

## The Righteous Player(s)

Chapter 471: Tank! You Still Have to Dodge the Instant Death Event

2 a.m. was the dead of night.

A silver-white sword energy unfolded silently; it was as pure as moonlight.

Its lethality was indisputable.

—Boom!

The sword energy blasted the targeted wall.

Accompanied by the sound of the wall collapsing, dense smoke permeated the battlefield.

Dove darted at the moment the wall collapsed and entered through the crack.

After checking the prompts in front of his eyes, Delicious Wind Goose responded loudly, “I have killed four people!”

“I saw it. Back off!” Anderson yelled immediately, pulled out his leather shield, trotted two steps forward, and rushed to Delicious Wind Goose, who sheathed his sword. Then, he raised the shield high.

Accompanied by the gun noise, a burning ember-colored bullet shot out from the lingering smoke and dust.

Anderson groaned after receiving the bullet.

He felt rapid dehydration and became increasingly thirsty. The impact point of the bullet at the leather shield was already charred.

“I have lost 20% of my health. Give me some healing.” Anderson grunted.

Before Anderson entered the battle, he had about 18% of his health depleted. At this point, he was a little flustered after having almost one-third of his health gone.

If this bullet struck Delicious Wind Goose, he might not die immediately, but it would be a fatal injury.

Apparently, it was an attack from a Bronze Rank Transcender.

However, since it was a surprise attack, the attack became possible to injure or even kill a Silver Rank Transcender. Dove and the others have already demonstrated this scenario once before.

Still, the players were the ones who seized the initiative in this battle.

The moment the bullet flew out of the smoke, a devastating arrow wrapped in a whirlwind was launched from the back without making a sound.

The arrow plunged into the rising smoke and dust when Anderson received the bullet. The sharp whirlwind even cleared away an area of dust.

This was the newly learned skill after Dove advanced.

Almost most hunter professions had [Elemental Arrow].

The opponent's bullet burning with ashes should also be this skill.

This skill would collect the element in the environment around the user to greatly strengthen the next shot, giving it various effects.

The opponent shot a bullet with "fire". Thus, he should be near a stove.

There were almost no signs around Chocolate. However, even though the sign was an ordinary "air", it was already deadly enough given her terrifyingly accurate and instinctive counterattack.

Even if they were both Bronze Rank Transcenders and Hunters, there was still a gap between them.

A muffled grunt was heard.

Then, Chocolate's kill prompt appeared in front of the party members.

That was why Chocolate did not appear in the first place.

As long as the opponent counterattacked, their position would be exposed. Thus, Chocolate must lurk at the back with the broadest view.

The team was not lacking in damage output capabilities.

However, only Dove had the skill to counteract reinforcements and attack opposing hunters and wizards.

Although Dove's advancement did not contain the mastery of [Trap] type ability, she was an aimbot turret because Chocolate substituted the primary human body.

Sure enough, the Hunter profession should not be played as an ADC at the front row but as an assassin with an aimbot covering her.

Yokai Sensei had such a thought in his mind.

He held a flintlock gun with the muzzle facing the ground in his right hand. Then, he hid behind Delicious Wind Goose and Anderson.

He skillfully took out a silver coin with his left hand. After touching it, he threw it out in an arc and fell into Anderson's arms.

If there were no wounds and bone dislocations, this healing would restore about 30% of Anderson's health.

Yokai Sensei pondered in his mind.

This “game” did not show the damage figure or healing amount. Different people had varying constitutions. According to the types of injuries, many aspects depended on the healer's experience and habit. For example, how much health could be recovered upon each heals, which injury be treated first, and so on.

Anderson was somehow exceptionally good at this rough “estimation”.

“Meow—” Dove's voice sounded in the smoke.

This was the code they agreed upon in advance.

Anderson and Yokai Sensei secretly heaved a sigh of relief.

One single cry meant that all the enemies were defeated. After that, the rest of the players only had to guard the entrance.

Two mews would signify the presence of a formidable enemy and have the squad ready for battle.

The reason was that “demons” might appear in this stronghold.

Anderson and Yokai Sensei looked at each other, keeping their vigilance up and observing the smoke that hadn't dissipated.

However, they soon saw the kill notifications appearing continuously in front of them.

“It seems like we are no longer needed.” Anderson couldn't help but grin.

Dove's efficiency was outstanding. She would take down one enemy per second on average.

There was an inexplicable feeling of being led by two seniors.

Yokai Sensei shook his head.

As a priest, his perception was relatively sharp.

He could vaguely feel that many people nearby had woken up and were peeping at this place.

They did not open the windows, or even turn on the lights. Instead, they just watched silently in the deep late night of 2a.m..

“Still, we should...” Yokai Sensei withdrew his warning gaze and spoke casually.

But before he finished speaking, he heard a sharp mew, “Meow—”

The players' eyes quickly became serious.

The next moment, the ground suddenly began to collapse layer by layer.

The ground melted like soft butter. Yokai Sensei, who had perceived something went wrong at the first moment, reacted immediately and retreated quickly. Delicious Wind Goose was a little slower, but he ran the fastest.

Anderson, who raised his shield in a daze, could not react in time. Then, he fell into it.

A middle-aged man's deep and angry voice came, “Where did you come from, thieves?”

Immediately after, the ground coughed up a large amount of mud like a rising volcano. The gushing mud wrapped Anderson directly, like a bug enveloped in amber.

A man with only half of his hair remained, and shiny red skin stepped out of the ruins.

His right arm was robust, but he just stood there, leaning firmly on the ground like a khaki mud pillar. He only wore a pair of underpants. His left hand had sharp nails and looked like an orangutan hand.

—Rather than walking, it was more accurate to describe it as crawling.

He glanced at Anderson with his dim yellow pupils, then raised his right hand to him and squeezed it slightly.

The flowing mud suddenly solidified. Anderson was sealed inside it.

Then, an arrow flew toward his head.

The man did not underestimate the arrow at all. He plunged his hand deep into the ground. A slightly curved soil column was pulled out like a stretched year cake [1].

The arrow was nailed to the soil pillar under a bang and went straight into it.

But at this moment.

Delicious Wind Goose rushed out all of a sudden. His figure darted swiftly—

He avoided a few earth pillars that rose indiscriminately in front of him with incomparable lightness. Wherever he walked, the ground collapsed one after another. The attacks couldn't catch up with his speed at all.

As the silver sword energy was unleashed, the middle-aged man was severed in half.

Then, Old Goose's figure flashed, appearing where the sword energy had landed. Many collapsed mud pillars submerged his original spot. The exploded sword energy caused the mud to splash everywhere.

Old Goose sheathed his sword, signifying that the battle was over.

“A Bronze Rank Demon looks quite scary.” Delicious Wind Goose secretly heaved a sigh of relief.

For safety purposes, Old Goose used two bars of Qi for this attack.

“Old Goose, you're so cool!” Yokai Sensei couldn't help but let out a strange cry.

Delicious Wind Goose hissed, frowned, and grinned, “Silent... I only have three bars left.”

“Then, you are a noob, brother.” Yokai Sensei clicked his tongue, “You're using your ultimate move to snatch the kill.”

“Shut up!” Delicious Wind Goose glanced at Anderson, “Don't you need healing?”

“No need. I have already respawned and lost 1 level.”

At this time, Anderson had a sad expression on his face. He followed the serval out of the building slowly, “How can this man bind me in seconds? I thought it was an effect like foot trapping. How can it work so well? I was ready to block it.”

“You bring shame to our team!”

Yokai Sensei, who had dodged successfully by relying on his mere 5 points of Agility, let out a cry of delight.

Then, they broke into a mess.

Yokai Sensei evaded the instant death event and watched his friend die. It was undoubtedly joyous for him to throw remarks at his friend. This shame would most likely linger for about a week.

Of course, that would only happen after clearing the level.

If the entire team were defeated because of a teammate's mistake, there would be no joy but fuming blood pressure.

#### Chapter 472: Spirit Thief

The Razor Territory in Bloomfield Province was one of the influential cities in the Austere-Winter Dukedom.

The locals call it "Razor Ridge".

This was not because its terrain was like a razor but because a massive dragon called "Barber" lived there.

For the time being, it was still kind to people. It had no particular hobbies and would not wreak havoc on the world. It was unlike Old Grandmother, who would fall into Wymrest every few decades and hibernate. Instead, the dragon was like Father Flint, nestled in his home to study.

Dragons were intelligent creatures. They were smart and lived in isolation. Almost no dragons were enemies with humans because they were smart and knew it would disturb their lives.

There were few dragons left in this era already.

It was not because of the lack of magic essence or any other reason. Instead, all the dragons who came to Yaseran back then had become deities before the Third Age.

Dragons were creatures that existed before the First Age. The so-called "First Age" began to exist after the concept of "history" was born in humanoid creatures.

Many dragons who did not become deities died or left Yaseland to the desert for various reasons.

The "living desert" was a deadly natural disaster for elves and centaurs. But to the massive dragons, it was just a terrain challenging to traverse.

In the current world, there were less than ten dragons that had yet to become deities. Seven of them disguised themselves as humans and formed the “Chanter Alliance”, which became the famous idol group in the Papal Kingdom. They also regulated the orders.

Austere-Winter had two dragons.

One was called “Barber”, and the other was called “Graupel”.

The Barber was named so because he would shave the heads of those who offended him. The dragon would shave those who fantasized about becoming a dragon-slaying hero or coveted the treasure in his nest. Then, he would throw them at the Razor Ridge. When someone went bald, the others would know he had done something stupid.

Therefore, Austere-Winter had a proverb, “the man with the shaved head”, which meant the lucky one who survived doing something stupid.

Razor Territory was also the central manufacturing place of Frost Beasts' products.

That included extracting the Frost Beasts' blood, making semi-finished reagents or storing them in the freezer, and stripping the furry hides of the Frost Beasts for tanning, dyeing, and processing. All of them were carried out in Razor Ridge.

Although the primary value of raising the Frost Beasts was for their blood and fur, the meat shouldn't be wasted either—whether it was made into frozen steaks or sausages, it could effectively improve the lack of food in Austere-Winter Dukedom.

These harvested Frost Beasts were not the militarized ones. Instead, the military Frost Beasts were tall, robust, muscular, and large. They were sent to the army with each troop adopting one as a mount and hunting animal.

These militarised Frost Beasts were cultivated with the emotions of felons, death row prisoners, and tortured spies in prisons. The claws were cut off on time, leaving only the ability to swallow emotions. At the same time, these Frost Beasts tend to eat less and grow fat.

Although it sounded like a Dementor [1] from Azkaban, it looked more like a fat orange cat.

At first glance, it was hard to tell whether they were pigs or cats.

“Oh, so, these are Frost Beasts!”

The person speaking was a kind and cheerful middle-aged man with black hair and black eyes. He had well-defined features. He stood in the crowd, looked at the chubby

Frost Beasts being transported in the cage, and couldn't help but exclaim in amazement, "I can't believe myself seeing one!"

"Is this your first time seeing the Frost Beasts?"

A well-dressed middle-aged lady wearing the Frost Beast fur asked, "Are you a foreigner?"

"Ah, yes. Gracious lady!"

The middle-aged man extended his hand in a friendly manner, "Hi, my name is Ghirlandaio-David-Buonaro. I just came to this land not long ago. The popular etiquette here is to shake hands, right?"

"Yes, you are right. When shaking hands, it is best to open up the other hand with the palm facing the other party."

After being flattered, the lady, who looked a little solemn, couldn't help but raise the corners of her mouth slightly.

After shaking hands with "Ghirlandaio", she habitually taught him a few words before realizing she was a bit pushy.

She coughed lightly and then introduced herself calmly, "Leona Bunyan. The third daughter of the Bunyan Family."

"Hello, Ms. Bunyan!"

"Ghirlandaio" smiled happily and referred to her last name appropriately based on the earlier conversation.

He said cheerfully, "How should I put it? At first, I thought that the Frost Beasts were scary creatures like giant wolves! I didn't expect it to be a little cute. If it weren't so scary, I would want to raise one. Hahahaha!"

"The vast majority of the Frost Beasts are wolves, but that doesn't mean they are all wolves."

Leona smiled helplessly and explained, "It's just that there are a lot of wild wolves and foxes in this land during the harvest year. So the majority of the Frost Beasts had the common shape of a wolf."

The Frost Beasts were monsters whose bodies had mutated after being exposed to a blizzard full of curses for a long time and survived. Bear, deer, and badger types of the Frost Beasts also existed.



But no matter what they looked like before mutation and their anatomy, there was only a gap between body size and constitution after becoming a Frost Beast.

The meat taken from them had a dark hue, appearing as dark purple flesh. Even if it were stored indoors, it would freeze by itself. If the meat were cut into slices, it would have a strong fishy taste, and the muscles were so strong that it was difficult to chew. Some gourmets with strange tastes or skilled cooks would try to challenge this rare ingredient.

Of course, when grilled, the Frost Beasts taste almost like tougher beef jerky. The chilly aspect also disappeared.

“Did you know that if you shine an intense light on the juvenile Frost Beast, you can see the opaque blood vessels like tree branches in their translucent bodies? There is a block of shadow just behind the heart.”

Almost all of their previous internal organs had disappeared. In addition to the heart which was several times larger than before and pushed the stomach, there were those blood vessels that connected the skin. Also, there was the 'heart sac' hidden behind the heart.

The long convoy transporting the Frost Beasts had occupied the road entirely. Seeing that she couldn't move, Leona couldn't help but chat with the kind middle-aged man beside her, “Although the Frost Beasts can feed on positive emotions, they do not consume it by lungs or stomach. Instead, it is absorbed via their blood.”

They absorbed emotions through the skin and stored the positive emotions they feasted in the gall-like “heart sac” behind the heart. The more the emotions were absorbed, the more the fluid clotted in the emotional sac.

If the abdomen of the Frost Beasts was cut open at this time, the crystals in the heart sac could be taken out. These crystals could be used as a powerful curse material, usually referred to as “emotion crystals”. This would make the Frost Beasts weak but not necessarily dead if the wound was well-stitched.

The crystal's color varied across different emotions. It could be separated by physical means. Crystallized “happy” could be consumed after being processed. It would evoke happy feelings. Similarly, feelings such as “loyalty”, “hope”, and “bravery” could also be sold.

This was a special underworld production unique to the Austere-Winter Dukedom.

—Spirit Thief.

That was to steal happiness, courage, love, and hope and sell it to those who need it.

“Ghirlandaio” listened carefully. He responded positively from time to time, replying things like “So that’s the case”, “I see”, “You know a lot. I’m amazed.”, “Ah, I have learned something new today”.

Then, he nodded thoughtfully.

#### Chapter 473: Overseer Nieuwel

Residents of the Underground Federation would never call the Underground Federation by its full name.

The public did not recognize the name “Twin Goddess Republican Federation” when the two deityesses were not residents in the country.

They were grateful to the two deityesses for giving them the ability to live underground.

Gratitude, however, did not mean reverence.

The underground folks would not pay tribute to anything.

They paid no reverence to the monarch, their parents, and their deities.

They did not even have the concept of a country, a territory, or a nation. That was because they were still developing their “land”. Also, the dwellers were a collection of many “losers” at the beginning, and their population was still increasing.

Compared with the narrow world above the ground, the underground world, with almost infinite space and rich resources, allowed the citizens of the Underground Federation to live quite comfortably.

The underground folks even had a sense of superiority over those living above ground.

They would even get together often to mock the worries of the above-ground people.

Because there were always people above ground worried that the underground folks would attack them through the subway. Newspapers and speeches reiterated the underground threat, emphasizing the dangers of the subways.

But the truth was that they did not pay the slightest attention to the world above them.

These underground dwellers did not have to worry about food and clothing and had access to light sources. They had individual living spaces that were sold at extremely low prices. Plus, it was easy for them to buy specialties from various countries; They had no obligations to be enlisted in war by their country. There were no city lords, kings,

or nobles. The only exception was that they had to pay taxes to the Wise Council and must abide by the local laws proposed by the Wise Council.

The entire underground world was governed by the dual parliamentary model of the “Digger Council” and “Wise Council”.

However, this did not mean that the status of the legislative members was superior.

The cities in the underground world did not have a so-called “mayor”. Instead, almost all members of the Wise Council were in charge of the jurisdiction. They did not have any specific positions, and they took charge of their respective responsibilities.

The reason being the Underground Federation had been expanding outward while their population was small. The federation did not have special affairs to attend to. At the same time, the federation did not need to to any country, king, or local nobles.

Even in different underground cities of the urban layer, the laws varied. Housing prices were low, and there were no immigration restrictions. When local laws in a region were unwelcome, the residents would move to other cities independently.

It was a distinctive place from the world above ground.

“That’s why there are so few people here...” Suuankou looked around and whispered, “Is it because the living environment here is poor?”

He dared not speak loudly.

Those unfamiliar with the new place might easily step into danger unknowingly.

“Oh, that’s not the case.”

It was not Jiu Er or Lin Yiyi who spoke.

It was a man with ashen skin. He wore a long-sleeved, ruffled leather jacket.

“Something major happened, giving birth to a troublesome nightmare. This place used to be called the Black Mushroom Mill instead of Sporeggar Mill. After the nightmare, many people thought it was troublesome, so they moved out temporarily. I’m only going to come back after the nightmare is over.”

As the man said, he reached out his hand to Suuankou and smiled at Lin Yiyi and Jiu Er, “Let me introduce myself. I’m the supervisor of Sporeggar Mill. My name is Nieusel.

“Where do you come from? Since you came to Sporeggar Mill at this time, are you the friends who want to resolve the nightmare here?”

He had natural brown curly hair, and his eyes shone in a strange green light. Those eyes glowed on their own. They were characterized by unusually pale or dark plaster statue or obsidian-like skin. At the same time, those were the main characteristics of underground people.

Niusel exuded a faint smell of alcohol and tobacco.

...Is he an Overseer?

Lin Yiyi became vigilant immediately.

Similar to the world above the ground, the underground world also had positions like “policeman”, “judge,” and “lawyer”.

The underground people refer to the police as “Overseers” and the judges were members of the Wise Council. They were also the lawmakers. Lawyers were called “Debaters”, and they were despised and belittled professions in the underground world.

Cities had their laws discussed and determined by the members of the local Wise Council. On the other hand, members of the local Digger Council jointly paid for the fee to hire Overseers. Sometimes, the Digger Council's members would directly stand in as an Overseer.

Of course, they were more affluent than citizens.

But it was not because being a member would make you rich. On the contrary, only those who could become rich were eligible to become a member.

The founders of the Underground Federation formed the original dual councils.

—The so-called “Wise” and the “Diggers”.

The pinnacle of “wisdom” and “hard work”.

The Wise Council was all Mysterious Lady's believers and a small number of Father Flint's believers. They were outstanding inventors, engineers, and botanists. These “Wise” created the splendid civilization of the underground world bit by bit. Only the genius could become members of the Wise Council.

The subway that used the Gray Mists as energy and the seafloor tunnels were their masterpiece—not a gift from the deities.

As for the Digger Council...

Among them, the believers of the Silent Lady and the believers of Bone Burying Grandma accounted for half of the council each.

Everyone who volunteered to become a “Digger” and discover a new soil for the Underground Federation would receive a set of equipment and a ration. They would be sent to dive into the exploration layer, and the rest were up to their fate.

Not every place had a “well” that would allow them to return to the ground.

In the exploration layer, the Diggers had no map and could not replenish their supplies. It was common to lose light sources, food, and water there. At the same time, they were vulnerable to the attacks of the underground monsters or even other Diggers.

Those who died in the exploration layer could not even send the message “I’m dead” out.

The victim would only be labeled as “missing”.

The ownership of valuable areas discovered by the Diggers would automatically belong to the Digger Council, and the discoverers would be granted the status as members of the Digger Council. But before the discoverer died, anyone who rented and used the land through the Digger Council would have 30% of expenses paid to the discoverer; this figure would be reduced to 10% ten years after the Digger died and would continue to be given to his family.

But under this generous remuneration, there was a 70% “disappearance” rate in the first month of “Diggers”.

This was why the “Diggers” believed in Bone Burying Grandma.

When they went on an expedition, many people had already mentally prepared to “die in the soil”.

—It was said that the “Wise” relied on their wisdom and brains to earn wealth and make citizens respect them and be happy. On the other hand, the “Diggers” won their wealth by relying on “hard work in digging”, “courage to endure great danger”, and “luck in returning successfully”.

Conversely, the “Overseers” would only need to be directly responsible to the Diggers.

What they arrested was not necessarily the person who broke the law but the person the Diggers wanted to arrest.

If the Overseer himself was the “Digger”...

Lin Yiyi glanced at Nieusel.

Her silly brother and Jiu Er were young and unreliable.

Annan went to the Austere-Winter Dukedom, and now she had to attend to the matters on her own.

The underground world was not a rightful place.

Weak people would only be bullied here. However, they would be unwelcome if they stirred up too much trouble.

I have to make him wary of us but not too intimidating...

So Lin Yiyi pondered for a while and had an idea in her mind.

She said in a deep voice, "My name is 'Yiyi'.

"We are the scribes of the [Secret Eye]."

#### Chapter 474: Trade & Plunder

Hearing Nieusel's words, Nefertari frowned slightly, "Secret Eye?"

She was a young lady with skin as pale as a stone statue but hair as crimson as flames, full of strange vitality.

Her figure and skin were well maintained. However, it was impossible to determine her approximate age at first glance. Flame-colored brilliance danced in her eyes like a blazing bonfire in that pupil.

She was one of the "Wise" of the city.

At the same time, she was also Nieusel's friend since childhood.

"Are you sure that's the name?"

"En, they claim to be here to resolve the nightmare."

"Nightmare at Sporeggar Mill? Are they serious?"

Nefertari paced around the room. Her expression became slightly serious, and she asked Nieusel again, "Have you verified with Edict magic?"

"Of course, I did everything that is under my role. My magic told me they weren't lying. There is such an organization, and they belong to it. But other than that, I don't know anything. I can't find anything more about them, and I've never heard the name myself."

Nieusel shrugged helplessly and looked at Nefertari, who was walking anxiously around the room. The dark green light seeped into his eyes, "That's why I came to you to see if you know anything else than me."

"Sorry, Nieusel. I haven't heard that name either."

Nefertari frowned, "But I may have a little idea... Maybe the problem is more serious. Wait a minute. I will do an experiment."

"What? Nefer, what did you think of?" Nieusel's eyes lit up, and he chased after Nefertari and asked endlessly.

"Don't get so close to me. You have stepped on my shoes, idiot! Bring me the barrel of "knowledge worms" in the basement, and I'll establish a ritual to verify my conjecture."

Looking at Nieusel, who was running around like a dog and stomping off his shoe, Nefertari felt her blood pressure rising.

"Bring them all? Or just one?"

"One single ritual only uses one, but how do you plan to take one out?"

"How do you take it out?" Nieusel followed Nefertari's words and asked.

The woman grinned, feeling a slight headache. She replied helplessly, "So don't take it out! Bring me the whole barrel!"

"Oh, you should have said that earlier." The brown-haired, blue-eyed, robust, and handsome Overseer Nieusel nodded repeatedly and ran to Nefertari's basement.

Nefertari put pressure on his temples a few times, trying to calm down.

Nieusel was an all-rounded man. He was pretty intelligent, but he never used his brain often.

She quickly arranged the ritual area with crystal powder, forming a hexagram by overlapping two triangles. Then, she took out polished yellow crystal fragments and placed them according to the clock position of 2 o'clock, 6 o'clock, and 10 o'clock. Starting at the first designated location, she put one fragment—next, two fragments at the second designated spot, and so on. After that, she put three light sources behind the yellow crystal.

"Is this the barrel?" Nieusel came up with a small oak barrel and said troublingly, "I only saw this 'barrel'..."

While they called it a barrel, it was actually the size of a beer can.

It was soaked in ice water previously, so it looked a little wet.

Before handing it to Nefertari, he graciously picked up the cotton cloth on the table and wiped the damp and cold wooden barrel.

“Well, watch. You don't need to leave, but don't bother me.”

Nefertari warned, “This is a ritual directly connected to the Mysterious Lady. From now on, keep quiet until I say yes.”

Nieusel nodded silently, watching Nefertari perform the ritual intently.

Nefertari shook her head helplessly and put the barrel on the corner of the table.

She opened the barrel lid, revealing the white translucent worms inside. There were about a couple of dozen.

It looked like a child's ring finger. Since the temperature gradually returned to normal, these 'knowledge worms' whose skin was covered with frost also began to shake their bodies slowly, slowly becoming active.

Using a glass vessel resembling a wine raisin, Nefertari took out three worms and carefully poured them into the middle of the ritual area.

This was a monster called “knowledge worm”.

In ancient times, ritualists believed that if a person suddenly became obsessed with learning or reading, he was usually parasitized by the knowledge worm.

When they touched the flesh and blood of living beings, they would immediately turn into transparent spirit bodies and become one with it; if they touched any metal, they would become weak. It was so fragile that they would be split in half after being picked up by metal chopsticks.

The higher the temperature, the more active and restless they become, turning into transparent spirit bodies; when the surrounding temperature was low enough, they would manifest. This was also why the ancients understood “why the brain doesn't work well when it's hot”.

Of course, modern ritualists already knew that the previous views on knowledge worms were incorrect.

In other words, the predicted relationship should be reversed.

It was not because of being “parasitized by knowledge worms” that people sought knowledge like a demon but because the heart of seeking knowledge was refined and



manifested by ritual. Only then, the “knowledge worms” truly born. Once this “thirst for knowledge” was extracted, it would disappear with the “initial desire to know”. Unless the host were motivated or inspired by something, he would never learn new skills and knowledge again and become useless.

For various reasons, the “Activation Extraction: Knowledge Worm” ritual spread widely. However, so far, only the Underground Federation could produce large numbers of knowledge insects.

The reason being there were geniuses in this place who were willing to learn, study, and strive to become “Wise”.

There were also the most “intelligent people” willing to “sell themselves” in exchange for money.

Whether it was plundering or active trafficking, the Underground Federation would export many knowledge worms every year.

It was true that the “Wise” were the founders of the Underground Federation.

But at the same time, not all “Wise” were willing to dedicate their wisdom to others selflessly.

A Wise would not kill.

That was not a “secret act”.

But some Wise did not want many Wise to appear in their city.

They would arrange rituals to take away the wisdom of others, give them curses to make their minds gradually deteriorate, or take away others’ “thirst for knowledge”. In their approach, some Wise would even give their competitors an overly comfortable life, inviting them to eat, drink and have fun. The Wise would target their opponents based on the varying personalities.

However, even the Wise who did not make their own “knowledge worms” would inevitably buy some “knowledge worms” from other people.

These worms were practical consumables, no matter if it was applied on themselves to incur the dedication to learn or use it on ritual to acquire short-term prophecy magic.

Indeed, these worms were consumables.

In the free Underground Federation, selling relationships was also relatively uncontrolled.

In the hands of these “Wise” who were proficient in various rituals, many unexpected things could be transferred through various rituals, including: lifespan, health, wisdom, power, body parts, and even... the desire for knowledge, someone's love for themselves, the mastery for a particular language, beautiful faces, enchanting voices, and even illusory fates.

Since it could be transferred, it also meant that it would be trafficked.

Reaching a formal transaction meant that Silver Sire had protected and supervised this trading.

It was precisely because of this reason that everything could be sold and bought in the Underground Federation.

However, it was just that the “taxes” were unavoidable.

This was not a tax for a non-existent “king”.

Instead, the “taxation” was a “transaction” for the Silver Sire to acknowledge the trade.

Instead of the process turning into plunder.