouted out.

Vick saw that he wasn’t going to be able to avoid his father: “I drank a bit much last night. Overslept! Sorry!”

“Well,” Abel spoke in a cold tone: ” You should learn from your brother and sister. You are a knight and has to be and act like one! Even if you don’t have to go to border areas to protect the land at least don’t disgrace the knight’s glory!”

Vick said in an honest tone: “I know.”

“Alright, alright! The child snoozed a bit no need to make a scene out of it.” Alex whispered to Abel.

Abel sighed: “Dad, you have spoiled him a lot!”

Alex smiled as he looked at Vick: “I heard that recently you and the little miss of the Mel family are very close. Are you interested in that little girl?”

Vick felt the jealous eyes of his brothers and cousins on him. But he was secretly proud in his heart. He humbly said: “Grandpa, I was just inquiring news about Jenny from Sarah.”

Alex laughed: “It seems you are intimate to call her by her first name. If you ever want to pursue then let me know. It would be good if you guys get married.”

Abel slightly frowned, but didn’t say anything. He bowed his head as he cut the steak. Occasionally he would raise his head to stare at Vick coldly. It was to remind him not to get carried away.

Vick noticed the cold glances from his father and scratched his head: “Grandpa, I will find a way on my own.”

“Good boy! This how a man from the Milan family should act!” Alex laughed.

As Alex's voice faded, a steward ran through the hall in a hurry. He was breathing heavily as he said to Alex: "Master. There is a problem. A group of knights from magistrate have come. They want to break through..."

Abel was about to scold steward as he didn't follow the etiquette, but the moment he heard his words many thoughts passed through his heart. He immediately stood up and said to Alex: "Father, I'll go and take a look."

Alex glanced at him: "Deal with it."

"I will." Abel nodded and left the dining room with the steward. They came to the castle door. There was a squadron of knights led by two figures who had silver armor. Their badges were the symbol of their identity as the knights of the magistrate!

The door was opened, and Abel quietly waited for them to come inside. However, his heart was suspicious as those two silver armored meant that the magistrate was firm on taking action. Normally, a magistrate wouldn't offend their family if there was no apparent reason.

"What wind has blown you here?" Abel took the initiative to talk, as he saw them approach closer.

The disciplinary knight was leading their squadrons as they entered the castle courtyard. They had a young boy with them. The moment they heard Abel's words, the thick eyebrows of the

both disciplinary knights wrinkled: “You should be Abel Milan!? Today we have come to take your son to court because of an on-going investigation.”

“Ah?” Abel was stunned as he didn’t expect that they would come after his son. He thought that something with their businesses had gone wrong: “I am Abel Milan. My son is called Vick. He is a knight. Why would court ask for him? It has to be some misunderstanding.”

“Misunderstanding?” The disciplinary knight on the right spoke in a cold tone: “Your son is involved in a homicide case. There is solid evidence that your son is the murderer of deacon Huey. There is no misunderstanding. Moreover, you better let him out. If we don’t take him today, then the court will issue an arrest warrant against him immediately!”

“What?! My son is a murderer” Abel was a little relieved when they mentioned an assassination case. However, when the disciplinary knight made clear that the case was about the murder of deacon Huey, Abel’s heart tightened. The nature of a normal murder case and the assassination of a deacon were two totally different things!

“IT is impossible!” Abel said in a hurry: “It is impossible for my son to kill Deacon, Huey! There must be a misunderstanding. There is another reason behind this case!”

“Well!” The second disciplinary knight who had a sword scar on his face said: “We have investigated deep enough, and there is no misunderstanding. Now, if you continue to struggle, then it will be

regarded as covering up for a crime!”

Abel looked at disciplinary knight’s blunt expression. His face turned ugly as he hesitated a bit. He ordered the steward who was next to him: “Call Vick out!”

Steward was stunned as he heard the words said by the disciplinary knights. However, he recovered as he listened to Abel’s order and returned to the castle in a hurry.

After a while, Vick was led out by the butler of the house. Alex was walking behind the Vick. There were two middle-aged women behind Alex.

Vick’s face turned white and pale as he saw two disciplinary knights. He said in a hurry: “There has to be some mistake! I simply can’t kill Deacon, Huey! Why would I do such a stupid thing?”

“It’s him!”

The little boy who was standing close to disciplinary knights shouted out. Both the disciplinary knights, Alex, and Abel, were shocked.

The kid’s eyes were red and full of hatred as he stared at Vick. “Yes! It’s him! I saw him yesterday!”

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Vick stared at the kid: “Stop uttering nonsense! Where have you seen me, you little devil?!” His tone was panicky as he spoke.

The disciplinary knight grabbed the little boy’s arm in case he rushed to attack Vick.

“You are the murderer! I want to kill you! I want revenge!” The little boy struggled, but he couldn’t get away from disciplinary knight’s grasp. His eyes were red as he looked at Vick.

Vick’s face was ugly as he looked at both disciplinary knights: “Where did you get this kid? He is slandering me! Nonsense! Do you know what is going to happen to you if you continued to slander a noble?”

The disciplinary knight with a sword scar on his face retorted: “Who do you think you are in the court’s eyes? He is the son of Deacon Huey! He witnessed you kill the deacon’s wife last afternoon!”

Vick and Abel were startled as they didn’t think that the little devil was Huey’s son.

“Did you see him kill your mother? Why didn’t you get killed? Are you sure you saw his face?” Abel asked continuous questions.

The little boy heard him and looked up. Tears gushed out of his

eyes, and he raised his hands to clean them off: “Although I didn’t see his face these were the same clothes that he wore yesterday! I admit that he was wearing a mask yesterday!”

Vick was startled as he looked down at his clothes. His pupils narrowed as he remembered that yesterday when he woke up, he found that his coat was taken. He thought it was just a robbery. Moreover, he had few more spare coats as a replacement in his wardrobe, so he had worn the same coat today.

Abel’s heart was relieved as he hearts the kid’s statement. He turned towards two disciplinary knights: “It seems it’s just a small misunderstanding. There are many people with the same taste as my son. So it could be that the murderer has used the same clothes, but it doesn’t mean that it was my son.”

The knight’s face sank: “Do you think that we just rely on a child’s word to catch the criminal? Stop being long-winded. Now, are you going to let him come with us or not?”

Abel’s face turned ugly as he didn’t think that the attitude of the disciplinary knight would be so tough. Also, he tried to restrain, but he knew that the Milan family alone wouldn’t be able to resist the anger of the magistrate when it came to Deacon Huey’s assassination. Even if the entire Mellon consortium was involved, the outcome would not change. They could use the money to resolve small matters, but the death of a deacon was on another level. If they issue a decision that Vick was the killer, then there would be nothing that they could do.

“Hm!” Alex said: “The magistrate has become quite arrogant in

the recent years. I will personally come over to see the proceedings." He turned to the butler: "Prepare the carriage!"

The butler turned away and ran in a hurry to get into the carriage.

Vick and Abel's faces changed. They knew that things had become irreparable at this point. No matter what the final result was if a noble was brought to court then the family's reputation would decline too. Moreover, they knew that magistrate wouldn't arrest people if they had a firm grasp on the issue. They were worried about the facts in the court's hands.

"You should go first. We will figure out something." Abel sighed as he looked at Vick's eyes.

Vick clenched his fists in anger, but wasn't unable to do anything.

A knight standing behind the disciplinary knights brought up the handcuffs.

Vick's face was ugly as he lifted his hands.

Abel had a gloomy look as he watched his son taken to court by the knights.

...

“Today’s breakfast was really good.”

Dudian stretched his arms. He was pleased with the news. He drank a cup of tea and looked at Old Fulin: “I will go out to complete the unfinished business.”

Old Fulin asked with interest: “What has happened?”

“It is time to appeal to my case.” Dudian smiled: ” I have to complete the restoration of freedom. ” At present, his identity was a person who was on bail. Although he was able to live outside the prison, his activities would be limited. After all, the perpetrators had to go to court to report on the given time. Moreover, if magistrate decided that there is new progress regarding the case, then he must be there on call or else will be regarded as a criminal.

Old Fulin was pale as he asked: “Do you want to go all out against the Mellon Consortium?”

“No. I’m not that unreasonable.” Dudian got up, picked up his jacket from behind the chair and wore it: “I got to eat in small pieces. After all, if I want to swallow the whole piece in one go at the end I’ll choke up!”

…

The Magistrate building. Artemis street.

Alex got out of the carriage and used the stick to go along with his grandson Vick to the court hall.

“The room is meant for the interrogation of the suspects. Outsiders are forbidden to enter. You should wait in the hall.” The disciplinary knight looked at Alex.

Alex looked back at him: “I understand that.” Then he turned towards Vick: “Child, don’t worry. You certainly will be fine since it is a misunderstanding.”

Vick’s tension settled down as he heard his grandpa’s words. He followed after two disciplinary knights.

In the dark interrogation room.

A slim young woman wearing a silver armor looked up and down at Vick. Her armor outlined the sexy curves of her body: “It is an official investigation. Please make sure that you are not hiding anything!”

The urgency in Vick’s heart relaxed as he saw her beautiful face: “I am wronged! I will certainly work with you to solve out this problem.”

“That’s good.” The woman nodded. “Last night, late Deacon Huey’s wife Mary was murdered at home. Ken, their son, saw you. Although there was a mask, the clothes have exposed you. Moreover, the neighbors and passersby have seen your figure

coming out of deacon Huey's house and rapidly enter a carriage. All the people have been found and have given testimony."

Vick was startled: "It is a misunderstanding. Why would I kill Deacon Huey or his wife? I am not crazy to do something like that. IT is a setup. Someone has worn the same clothes for me and framed me. Ah! Moreover, yesterday I was struck by someone and fainted. When I woke up my coat was gone. The people who attacked me should be the suspects behind this case. They deliberately framed me!"

The young woman looked at him and nodded. "Did you yesterday go to the Moulin Rouge cabaret in Lido Avenue?"

"Yes, I was in the Moulin Rouge yesterday afternoon. That's the thing, how could I kill Deacon Huey's wife if I was in the Moulin Rouge?"

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“Nothing is impossible! It would take two hours to go from the Moulin Rouge cabaret to Deacon Huey’s house.” The young woman said in cold tone: “According to our investigation you didn’t take your carriage yesterday to go back to home. The knights who were supposed to take you home didn’t find you in the Moulin Rouge! Moreover, many people saw you on different streets yesterday. There are lots of witnesses.”

Sweat drops as big as small beans flowed out from Vick’s forehead: “I was framed! I have already said that I was struck and fainted in the Moulin Rouge’s bathroom yesterday afternoon. The moment I woke up I was in some strange little alley which I have never been to.”

“It’s shameful that a knight tries to cover up things with lies! Hypocrisy!” Young woman mercilessly said in a cold tone: “We have searched for your smell which led us to a pool outside the suburbs. The horse was punched to death. You should be able to do this with your strength! Moreover, your coat and pants were found in the compartment of the carriage. According to our investigation, you were wearing a different coat when you went back to your house.”

Vick opened his mouth but found that he was unable to refute her claims. He gradually became aware of what kind of situation he was in after the woman told him details. He understood that the people who attacked him yesterday meant to finish him for good!

All the evidence was forged to make sure that he goes to prison.

“I said that my coat was taken away and I had to buy a new one before coming back to home.” Vick still insisted on his version of the story.

“Aren’t you pleading guilty?” Young woman indifferently said: “Do you think that we would come to take you out of your house without conclusive evidence? We don’t want to hear your dirty noble apology afterward!”

Vick’s face change as he heard her words. He pounced on the table as he completely ignored her beautiful face: “Do you dare to insult nobility?”

The disciplinary knight with a sword scar on his face immediately stepped forward and caught Vick’s wrist: “Presumptuous! Where do you think you are?”

Vick looked at him in anger. Their eyes were fixed on each other. Vick’s heart tightened, and gradually he restrained anger and sat down.

The disciplinary knight looked back at the young woman: “Michelle you should also pay attention to your speech. Although aristocrats have no special privileges within the inner wall, but don’t let your words fall on the ears of the others.”

Michelle looked back at Vick: “Well!”

Vick's heart was surprised as he heard the knight's words. He had heard about 'disciplinary' status, but had rarely seen them. Moreover, he didn't think that these people turned out to be from the inner wall!

He eye shrank as he thought about that towering wall. He had repeatedly listened to his grandfather Alex and his father Abel says that their family's lifelong struggle was to enter the wall!

"I did not lie!" Vick looked at Michelle's eyes. He tried not to flinch as he was trying to pass the sincerity in his heart to another: "I swear by order of the Knighthood! If I lie, let me suffer the torture of Asura!"

The asura torture was the method the Holy Church used to treat most evil criminals. The body's skin would be peeled off and fed to animals. It was an extremely bloody process.

"Knighthood?" Michelle sneered: "I have seen and executed quite a few prisoners who were knights. Junior ones, intermediate ones as well as senior level knights. Your hypocritical identity as a knight and noble can only fool the civilian population. In the eyes of the magistrate only the evidence matters! Knights? Aristocrats? Even if the evidence showed that the Pope himself was guilty, then there is not ruling but death!"

Vick's face turned extremely ugly as he knew that he had met mad disciplinary knights. He was displeased as if his family could get their hands on their director...!

However, he knew that in reality, he wouldn't be able to do anything. He had to change his bitter tone: "I was wronged. Although I told you a lie, I didn't kill them! I didn't!"

"Don't you want to spill the beans?" Michelle slightly sneered and looked at the other disciplinary knight: "Bring in witnesses!"

The disciplinary knight with the sword scar ordered a knight of the magistrate to bring the witnesses.

Vick's heart was cold. Although he was a young master of a noble family, he knew that this time he was framed for good. If the court had evidence, then it is likely that they have believed the puppet masters of this circus. Moreover, if the evidence was conclusive, then there was not chance for him to justify himself!

Soon, a beautiful woman was brought in. The disciplinary knight with the sword scar on his face asked the woman: "Is it him?"

The beautiful woman looked at Vick. There was anger on her face as she said: "Yes, that's him!"

Vick was stunned as he saw the woman. He growled: "You bitch! Who bought you to frame me? Who?!"

"Quiet!" Michelle snorted.

Vick bites his lips as he stared at this beautiful woman.

The disciplinary knight with the sword scar came in front of the beautiful woman and looked at Vick: “Was she your partner at the Moulin Rouge yesterday?”

Vick was stunned as he heard what he said: “What?

The disciplinary knight was getting angry, but he endured as he repeated the question again.

Vick at first thought that the woman was bought by someone else to frame him. But he didn’t think that this was not the case. There was hope as he said: “Yes! Yesterday afternoon she was my partner in the Moulin Rouge! She can testify that I was there! She is my witness!”

Michelle sneered: “We know that your partner is her. But do you remember this thing?” She unwrapped the paper and took out a necklace and showed to Vick.

Vick was startled: “This is the necklace that I gave to her!”

Michelle sneered: “The evidence is now conclusive! You are guilty!”

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Vick was completely shocked as he heard Michelle: “Confession? I didn’t kill them, why should I admit?”

Michelle was impatient: “This bracelet was found at the scene of deacon Huey’s wife’s murder. According to the smell, it indeed belongs to her.”

Vick stared: “The necklace was found at the murder scene? How?! Why do you doubt that I haven’t killed her? Maybe it’s her!”

The woman was scared: “Stop saying nonsense! Yesterday they proved that the murderer is a man! There were wine stains on your discarded clothes! I have seen them. Moreover, you stole the necklace from my neck yesterday. I was aware of it after you left! I searched for you but couldn’t find you!”

Vick stared blankly at her while many thoughts passed through his mind. He suddenly realized that what kind of an insidious plan was made to frame him. It seems that someone has acted in his stead while he was unconscious.

“I know!” Vick said in an excited tone: “The murderer is the person who hit me yesterday. The wine! I went to the bathroom to clean my clothes, but was knocked unconscious. That person must have disguised as me and stolen her necklace. Moreover, that has to be the person who has shown himself in different places to make

an alibi against me! After killing the deacon's wife, he has put the necklace on the scene on purpose!"

Michelle sneered: "The idea is pretty good, but all the evidence is pointing at you! Let me finish your story. I believe you are framed!"

Vick was anxious: "Of course I'm framed. You are known to be just and strict. Why don't you thoroughly investigate the matter? I have no reason to kill them! I am not crazy. I have never crossed passes with the deacon or his wife. Why should I take such a big risk and kill someone with that status?"

Michelle's brows wrinkled. Actually, it was the biggest doubt that the investigation face. The motive was puzzling. According to the investigation, the aristocrat youth didn't have a motive to kill the deacon.

Therefore, they couldn't figure out why Vick tried to kill Deacon, Huey!

The disciplinary knight with a sword scar said to Michelle: "It is a bit fishy. We should re-review it again so that we can come up with a reason to satisfy the Milan family too."

Michelle frowned as she looked at Vick then she said:"Alright. But during our investigation, you will be temporarily detained in the court. We will see what the result will be!"

Vick's heart tightened. He felt cold sweat in his underwear. He was tired of sitting in the chair. Moreover, it was the first time he felt that he was so close to death.

...

Michelle and the other disciplinary knight left the interrogation room. Two knights of magistrate escorted Vick out. The other disciplinary knight looked at Michelle: "It is possible that he was framed."

Michelle's brows wrinkled: "Although we have yet to find his motive for assassination the evidence is conclusive. It's just an excuse he is telling us. Every prisoner comes with perfect reason and story. But at the end it is a story."

The other disciplinary knight nodded: "That is true. But we still need to strive to find his motive for murder as soon as possible so that the Milan family could find nothing to say."

Michelle nodded and said in a low tone: "The deacon Huey's assassination has affected us very badly. IF we can't solve the case as soon as possible, then the magistrate's reputation will fall. There must be proper verdict maximum in three days. The family will certainly try to find a scapegoat and take him out. I have seen lots of tricks such as that. They don't care whether he has killed or not as long as he is out safely."

The disciplinary knight sighed: "I know, I will get results in three days."

“Well,” Michelle nodded slightly.

At this time, a middle-aged deacon passed by. He was holding a stack of information in his hand.

Michelle said: “Who’s case is that? Why there is so much information?”

Middle-aged deacon wryly smiled: “It is not a big case. Three years ago deacon Huey’ handled a case and the culprit has come over to complain. He wants re-trial on the case.”

Both of them were surprised. Michelle asked: “What is the case about? Perhaps it may have some link to Deacon Huey’s assassination. It may be helpful.”

The deacon didn’t refuse and explained: “It is not a big case. Three years ago a hunter from the Mellon consortium had stolen the Longshan ruby from the Milan family and was sentenced to two hundred and thirty years in jail. Now, he was bailed out by a noble and has appealed the sentence.”

Michelle and the disciplinary knight with sword scar were startled. They had an idea as their eyes brightened up.

“Alright, thank you.” Michelle finished and whispered to the other disciplinary knight: “Immediately investigate this person as well as aristocracy behind him. Moreover, the search for the cases

when Deacon Huey was involved with the Milan family's matters."

Both of them speculated about a few things. Their eyes were full of excitement as they finally seemed to find the clue to solving the case.

Both of them immediately separated.

In the hall of the magistrate.

Dudian was sitting on the sofa meant for the guests. There was an old man sitting opposite to him. He had a huge diamond ring on his finger. Dudian thought that the man was an aristocrat from his temperament. This old man was Alex Milan.

Dudian looked at him as a trace of a smile appeared on his face: "Uncle, you are so old. Have you come over for a case too?"

Alex looked at Dudian. He saw that the teenager was dressed well. He didn't say anything but nodded. He was thinking about how to find the right people to get Vick out of the court.

"It seems you have encountered a big problem." Dudian continued: "Didn't your family accompany you over?"

Alex's brows wrinkled. Did the kid saw that he was not an ordinary person? He even dared to speak so freely! His tone was indifferent as he said: "Little guy, you have to learn how to behave. Kids around your age shouldn't be in the magistrate."

Dudian shrugged his shoulders: “I’m not guilty as someone else has framed me. But looking at you, I believe that you are certainly being framed. Uncle, but you shouldn’t be worried. The court is fair and impartial, so they will not mistreat you. I hope you will get a fair ruling!”

Alex’s heart turned a bit comfortable as he heard Dudian talk: “It is not me but my grandson who is framed. I assume court can see that a small kid like you isn’t involved in any crime.”

Dudian laughed: “I’m not small.”

Alex faintly smiled, but didn’t say anything.

At this time an official came towards Dudian and Alex: “Who is Mr. Dean?”

“It’s me,” Dudian replied.

“This is your notice.” The man handed out the letter to Dudian.

Dudian picked up and glanced at the letter. The appeal he had brought up had passed. The court will be held in two days, so he had to go back and prepare.

“You see the magistrate is very fair. I believe uncle’s problems will be solved soon.”

“Thank you for the good wishes,” Alex said with a faint smile.

Chapter 197

Dawn came, and the sun shines upon the Ryan Castle.

The silent night had come to an end. The servants got up one after another. They fetched water, did laundry, cooking and so on.

Dudian got on early and went to the dining room to eat. He saw Old Fulin up and making breakfast.

“So early?” Dudian saw Old Fulin was already sitting in the dining room.

The old patriarch smiled: “Old men always sleep less.”

Dudian took off a chair and sat: “What happened to the factory?”

“Everything is progressing according to our plans. Mellon consortium didn’t mention about our consortium for two straight days so that we could relax. Then they tried to make the surprise attack. Everything is as expected.” Old Fulin laughed and continued: “Prestige of our consortium has risen as we have made a large consortium such as Mellon suffer.”

“The other naturally can’t figure what cards we have in our hands.” Dudian faintly smiled: “Fame is not good in a sense, as the pressure will follow.”

Old Fulin looked at him: “After two days the court will look to your case. Are you ready? The magistrate is tracing the assassination of deacon Huey, and you have made the appeal. Aren’t you worried that they will look into your case and somehow link it to the assassination?”

“They had called me to the magistrate the first time as I was on the list of suspects,” Dudian said. “They won’t call me to interrogate again as there is no evidence to find! Moreover, the newspapers have already reported that the blood on the spikes belonged to a dog but not human. Are they going to catch a dog and sentence it?”

Old Fulin smiled: “That is a masterpiece.”

Dudian shrugged his shoulders: “They don’t have any solid evidence. At best they will stare at me, but won’t be able to take action. However, this time there is witnesses and evidence that point to the Milan family. IF they investigate, they can find that I have been to the Moulin Rouge, but there is no conclusive evidence to prove that I murdered the wife.”

“The main rules of the magistrate are fairness and conviction upon evidence! Doubts and speculations are nothing but an expression of a person’s feelings. Unless the Milan family completely buy the whole magistrate then nothing will change. But it should be impossible to buy all of them. It would be like a slap in the face to the magistrate in this case. They are not that stupid!”

Old Fulin was startled: “The words that you saw are sweet to the

ears. No consortium can buy the magistrate, including the Holy Church. But you are a ‘heavy’ suspect. You will be under investigation.”

“No, this case will end soon.” Dudian shook his head.

Old Fulin was surprised: “soon?

“It has been a month since deacon Huey was assassinated. It has already been fermented for too long. The magistrate has to gain face and respect. They will just go with the evidence and give the result! As for the one who killed deacon Huey, no one cares, but his family and friends.”

Old Fulin looked up at Dudian: “How can you so sure?

“Newspaper is a good thing.” Dudian smiled: “The way the events surrounding deacon Huey is written so that there is a lack of information. They always focus and outline how powerful and cunning the magistrate is. At first glance, it seems normal, but the events that I am aware of are proving against the news. Their progress is futile!”

Old Fulin nodded. He could understand this. He would report some other things in the news to distract the people their attention and cover the core issues when it came to their consortium.

At this time, the middle-aged maid brought the morning paper.

Dudian grabbed the paper: “The Milan family’s involvement is a foregone conclusion. It will become the cornerstone of the success of my complaint. The disciplinary investigation should do an in-depth research of the cases where the Milan family and deacon Huey were involved. My case will be closely investigated too. Even though the Burong and Milan family have jointly framed me, but it will be enough to clean my sheet.”

Old Fulin also grabbed another newspaper and checked it. He sighed: “It is over for the Milan family. The Scott consortium’s new agency and the other news agencies under Huasheng consortium are covering the Milan family’s involvement in the deacon’s death. Scott consortium is already hostile towards Mellon Consortium on the surface. The other consortiums are also anxious to find problems related to Mellon Consortium. The Milan family is part of Mellon Consortium and is a big shareholder. Now, the patriarch’s eldest son is involved in a famous murder. They won’t lose an opportunity like this.”

Dudian smiled: “The moment prey shows its tail there will be archers ready to make the shot.”

Old Fulin deeply looked at the boy. He felt a bit of throb and chill because of the latter’s faint smile. He knew that the kid would stir out even more incredible things in the future.

“Perhaps you are right.” Old Fulin slowly said.

Dudian looked at him as his lips turned into a big smile.

…

The magistrate building. Artemis street.

Michelle and the disciplinary knight with the sword scar were searching the archives. They dug out three or four cases which had Deacon Huey and the Milan family.

A few hours later, Michelle had three files.

“These are the cases where Deacon Huey’s ruled over the Milan family issues in the last five years.”

Michelle’s eyes narrowed as she opened them one by one to check.

“Giant Wall Calendar. Year 302. Black Snow Season. The Longshan Ruby theft. ”

“Giant Wall Calendar. Year 303. Storm Season. The Milan mine case.”

“Giant Wall Calendar. Year 304. Black Snow Season. The Milan murder case.”

Michelle’s eyebrows wrinkled as she began to check one by one from top to bottom.

Chapter 198

“The Longshan Ruby was found in the house of a junior hunter called ‘Dean’?” Michelle looked towards the disciplinary knight with the sword scar as she read the description: “I remember well. We had investigated this case back then. ‘Dean’ was a suspect. He was a newcomer hunter in the Mellon Consortium. He was the first scavenger to get magic marks from outside and was promoted to be a hunter.”

“Yes, he was just a junior hunter.”

“Is there any way for a junior hunter to steal one of the treasures of the Milan family?”

The knight shrugged his shoulder: “Unless the Milan family has recruited crap instead of knights. Otherwise, it is unlikely.”

Michelle looked gloomy: “If it were not for his death, we could get more information about how many such cases were handled by Deacon Huey.”

The disciplinary knight with the sword scar exclaimed: “No one can resist the temptation of wealth. Even though Huey was a deacon, but he was a human being at the end of the day. He had family, children, a wife. Moreover, he loved gambling. He spent so much, but he couldn’t earn that much money.”

“Anyway, wrong is wrong! Any other reason is nothing but an excuse.” Michelle exclaimed: “The kid was clearly framed. How

could he give such a contradictory verdict?”

The other knight smiled: “It is better not to talk about this outside. Because the aristocracy could get a whiff of this. Let’s keep it within the people of the inner wall.”

“The inner wall area is more complicated than this.” Michelle frowned and didn’t say anything anymore. She continued to read the following two cases.

…

The spacious hall. Milan family castle.

Bang! Alex threw the cup onto the floor. The value of the Cup was dozens of silver coins. The tea sprinkled onto the ground and soaked the red carpet. He looked at Abel in anger: “No way? He is your son! Damn it!”

Abel’s face was gloomy as he replied: “I have contacted the Mel and Burong families too. Moreover, they have used all the resources of the consortium. We could contact the high-level judges and deacons of the magistrate, but no one answered. It’s because a deacon was assassinated that no one can intervene. Moreover, the other consortiums newspapers are guiding and swaying the public opinion to pressure the magistrate. The Scott consortium is especially active in this matter.”

Abel’s fingers clenched into a fist: “The other consortiums are

putting pressure too. They directly believe that Vick is the murderer. Evidence collected by the court is open to all. So everyone is analyzing it. They won't release him if we come with sufficient evidence or any other way."

Alex said: "Do no tell me anything! I want my grandson out! Do you get it? Out!"

Abel's mouth slightly twitched: "I will go and contact the magistrate." Then, without following the ceremony, he turned around and left.

There were several middle-aged men and ladies who were in the hall. One of the middle-aged men came forward: "Father you don't need to worry too much. Your body is getting anxious and stressed. I have known little Vick since childhood. He is an honest knight. I'm sure he would never make such a rash decision and act upon it."

Alex stared back at him: "What's the matter with you? I don't care even if he did. A deacon died, so he died. I want my grandson out! We should get a scapegoat then!"

The middle-aged man was stifled. He smiled but didn't say anything.

...

After two days.

7:35 in the morning.

The gray radiation clouds had covered the whole city. A carriage slowly came to a stop and parked in front of the magistrate. Two figures went out of the carriage. They were Dudian and Old Fulin.

Old Fulin has decided to come forward as a bailor despite Dudian's refusal. As an old aristocrat, his involvement may add a bit more success to Dudian's appeal.

Dudian took the lead and jumped out of the carriage first. Then he helped Old Fulin's aged body down the carriage. He escorted him up the stairs, and they went to the magistrate.

"The two cases will be judged today by the court. After the first is finished then it will be your turn!" said one official who had come to meet Dudian.

The courtroom was a very spacious place. It was like a church of the old era. At the moment there were a lot of people. Most of them belonged to news agencies of the consortiums.

"They are from the Scott consortium. Those are from the Green consortium." Old Fulin pointed to people sitting in different rows and introduced their origins to Dudian.

Dudian secretly admired Forin's eyesight. He was seemingly old and lived in the Ryan Castle most of them. He didn't expect that he

was aware and familiar with almost everyone sitting in the courtroom. He secretly noted down.

A moment later, a stir occurred at the entrance.

Dudian and Old Fulin turned to look. Their expression changed a bit. They saw a group of seven individuals led by an old man enter the place. There was another middle-aged man dressed in a black suit following after him. The others were following silently behind the middle-aged man.

“He is called Alex. He is the old patriarch of the Milan family.” Old Fulin whispered.

Dudian smiled, “I know.”

“Behind him is his son, Abel, who is also the head of the Milan family. The guy is very shrewd, but his son hasn’t inherited the qualities from his father.”

“It is not necessary a good thing have a wise father. ” Dudian said.

“Indeed, the little guy had earned the old patriarch favor, so favors and compliments surrounded him. Inevitably, he would burst at one point.”

Alex and Abel came to sit in a front position.

“Those are high-level butlers from the Mel and Burong families. The others represent the other families. ” Old Fulin said in a low tone.

Dudian nodded. The patriarchs of the Mel and Burong family couldn’t come in person and mix with the dirty water, but they had to show some support.

As the time passed, more and more people came in. The official hearing began at nine o’clock.

Three people wearing white silk robes which had gold embroidery on them sat above the court as the deacons who would be ruling over. After they had announced the reason for the first case, the knights escorted a figure to a table. The person was Vick.

Vick had an arrogant atmosphere radiating off him just two days ago. But right now he looked slightly dirty. His hair wasn’t combed and didn’t look as shiny as usual. He was a bit scrawled.

Chapter 199

Vick dragged his body to the courtroom. His eyes searched the audience and found his father Abel and grandfather Alex in the first row. There was a pleading look for help in his eyes.

Alex looked at him and shouted: “Do not be afraid my child! Your grandfather will give you back your innocence!”

Vick’s face turned red. He felt the care his grandfather showed to him in the moment of the disaster. However, his heart was full of self-blame and shame. He hated the people who framed him for the murder.

Vick was seated. One of the deacons hit the hammer and coldly said: “Silence!”

The people were pointing to Vick and whispering to each other. However, after the deacon’s order, the place was dead silent.

“The investigation was made by four disciplinary officers and two deacons. Current decision. Mr. Vick Milan from theMilan family on the 18th of this month sneaked into the late Deacon Huey’s house and killed his wife. Do you plead guilty?” The old slim deacon who was sitting in the middle and overlooking Vick coldly said as he stared into Vick’s eyes.

“I do not!” Vick yelled: “I was wronged, I am a knight, I will never lie!”

The old man cuts him off: “Silence! Your knighthood has been deprived by the Knight Hall yesterday afternoon!”

Vick’s face was stiffened. He started back at his father and grandfather. He had grown in a noble family and knew that what deprivation of knighthood identity meant. It was not a simple thing, but most probably they were facing pressure from the outside. So the Knight Hall had to make a decision. Their decision was to deprive him of the identity!

“Deacon Huey’s son Ken has witnessed you kill his mother. Moreover, when you left in a panic, the neighbors had seen you. Additionally, you have left the necklace that you had stolen before. There are witnesses and evidence. Do you plead guilty?” The thin old man shouted.

Vick’s face turned ugly as he clenched his fists. He felt that he was going against the world by himself: “I was framed! Why don’t you let deacon Huey’s son to face me? If I killed his mother why I didn’t kill him?”

“Moreover, you are saying that I have stolen a necklace! It is simply ridiculous! Our Milan family started with the precious stone business. I have seen all kinds of rare gems and stones. Why would I steal a necklace?”

Slim the old man indifferently said: “Perhaps you didn’t notice Ken’s existence, so you haven’t killed him. As to why steal a necklace?! The reason is simple. Maybe you thought that the value

of the necklace has been too much just to give it a dancer of the Moulin Rouge. Maybe it's your personal hobby too. Stealing! Moreover, the witness says that you have stolen the necklace and it appeared in deacon Huey's house! This can't be fabricated!"

As Vick heard his words, he thought that it was the biggest joke in the world, but he didn't laugh. The anger bursting within him almost burned his chest. He understood that when the evidence appears the trust and truth don't exist anymore. The explanations didn't matter, but were taken as a cover!

He clenched his fists firmly and said: "I want deacon Huey's son to confront me!"

The old man looked at Vick then turned to glance at a knight of magistrate: "Bring the boy over."

Knight nodded in approval. Moments later a young boy was led by the knight into the courtroom.

The little boy's emergence caught the attention of people from various news agencies. They took his records.

"Ken, please describe what had happened." The old man looked at Ken and spoke in a peaceful tone.

Ken nodded slightly and looked at Vick with eyes full of hatred. Vick saw that the kid was up to no good, so he grabbed the opportunity to talk before the kid: "Boy, do you have a good

memory? Are you sure that you saw me? My face?!”

Keno stared at him: “You were wearing a mask while you killed my mother. But I remember your clothes!”

Vick was angry: “Kid, if I killed your mother why didn’t I kill you too?” He said and almost wanted to strangle the kid to death.

Keno shook his head and said, “You did not find me.”

“I’m a knight. How can’t I detect the presence of a child in the house? ”

“I said, I was hiding!” Ken shouted: “I was playing hide-and-seek with my mother, so you did not notice it.”

Vick was almost suffocated. He was speechless.

Dudian looked at the little boy. He was somewhat surprised. But after a little thought, he understood why the kid would lie. He sighed. Hatred could make a person crazy! Even a child would turn into a mad man.

“Now the evidence is conclusive. Do you plead guilty?”

Vick angrily growled: “I did not kill, I do not plead guilty, I will not plead guilty!”

Alex slowly stood up and said to the thin old man: “Your honor. You must show fairness on behalf of the magistrate. The matter had to be seriously investigated. Others framed my grandson. The commercial means were used to repress the truth, and it was aimed to take revenge on our family maliciously. My grandson was a knight, although he is now deprived, he was an upright knight! He would not murder anyone!”

“Is he?” Slim old man indifferently said: “If someone is deprived of his identity as knight then he does not deserve to be called a knight. Knights are glorious and just! Holy light surrounds them! If I remember well, Vick has always preferred cabarets such as Moulin Rouge. Is this the behavior of a knight?”

Alex was slightly stifled: “But he would never kill a deacon of magistrate. This is a conspiracy! He is framed!”

“There is no evidence, do not speak!” The old thin man’s eyes swept over him. Their ages were almost the same, so he naturally didn’t give face to each other.

“Who says there is no evidence?” Abel, who was silent all the time stood up. He spoke in a cold tone: “We, the Milan family has done a private investigation and have arrested the murderer. He will be brought here now! ”

All the people present in the courtroom were stunned because of his words. They looked at the slim old man.

The old man’s face turned ugly. First of all, if magistrate couldn’t

catch the murderer, but a mere aristocracy could catch. It was just not believable. Even if they caught the real murderer, then it was like slapping the magistrate system in the face! It was even more embarrassing! The old deacon spoke in a cold tone: “Caught the murderer?”

“Yes, of course. He has confessed everything,” said Abel.

Old Fulin whispered: “The scapegoat.”

Dudian nodded slightly as his brows slightly wrinkled.

Chapter 200

The old man said in a cold tone: “I need to remind you that posing as a substitute for a criminal is same as covering the crime! It will have severe results!”

Abel’s eyelids didn’t move as he looked at the old deacon: “We caught this man! After torture, we learned through his confession how he did the murders! We would like the deacons to confirm! Moreover, our family will never cover up any criminals!”

The slim old man had nothing to say after hearing Abel’s cunning answer.

Moments later the supposed murderer was brought into the courtroom.

It was a middle-aged man who was looking down at his toes. He was escorted by two knights of the magistrate and a high-ranking judge.

The high-ranking judge came to the court, leaned slightly towards the lean old man and said: “We verified the basic information and the man’s confession. He was the one who killed deacon Huey and his wife.”

Thin old man indifferently said: “The evidence.”

The high-ranking judge nodded slightly and took out a roll of

information:” The criminal Nolte, 36 years old. He was working as a knight, but didn’t receive his honor medal from the Knight Hall. Five years ago his wife was suffering from ‘black death’ and she died soon. He was left with a single daughter.” He stopped here and continued:” Nolte confessed to committing the crime. Five years ago deacon Huey’s carriage had hit his dying wife. Nolte has attributed the death of his wife to Huey. He had secretly investigated Huey’s whereabouts and seek the revenge.”

“After killing deacon Huey he was not satisfied. So, later on, he sneaked into his home and killed his wife.”

The high-ranking judge continued: “The evidence was in his home. We found spikes and they were stained with dry blood. Also, the people familiar with Nolte confirmed that he likes to abuse dogs seriously. The spike that was infected with dog blood was a result of Nolte killing stray dogs with them.”

The first intuition was that the family tried to replace the murderer. Otherwise, they would have found this knight early on.

“Dear Deacon, now the evidence is conclusive, and criminal is in here. Why aren’t you releasing my child?” Abel wasn’t humble at all as he said.

The thin old man looked coldly at him, then turned to high-ranking judge: “How did he explain the scene with the bracelet?”

The high-ranking judge looked at the middle-aged knight: “He said that he picked up this bracelet in front of the Moulin Rouge.”

“Do you mean, the dancer girl was lying?” The old man slammed the hammer in anger: “Let her come up.”

Soon, the dancer girl came to the courtroom as her face was covered with a white mask. She timidly looked at Abel then looked back at the old man: “Deacon I was drunk and a bit dizzy because of the work. I can’t clearly remember what had happened that day.”

Old man cut off her words as his eyes narrowed: “Take her away.”

The dancer left the courtroom.

Alex played around with his cane: “Now the truth is out I hope the magistrate can bring down the justice!”

The thin old man frowned as he turned to whisper with the other deacons.

Suddenly two shadows entered the courtroom. It was Michelle and the disciplinary knight with the sword scar. Michelle looked at thin old deacon: “Sire, please let us question the criminal.”

The thin old man saw that she had come forward, so he nodded: “Alright, I will give you fifteen minutes to investigate.”

“No,” Abel stood up and spoke in a sulky voice. The truth is clear as daylight. The criminal has already admitted the crimes. What do you want to investigate?”

“Since when are you ordering the magistrate?” Michelle looked at him.

“You!” Abel stared at her.

The old man ordered:” Take him.” Then he looked at Abel:” There are lots of evidence in this case. We need to confirm each one.”

Abel’s face turned ugly. He looked at the middle-aged man who was dragged down by Michelle.

Old Fulin looked at the instant changes in the courtroom. He whispered to Dudian: “It seems the magistrate has identified Vick as the murderer. Those two disciplinary knights will take this scapegoat and torture him a bit. The truth will come out!”

Dudian calmly said: “A deacon was assassinated! They would allow such a thing to go like this. They would be worried about their future safety too.”

Old Fulin was startled as he hadn’t thought about this. He looked to three deacon’s who were presiding the courtroom. There was a bitter smile on his face.

Moments later, Michelle and the disciplinary knight with the sword scar came back. The middle-aged knight was shaking and trembling.

He wasn't hurt, but he was constantly sweating, and his body was gently shaking.

"Sire after a thorough investigation, we found that this person is lying," Michelle said as she bowed.

The old man's eyes lit up: "Please elaborate."

"Yes." Michelle nodded and turned towards everyone: "After an investigation, the person himself admitted that he was hired to cover for the murderer. He was told that after he was imprisoned, he would be released on bail. Moreover, he would get a lot of money. That's why he was willing to do it."

Abel, Alex as well as Vick's face turned ugly.

The old deacon breathed in relief, "Who hired?"

Michelle looked at Abel and Alex and said: "He said he did not know the name and appearance of the opposite party."

Old Fulin sighed in regret. His expectations didn't come true. He whispered: "This Milan family has done the job meticulously."

Dudian nodded slightly. He had regretted too. If the middle-aged knight said that the Milan family had hired him, then it would cause a heavy blow to both the Milan family and Mellon Consortium. It seems some people from the consortium had expected such a turn of events so has prepared in advance.

The old Deacon glanced at Alex: “Now the things have been investigated thoroughly I sentence Vick Milan from the Milan family. He has assassinated deacon Huey and his wife. According to Article 28, I sentence him to death after a year of prison time. He shall be imprisoned immediately and sent to Thorn Flower Prison! ” As he finished, he hit the hammer, and the matter was settled. There was no room for maneuver.

The instant judgment was like a slap in the face to Abel and others. For a time they seem to be shocked and ignorant of the sentence. They couldn’t believe that magistrate would be so decisive.

Vick’s mind went black. He looked at his father and grandfather whose faces were drooling. His heart sank, and despair crazy gushed in. He roared: “I am not guilty! I am not guilty! I was framed! Ah ah ah … …”

Pat! His roar suddenly stopped.

Michelle’s slap had hit him in the face. The heavy force made him stumble and hit the floor.

Michelle waved: “Take him away!”

Two knights came over and grabbed Vick by his shoulder and escorted out of the courtroom.

“Finally over.” Old Fulin felt a bit tired.

Dudian looked at Vick, who was dragged away: “I hope he can take care of his body.”

Old Fulin smiled: “You have a little sympathy.”

Dudian smiled: “It’s my turn now.”

Old Fulin nodded: “I will back you up.”

Dudian smiled.