

The Righteous Player(s)

Chapter 481: An Unexpected Beginning

“Then, we're proceeding to a public speaking period of up to four minutes, followed by a one-minute private speaking period.

“—Then, let the game begin!”

After Ike Searing-Fang's voice sounded, the cuff on Delicious Wind Goose's wrist was immediately unlocked.

However, Delicious Wind Goose did not speak immediately but kept silent first.

He would wait and see other people's speeches first, lest he says something wrong and exposes his identity as a newcomer. At the same time, it gave him the opportunity to reflect a little bit on the current situation.

As a result, he saw that the rune marked with the number “1” on the machine in front of him suddenly lit up. A filtered voice sounded beside him:

“I'm number one, villager, pass.”

Um?

Delicious Wind Goose was taken aback.

Why do you claim yourself as a villager?

Not only do villagers have no skills, but they also don't have an advantage in the battle with wizards, so they may be killed. Even if he is a villager, he should assume another identity to save his life.

But then, number 2 spoke, “I'm number 2, villager, pass.”

Why are the speeches so short?

Delicious Wind Goose was a little taken aback.

It was different from the Werewolf game he had previously played.

He had played the Werewolf party game before. In addition, he even played a season in the Werewolf Game Variety Show, which the streaming platform organized. But because of this, he was a little confused about the situation in front of him.

But it's too late now—

Although it was the designated period for the players to speak publicly, the rule here was to speak in order. Delicious Wind Goose, as number three, was about to have his turn to speak up.

“Ahem! Villager, number 3..., pass.”

Despite being unable to figure out the situation, Delicious Wind Goose's IQ was still fine.

From the 4th to the 6th, they all claimed to be villagers.

Fuck, how are there six players claiming the villager's identity!?

Something must have gone wrong there!

There must be something here that the Old Goose had overlooked.

Or probably that his faulty thinking approach made him capture the wrong hint.

Delicious Wind Goose hesitated for a moment but opened up the bullet text first.

It was number seven's turn. A different voice sounded:

“Number 7, my identity is Destruction Wizard. I will not kill anyone tonight.”

“Number eight, um... I'm the seer, and I'll check on number seven tonight.”

The seer...isn't it the Prophet wizard?

[TN: Seer [1] is the role name the Werewolf game adopted. Thus, it hints that he exists outside this world.]

Delicious Wind Goose reacted. This was probably a hint given to him by one of his teammates.

The players sent three people into the nightmare. That was the most significant advantage for the players—it was simply a rule-breaking approach to allying. So there must be some way to contact their teammates. It would be more convenient whether it was in the voting or killing stage.

Then, he heard another voice:

“Number 9, I am the Prophet wizard. Number 8, it is not too late to claim you are a villager. Otherwise, I will verify Number 8's identity tonight. If I die, you shall vote Number 8 out of the game tomorrow.”

“I'm Number 10, Edict Wizard. I'll defend myself tonight without using a skill.”

“I'm the Eleventh, an Edict Wizard. I'll defend myself tonight, too.”

Why did the tempo suddenly speed up?

Six villagers' roles were claimed at the start, then two Prophet Wizards and two Edicts Wizards popped out.

Speaking of which, where is the last player?

At this moment, Number 12 said, “I'm number 12, and I'm a villager. I'm new, and I don't know anything. Can someone teach me privately?”

This should be the third player.

Eighth and Twelfth.

I wonder who Dove is and who Anderson is.

But hearing so much defensive stance, Delicious Wind Goose vaguely realized something.

Number seven: “How many newcomers are there? Is it just the twelfth?”

Number One: “No, there is at least one newcomer between Number Eight and Number Nine. I'm more inclined toward Number Eight. Soul Snatch Wizard should control Number Eight tonight so he won't screw things up.”

Hearing this, Annan had already reacted.

This game should not be played the same as Werewolf the Party Game...

—This game was not a game contesting for kills at all.

He looked at Delicious Wind Goose with some concern.

Judging from the bullet text, the rest of the players did not notice. They were still approaching the nightmare with the thinking pattern of playing Werewolf the game.

Should I give them a hint now?

Delicious Wind Goose was still thinking hard.

At first glance, the players should have an advantage as the killer because they could trust each other.

If the players came in with their entire party of four, they were all wizards on the first night, and successfully killed four people, then they would win. That was because there were only three rounds of voting, and it was impossible to vote four of them out.

However, the problem was that the players could only have some of them take the wizard role in terms of probability wise. That was because one-third of the people in this game were villagers.

For example, Delicious Wind Goose was a villager this round.

In theory, the villagers could kill wizards too, but the chances were minute.

So, those people wearing villagers' disguises should pick a defensive stance to protect the real civilians.

In other words, their default victory condition was having the innocent win. In other words, everyone would play safe so that everyone won and everyone was happy in the end.

Should we approach this game in this way too?

Delicious Wind Goose was a little enticed by this idea.

But he quickly vetoed this decision with reasons.

And the reason was simple.

After all, they entered the arena as three people, not four. Since he was a villager, there was a high probability that number 8 was not a Prophet Wizard. If there was a villager between number 8 and number 12, then they had a lineup of double villagers. Thus, they had no way to resist a killer.

Number one and two might be wizards wearing the villager disguise, but Delicious Wind Goose was truly a villager. If more than three people joined forces, there was a high probability that Old Goose would die in the first round.

Even if Old Goose did not on the first night... If three people were almost certain to be voted out, everyone had to use skills to prove their identity on the second night. There was a high probability that someone would die the second night.

If this was the case, those who participated in the killing had a high chance of winning.

Even if the NPC won, the players could still win alongside them.

Then, there was a final choice.

Delicious Wind Goose, as one of the “six consecutive claims for villagers”, had a low probability of death.

If he was lucky enough to survive until the third day, he could kill his companions to gain kill counts. It did not even have to be Delicious Wind Goose. Number eight or twelve could opt for this strategy too.

In that case, choosing to kill was the best choice.

They could kill people in the first two days to reduce the number of people able to send messages out publicly.

Even if all the people in the game were on the defensive for the first two days, as long as one person successfully killed someone, he could be arranged to kill another companion on the third day and obtain the victory condition. No matter if the other person had killed someone or died, the condition of “the whole team of killers win” could be satisfied.

As long as one person successfully killed two people and survived to the end, the players would emerge victorious.

Delicious Wind Goose immediately reacted.

The core of this game was not to hide their identity!

Because he did not need to kill all the villagers or all the role players to win, exposing the killer's identity did not mean a disadvantage.

The key lay in the “Wolf King”!

To protect the person that would have a double kill to attain victory, he was even allowed to kill a teammate to get a kill count! As long as a person with two kills survived to the fourth night, all those who had killed people would win.

The innocent did not need to find all the killers. They needed to prevent the killers from getting two kill counts in the third round or vote the wolf king out on the fourth day and win!

Report

Chapter 482: War Game

Soon enough, the four-minute public chat time was over.

Delicious Wind Goose pressed the “8” key without hesitation.

The receiver also quickly answered the phone:

“Who are you? What's your identity?”

Delicious Wind Goose asked immediately.

“I'm Dove, Energy Falteration School, and not a Prophet,” Dove responded quickly, “You are the captain. Time is running out, so speak quickly. I'll pass on your command to Anderson.”

Delicious Wind Goose did not have much time to think, but he already had a rough plan, “They put on the villager role to stay defensive. As long as no one dies by the next night, the innocent will win.”

His thinking gradually became clear as he spoke, “But they can't defend all the time because they will inevitably vote out three people. Then, on the next day, someone among the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh will use their skill. “

Moreover, there was also the Idol Wizard bringing chaos into this game.

The Idol Wizard only needed to make sure that two people were dead. At the same time, the rest would not want the Idol Wizard to win. Then, if the Idol Wizard disclosed his identity and declared it the next day, the other people must let the “survival target” he named die to stop the Idol Wizard from winning; at the same time, the “death target” he declared could not be executed.

The option left would be to kill the Idol Wizard directly.

But no matter what, as long as the Idol Wizard used his skill, it would bring about death.

Then, the Idol Wizard would almost certainly kill people on the first night to switch sides. If the switch failed, he might throw away his offensive stance and act defensively.

However, as long as the Idol Wizard succeeded in killing people on the first or second night...at the latest on the third night, there would be at least two nights where murders would happen.

There was no way to shelter away this possibility.

“If we go with the innocent team, we can't fight back and kill anyone. Once villagers are actually killed, we can't kill people who already have a kill count to stop the opponent. That forces us to switch sides...”

“I don't know if the seven 'villagers' in this round are real or not. If Anderson is a wizard, I suggest killing No. 1 and No. 6 tonight. As long as we can get a villager dead, we will commit suicide and give him the kill count on the third night. Then, that will complete our mission.”

Time was running out.

Without hesitation, Dove dialed number 12.

Delicious Wind Goose realized that the greatest difficulty with this game was timing. Time was so tight that complex logical thinking was almost impossible. Furthermore, it was hard to convince other people because time was tight, and no one would listen.

...Then, how will the voting go during the daytime tomorrow?

But at this moment, Delicious Wind Goose saw the lights of No. 8 and No. 12 lit.

He suddenly felt a chill down his spine.

Looking at the dim runes of others, he seemed to see others looking down at him indifferently.

Delicious Wind Goose realized one thing.

Among the twelve people, it seemed only three of them had a private chat.

This meant that if someone died tonight, they might have been exposed!

Unfortunately, that was unavoidable. The killers could not communicate with each other at night.

Delicious Wind Goose could not modify his plan immediately.

He could only wait for dawn.

Soon enough, the first night was over.

“Then, it's daytime.”

Ike's voice sounded: “Number one died last night. He was murdered.

“Speak in the order of actions last night: Twelfth, Nine, Eighth, Eleventh, Sixth; the rest did not act last night. We will start with number two today. Your chance to speak is arranged in numerical order.”

—This is bad.

It was different from what he had anticipated at the start. Even the people who don't take action will be announced?

Delicious Wind Goose's heart sank.

Does this mean that the identities of the three of us are revealed on the first day?

Longjing Tea, who watched the live broadcast, sighed.

“—Old Goose, your brain power is still lacking...”

Annan couldn't help but shake his head as he muttered, “It's not the end. It depends on how you act.”

Delicious Wind Goose seems to realize something.

But he still could not find the crux of the problem.

The outcome of this game does not fall on the “wizards” but on “villagers”.

No. 12 was obviously taken aback for a few seconds.

He did not seem to expect that he would be the first to act.

He hesitated.

Then, he suddenly started to speak, “I am the Prophet wizard. I didn't reveal my identity on the first day. I tested on the seventh yesterday, and he is indeed a Destruction Wizard, not an Idol Wizard.”

...What?

Delicious Wind Goose was taken aback.

—Wonderful!

Although this speech was not top-notch, it salvaged the situation a little.

Then it was number 9's turn to speak, “I am the actual Prophet Wizard! I tested number 8 last night. He is an Energy Falteration Wizard. They have negotiated beforehand! Let's first vote for imposter number 12 today and vote for number 8 tomorrow! I saw the 3rd and 8th having a conversation. So, we will vote 3rd out on the fourth day. I have already made arrangements for you all. Pass!”

Then, it was followed by Dove.

She said thoroughly, “Number 9 is wrong. I am not an Energy Falteration Wizard. Of course, I am not a Prophet Wizard either.

“—I am a villager.”

The corners of Annan's mouth turned upward.

It was Dove who reacted first.

Dove said calmly, "From the 1st to the 6th, the sixth villager claims will protect them, but I may be killed as a lone villager. Thus, I have claimed to be a Prophet Wizard. At that time, there was no Prophet Wizard. Obviously, I have to wear that hat. At the same time, we have number 7, the real Prophet Wizard, to perform the verification so as to prevent him from pretending to be the Destruction Wizard as an Idol Wizard to mess up the voting.

"Number 9 goes against me when I claim to be the Prophet Wizard. However, instead of voting me out, he voted for the real Prophet Wizard number 12 first. I suspect he intends to kill me, a real villager, tonight. Now, he is lying about his identity. Therefore, I propose to cast your vote to execute number nine today. Pass."

The corners of Annan's mouth rose slightly.

Although there were still many flaws with Dove's speech, she was pretty alert compared to Delicious Wind Goose just because she had never played Werewolf.

Dove successfully disrupted all the first three speeches, creating doubts that ruined their credibility. Those who speak later must pick a side and provide new information and ideas. Otherwise, it would be deadlocked.

There was an obvious difference between the rule of this nightmare and Werewolf.

That was because villagers could hardly kill anyone and couldn't act. Thus, they were basically regarded as innocent people.

In other words, villagers without skills had a higher social status than wizards with skills.

After all, this was not a [killing game] that focused on logical interpretation and hiding identity.

It was a [War Game] that focused on incitement with [killing game] as a disguise in its appearance.

It would have a clear dividing line. Before the death of the second corpse, everyone tended to be defensive; after the second corpse appeared, everyone else would tend to kill.

Under strategic deterrence, no one would act rashly. Whoever acted first would be the target of the public.

But if everyone started to act, those who had not acted would become “sheep”. At that time, everyone had to change sides with blood on their hands to avoid being persecuted. The situation would immediately become chaotic.

To prevent the “wolves” from eating more “sheep” and becoming fat, villagers must be protected. At this time, villagers had the highest status card. However, after the war broke out, the sheep would be eaten in the shortest time. By then, the villager role was the most dangerous card again.

The victory condition of this game did not lie in how to hide one's own identity or how to see through the identity of others.

It was about how people with ulterior motives could disrupt others and how people who wanted to maintain order could persuade everyone to be rational.

It was about how to control people's hearts and how to set off momentum.

In other words, how to instigate and stop a war.

So, this was a ritual about “war”.

Report

Chapter 483: Delicious Wind Goose's Speech

Annan turned his attention back to Delicious Wind Goose's live broadcast.

Obviously, the identities of the three players were utterly exposed after the first night.

Old Goose had reasoned that the key to this game was “inciting the others”.

In other words, dragging people into the mess.

Thus, their victory condition was no longer hiding their identity but using various means and words to persuade others to start committing murders too.

However, the core challenge of this game did not lie in speaking skills.

Instead, it was “time”.

There were less than five minutes of thinking time in each stage. The average ritual participant would not be able to make instant decisions every round. There must be some kind of “habit”.

In other words, the participants would adopt the strategy of “sticking with the decision until a certain critical point was reached”.

At the same time, due to the lack of time for communication, it was almost impossible to “use logical and sound reasoning to convince others” and gain the right to speak.

Under such conditions, people would tend to make decisions instinctively.

Conversely, the players had to give the ritual participants a sense of urgency and flip the decisive [switch].

Annan narrowed his eyes slightly.

Whether discussing the possibility of the other's behavior at the logical level or figuring out the rationality of the other's behavior, there would be mistakes and omissions. If the players wanted to grasp the behavior pattern of the others in advance, they had first to determine their strategy.

If the players did not know what the other ritual participants wanted, they could not figure out what the others wanted to do.

“I wonder when Delicious Wind Goose will notice this.”

The tremendous difference between this game and the party game was that the ritual signified death, even though it was a nightmare.

But a nightmare was an abstraction of historical records—it must be different from reality. However, its original story must have happened in reality at least once.

“—Once the success or failure of the game determines their own life and death, everyone will adopt a relatively safe and conservative strategy when they are calm.

“—unless they lose their cool.”

Longjing Tea wrote quickly in the bullet text.

Although the success or failure of this game had nothing to do with whether the players' identities were exposed, their private conversations on the first night would have significantly diminished the credibility of their words.

Without knowing who to be voted out, the participants would inevitably vote the three players out first.

It was just because the players happened to have three people.

This game lasted a total of three days and four nights. After excluding the daytime of the first day when nothing could be done, it was exactly three rounds. This meant that participants could only cast votes to eliminate three people.

This was the critical point for strategic dominance [1].

Having four people contact each other on the first day could tip the balance. The rest of the participants could only vote three people out. In any case, there was a possibility that one person would kill two people without being voted out.

“—After all, only three of you entered the game, and you didn't talk to the other NPCs on the first day. Thus, you are isolated on the second day. The correct approach is to talk to the NPCs in groups on the first day. The discussion is unimportant, and the point is to form small groups to divide them and make them suspicious of each other.”

Longjing Tea, who had mastered the rules, quickly taught Delicious Wind Goose.

It was a pity that only Old Goose turned on the live-streaming function. Otherwise, Longjing Tea felt he could operate the three players in the nightmare and complete the game.

However, considering that only Delicious Wind Goose could see his words, it might be difficult for the players to communicate. Even though Longjing Tea had already guessed all the rules and tactics, he still could not secure the victory.

However, Delicious Wind Goose's gaze soon brimmed with determination.

He had figured it out.

He understood what he did wrong and would try to make amends accordingly.

Soon, it was Delicious Wind Goose's turn to speak.

Dove's previous statements had only temporarily misled the participants. But if Old Goose could not give any comeback speeches, the outcome would be having the three of them voted out.

He fell silent for a moment and slowly replied,

“—I'm not a villager.

“I claim myself as a villager in the first round to protect the villagers from being killed.

“And my real identity is an Idol Wizard.”

After Delicious Wind Goose said this, he said calmly, “You may vote me out now, but that is meaningless. The people after me don't need to speak anymore because the murderer has won. If you don't believe it, listen to my analysis—”

He had foreseen the surprised and uncertain expressions of the others.

“If I don't reveal myself this round, then I will definitely use my skill tonight, and I will be killed immediately since I can't defend myself; if I don't reveal myself, then I will be voted out tomorrow.

“So I will die if I don't reveal myself, that's why I have exposed my identity.

“The only condition for me to survive is that you choose not to vote me out for the time being, and I will begin the murder and switch my side immediately after nightfall. In this way, even if I temporarily 'die', I don't have to die as long as the side I belong to wins.

“Why do I say the killers have won?

“The answer is straightforward. It will succeed as long as the person who kills me tonight is not the same as the person who killed yesterday. On the third day, two people will meet the victory condition of 'killing two people'. The rest can only choose to vote for the one I have highlighted.

“Then, even if the number of murderers does not increase, there will be a winner alive to proceed to the fourth day. Considering this matter, the winning chance of the evil side is already greater than 50%. Then, if you want to switch sides in time, you have to get a kill count on the second day.

“In this way, the killer faction will fulfill the winning condition even if we can maintain a defensive state and attain the final victory on the craziest night of the third day. This will happen as long as no two people kill one person at the same time and the 'winner' successfully hides his status—half of the people at that time would have blood on their hands. The skills of the Edict Wizard and the Prophet Wizard are no longer valid because what they want to do is no longer to protect themselves but to hide the 'winner'.”

Delicious Wind Goose declared his demon-like inferences in a calm voice and methodically.

There was no doubt that Old Goose was bullshitting.

Delicious Wind Goose did not know whether those eliminated would die immediately or at the end. That was because “at least one person survives” was their dungeon instance's winning condition as a player. However, the condition for the other ritual participants was not necessarily this.

He was just taking a gamble.

If Old Goose did not make a move, he would die.

However, the outcome might change if he stirred up more chaos.

“What if the winner is killed by mistake on the third night? Everyone has to start killing on the third night. If the person who gets the kill on the second day chooses to defend, there is also the possibility of being attacked and killed by multiple people at the same time on the third day.

“Thus, taking either the defense or the offense have the same winning chances on Day 3.”

Of course, this was all nonsense.

There was no doubt that if Delicious Wind Goose was really the Prophet Wizard, then killing on the second day and defending himself on the third day was the strategy with the highest probability of winning.

But after hearing this, who would care about details like this?

Report

Chapter 484: The Only Solution

“You are talking nonsense!” Participant Number 11 could not bear it any longer and said, “That’s not how the probability is calculated.”

“—So what?”

However, Delicious Wind Goose immediately raised his voice and threatened, “If you choose to vote me out now, it means that there will be a murderer with a 'kill' on the first night!”

He immediately moved the topic to another direction, no longer lingering with the previous probability problem.

Delicious Wind Goose said quickly and confidently as he moved the participants' attention to another topic, “By then, you still can't be sure who the killer is. The killer has achieved his goal as long as there are at least two deaths tonight. Thus, the situation will evolve into either one person being left out or three participants failing to achieve the killing quota.

“Unless it is the first scenario and your elimination votes are correct on the third and fourth days, only then can the killer be stopped. That’s because the third night will still return to the possibility of 'being killed at any moment'.

“Why can't we prevent the second scenario? That's because the number of murderers on the second day exceeded three, equivalent to four people committing murder on the first day. Villagers can't defend themselves. If you cannot identify the murderer, you won't be able to satisfy the winning condition.

“In other words, the murderer faction will win as long as more than three people choose to kill tonight!”

Delicious Wind Goose added firmly, “When I told you about this, you knew this fact, and you knew that other people also knew this fact. Then this has become public knowledge among us.

“Thus, the ending has already been determined!”

—Time was up.

It just so happened that the designated period for everyone to speak openly had just ended.

Old Goose had calculated the time in his mind. His goal was to stop others from having the chance to speak.

His nonsense was illogical, but he believed his convincing inferences should mislead some people.

In the end, Delicious Wind Goose realized this was not a logical puzzle game.

Instead, it was a game to incite the others.

The point was not to find out the truth but to get others to act on his terms.

His speech was resounding and confident, and he gave out a lot of information.

Not many people could notice his logical error in a short period.

Considering the cost of explanation, if you couldn't explain clearly to others, you could only choose to cooperate with others. Like the beginning of an irreversible chaotic war, those who realized the truth could only go with the flow.

It was impossible for everyone to choose the optimal strategy. Even if everyone decided on the optimal strategy, it was not necessarily the optimal decision as a whole.

After the four-minute public chat period, Delicious Wind Goose received a private chat immediately.

It was not Dove being labeled as Number 8, nor Anderson being labeled as Number 12.

Instead, it was Number 2. He was the real idol wizard.

He knew Old Goose was a fake Idol Wizard, but that did not affect the two of them killing people together.

They planned to pick a target. Then, they would kill the target, one after the other. In any case, they would both get a kill. It would be the same for the following night.

Later, Number 7 sent a private chat request as well. He also made a similar proposal to Old Goose.

When Number 2 sent a private chat invitation to Old Goose, Number 9, who had previously clashed with Dove, also sent a private chat to Dove to ally.

The only one who realized that Old Goose was bullshitting was Number 11. Although he was a step behind the others, he also reacted. Thus, he also expressed interest in joining an alliance with Anderson, the Number 12.

In an instant, the peace was over.

“...Done.” The corners of Annan's mouth raised.

As for who the last “Wolf King” was, it did not matter anymore because he was destined to be born.

[TN: “Wolf King” refers to the person who kills twice in the ritual.]

Of course, Annan noticed there was an optimal solution to this game. That would be having everyone go through three rounds without doing anything. This would lead to the “peace ending”.

It was just like the “peace” that had been maintained previously.

But this required “collusion,” just like “peace” in reality.

So why would wars happen when everyone knew that “keeping the peace was good for everyone”?

A “peaceful state” could only be reached if everyone believed everyone else would maintain peace.

It was like the two companies did not issue vouchers and engage in price wars. This was the best situation collectively, and everyone could get better returns. But if someone started a price war first, the other party who did not do it would not survive.

This was what Delicious Wind Goose was going for.

As long as everyone realized that the possibility of others' killing was opened, they would soon realize they would lose if they sat idle for three rounds. It was impossible to stop the killer without using skills. However, as long as skills were used, killing became easier.

Thus, they had to commit murder, at least getting two kills.

When all wizards did not use skills, everyone had to head out and kill randomly for three rounds. It was possible that the wolf king would also be killed. Thus, the wizard who had one kill must also keep killing, trying to get two kills before sticking to a defensive approach to secure their survival.

After the “peace” was broken, and everyone had an awareness of “what if others choose war”, everyone would participate in the never-ending “war”.

This stupid strategy, on the contrary, would be the Nash equilibrium [1] of this war game.

That was the best choice for everyone when other people's strategies remained unchanged.

Whether others had been in peace or war, it would not go wrong after choosing war. But these “correct decisions” added up on each other and became a devastating mistake.

“So, this is war...” Annan took a deep breath.

He seemed to smell the stench of blood and gunpowder from this ritual.

No wonder...

No wonder this ritual can be established.

At first, Annan thought that this Wizard War Game was about Wizards who borrowed power from Mysterious Lady. After all, the final winner would become a wizard.

But it seemed that it probably borrowed power from “the War Deity”, Red Knight.

This ritual had touched the core Truth of the Red Knight very much.

Red Knight would give this ritual a generous reward.

“I don't need to watch this anymore.” Annan sighed and turned off the live broadcast.

The ending was already set.

The players would have already won unless they were unlucky enough to die on the second and third nights.

With everyone being dragged into the mess, “surviving the war” was just a game of luck.

"Ike Searing-Fang must be a genius to come up with this ritual." Longjing Tea was sharp.

Dove was also quick to respond.

Although Delicious Wind Goose was stunned for a while, he quickly adjusted his state.

In the end, he did not disappoint Annan.

The corners of Annan's mouth rose slightly.

The players finally began to mature.

Report

Chapter 485: Nightmare: The Wizard Among Us. Cleared!

The situation went on as expected for Delicious Wind Goose.

Although he was eloquent and instigated wars, he was voted out the next day when everyone did not want to reveal their ambitions.

Under the low buzzing sound and the clicking sound of mechanical rotation in the room Old Goose was in, he was lifted high. The seat rose to a height of more than four meters, and he was seemingly almost ejected out of it.

The nine buttons in front of him lost their luster at the same time. No matter how hard Old Goose pressed them, there was no response.

Delicious Wind Goose sighed softly, sat on the chair, and closed his eyes to wait for the execution, "Fine."

All for the sake of a necessary sacrifice.

Delicious Wind Goose had achieved his goal.

Of the three in their squad, only Delicious Wind Goose had the villager role. He was a defenseless sheep, and it would only be beneficial if he fed himself to his teammate. No matter if he stayed on the defense or made a move, he would die for nothing.

However, under the deterrence of Delicious Wind Goose, others had to use a round of voting opportunities to vote out a villager who could not resist. Of course, they knew Delicious Wind Goose might not be an Idol Wizard.

But after his death, the Idol Wizard who worthed two kills was hidden.

If Dove reacted quickly, she should be able to realize that the first person to approach Old Goose was the real Idol Wizard. So what Dove had to do was avoid him and not kill him. The point was to lead others to kill him.

In this way, other people had to vote out the person who had two kills on the third day.

Although they killed people secretly at night, they still had to maintain their superficial image during the daytime.

They would attack secretly while condemning others for being suspicious.

“This ritual is fascinating.” Delicious Wind Goose sighed.

Of course, his actions still came a bit late.

They did not enter as a four-person team and missed the opportunity on the first day, leading to a problematic start. His remedial action only ended up bringing the situation back to a balance of power.

In this state, Dove and Anderson could still die, getting ambushed while killing others at night. Even if they were defensive, they could have been murdered by two people working together.

I hope everything goes well...

Hope they both are ok.

“...Um?” Delicious Wind Goose waited a long time, but his execution hadn't yet arrived.

The room creaked for a long time, but nothing happened.

Instead, he heard the sound of gas escaping, as if some gas were slowly injected into the room.

“Oh, it isn't an instant death...” Delicious Wind Goose sighed.

He also did not expect that his nonsense speculation previously would be correct.

Their life and death were only decided after the outcome was determined.

However, this was also a reasonable guess.

Suppose the participants would be killed after their character was dead. The possibility of being killed could be avoided as long as they used their skills last. When skills were not used, the participants were regarded as “idle”, so there was no need to point out that they were “playing defense”.

In other words, the wizards would only be confident enough to use their skills when they did not know they were being killed. Thus, there would be wizards choosing not to use their skills.

Although this was not a logical puzzle game, it still required logic when Delicious Wind Goose deduced the hidden rules of the game.

In retrospect, it seemed pretty accurate.

If even this speculation went wrong, others would immediately guess Delicious Wind Goose was the newcomer.

But this was also a no-brainer. Delicious Wind Goose could only describe it ambiguously to ensure his words were provocative. Thus, he did not leave a way out for each of his statements so that the words seemed to have “weight”.

“Is it a hypnotic gas?”

It doesn't seem like it.

Soon, Delicious Wind Goose, sitting on the chair, felt his body start weakening.

His limbs began to tingle and become cold. His breathing gradually became rapid, but he was still a little out of breath.

Soon, he began to feel dizzy, with bouts of dizziness before his eyes and a metallic buzzing in his head. The sound of ocean waves seemingly rang in his ears. A severe pain stung his ears every time the tide rose.

I see.

A thought popped up in Delicious Wind Goose's mind.

The losers did not have to do anything. Their test was about how long they could survive in this poisonous gas.

In a darkened room, his legs were bound to the seat.

Fortunately, he could still read the bullet text

When Delicious Wind Goose gradually lost consciousness, he suddenly woke up.

[Main mission: Win the “game” (Completed)]

[At least one team member survives to the end (Completed).]

[The victory conditions of the whole team are not in conflict (Not complete).]

[Stop the “Idol Wizard” from winning (Completed).]

Ah, we have cleared the dungeon.

Sure enough, Dove still did not disappoint him.

The players just cleared the level three times in one breath.

However, they would still have to deal with Ike Searing-Fang.

That person is a dangerous man.

Delicious Wind Goose just had such an idea in his head.

The system prompts were still rapidly emerging in front of his eyes:

[Nightmare has been purified.]

[You have purified the nightmare with the designated identity. Your evaluation ratings increased.]

[You have not completed the other layers of the nightmare. Thus, your evaluation ratings have dropped.]

[You have seen through the essence of ritual. Your evaluation ratings increased.]

[Comprehensive Evaluation—C]

[Obtained Shared Experience 110 points, Perception+1.]

[Your Perception attribute is greater than 10 points and meets special reward conditions.]

[Acquired dungeon instance clearance reward: Given a profession (wizard apprentice), Level 1.]

[The wizard apprentice is your second profession. The amount of experience required to upgrade the profession's level with Shared Experience Points increases to 200%.]

[Warning: If the “wizard apprentice” advances to a transcended profession “wizard”, you must promote this profession to Level 30 before attempting to advance to Gold Rank.]

[According to your soul attribute, the school you get is: Idol]

[You are given Order Magic: Flash]

“Um?” Delicious Wind Goose froze for a moment.

Fuck?

Can a nightmare really change jobs?

I can change my profession to wizard as long as my attributes meet the standard and the dungeon clearance is smooth.

You gotta be kidding me?

Is that where the “alternate profession” originally came from?

Delicious Wind Goose was shocked. Not only he, but the bullet text who witnessed this scene also went crazy.

“—OMG! You guys hurry up and activate the teleportation waypoint!”

“—Fuck! We have just started tackling a nightmare here, and we don't have any free time to spare this week!”

“—We can't spare a hand here either!”

“—What are you guys fighting for!? Luckily, our team is close to Natta County, and we can arrive the day after tomorrow.”

“—Hey, hey, don't farm this nightmare too much yet. Leave as soon as you have the profession, and leave some nightmare attempts for those who want to change jobs later.”

Although the profession given was just a wizard apprentice, its requirements were low!

In addition to the special boost in attributes, the players started the Mist Continent game with an average of 5 points in all attributes. This meant that as long as they challenged 5 nightmares, they could steadily increase their Perception by 10 points.

That was a whopping free 10 attribute bonus.!

The nightmare's reward simply opened the door for a job transfer for new players!

Considering that it only tinkered with the levels in the [Wizard Apprentice] profession, it was actually a piece of good news!

After the highest-level profession had successfully advanced, it won't be troublesome for subsequent professions to advance as well. They just had to find a nightmare and clear a level to advance.

But if they did not advance the profession, it would not drag them down.

To advance into Gold Rank, all transcended professions must reach Level 30. If the challenger had two transcended professions, it would take three times the experience points to advance into Gold Rank.

The players would not choose this approach unless it were a special case.

But if it was just an elementary profession, the bonus was negligible. For example, a Lurker profession with a stealth skill, a Hunter profession with a pet, and the improved attribute points were hardly adequate.

The wizard apprentice profession was different!

—When the [Wizard Apprentice] was maxed out, it allowed the user to equip 4 spells! Moreover, the experience required for the apprentice level was minimal. At the same time, it also increased the user's mana pool.

Although the spells were not strong, they were practical and flexible. In addition, it also came with 10 Perception attribute points.

If you want to improve your strength and agility, you only need to undergo training. However, the Perception attribute could only be improved by clearing the nightmare. Besides the Will attribute, the Perception attribute was the most precious.

Even Annan found the reward bountiful after watching it. He had already turned off the live broadcast. Seeing that the forum suddenly broke out in a commotion, he looked through the rewards that Delicious Wind Goose got with some curiosity.

It was also the first time he had seen such a nightmare that directly rewarded a profession.

To be honest, Annan was a little moved.

But he was not greedy to acquire [Wizard Apprentice] as the alternate profession. His wizard profession had reached the Silver Rank already.

Annan was mainly coveting the designer of this ritual.

He could come up with a wizard job transfer ritual, couldn't he also make a job transfer ritual for the lost [Monk] profession? He might have Demon Blood's crafting skills.

Ike Searing-Fang is indeed a talent!

Should I start thinking about getting him on my side?

Report

Chapter 486: Nefertari's Overthinking

Lin Yiyi's group had lived underground for two days.

The players accepted the jewelry Nieusel gave without any hesitation.

Not only did they accept the gifts, Lin Yiyi and Jiu Er even put them on.

Lin Yiyi also thanked Nieusel, "It was a great help."

Nieusel passed those words to Nefertari too.

Nefertari was taken aback and immediately told Nieusel not to approach them again.

She felt that the players should be keen and had already seen through her purpose. Yet, they did not even shy away from it and relayed the corresponding message to her.

This meant that they had brains and confidence.

It felt like a dangerous probing attempt.

It directly determined Nefertari's attitude toward the three players.

Wearing silver and gold jewelry was common for the average person.

In fact, whether it was silver jewelry or gold jewelry, they did not directly signify transcendence — only "silver coins" and "gold powder" had those effects.

But when ordinary people did not understand occult knowledge, it was perfectly normal to use gold and silver ornaments to ward off evil spirits.

Ordinary people could wear it casually too.

The situation varied for the transcendents.

Only the transcendents would use bronze accessories. Therefore, people who knew somewhat about the transcended world could directly infer that someone was probably a transcendent after seeing him wearing bronze jewelry.

It carried a symbolic meaning. Some remote villages who did not understand “transcender” even called the “transcender” as “bronze man” and regarded bronze as an evil metal.

Of course, the “bronze” accessories did not mean that it was metallic brown.

Some bronzes were more golden, while others were more white. The color difference largely depended on its component and ratio. But even the most golden bronze, its luster was different from real gold.

But in any case, bronze was not a suitable metal for jewelry.

Not only because it would oxidize quickly when it was corroded by sweat, but the more important factor was also because “it was not expensive enough”.

Hundreds of years later, some people might like oxidized bronze watches that experienced the precipitation of time. But in the eyes of rich people in this era, bronze jewelry was too cheap.

In fact, bronze rings were even cheaper than iron rings. It could hardly be used anywhere other than as a curse vessel. In terms of luxury, it was too cheap.

This was why many disposable curse vessels came in the form of bronze rings.

It was cheap.

However, when ordinary people would not wear bronze accessories, transcendents were particularly fond of bronze accessories.

Even after advancing to Silver Rank, many transcendents would still wear bronze accessories openly.

This was not about modesty but hiding the number of curses they possessed.

Silver Rank Transcender would have at least two curses. If you could make others think that you were a Bronze Rank, then even if they figured out the repercussions of your curse through behavior patterns, you would only suffer with a single curse's jinx.

After all, curses were strange, and it was not easy to activate the jinx. The more you wanted to achieve multiple jinxes simultaneously, the more difficult it was to set up a plot.

As long as the transcender did not violate all the curses, he would not be killed by jinx.

Moreover, acting in a low-key manner could also be used to prevent ritual and magic attacks.

The essence of the Ascension Path was the sublimation of the soul. Bronze Rank's spell effects would reduce tremendously against Silver Rank Transcender and would be utterly invalid against Gold Rank Transcender.

As for the wizard apprentices who had not attained a rank yet, their spells were ineffective against the Silver Rank Transcenders.

As long as the gap encompassed two ranks, the transcended power applied would be ineffective against the opponent. The effect of rituals worked the same too.

Supposed a Silver Rank Transcender pretended to be a Bronze Rank. Even if he revealed his real name or accidentally fell into someone else's ritual, he could survive if the opponent only applied a ritual capable of killing a Bronze Rank Transcender. Of course, that was provided that his opponents were not vigilant enough.

After all, the cost would increase exponentially every time the ritual's effect was raised by one rank. It was hard to imagine having malicious passers-by who would mess with him regardless of the cost.

If it weren't for the Bronze Rank Transcender, it would be difficult to hide one's curse vessel. Many Bronze Rank Transcenders would also wear lower-level products as cover. But they had no other way. The Bronze Rank vessel was already the lowest level.

That was why "Bronze Rank Transcenders" traversed humbly on the ground.

There was not such a big gap between Bronze Rank Transcenders and those who were Bronze Rank or above.

Instead, under the constraints of "curse", everyone acted more cautiously and prudently. No one dared to act particularly arrogantly.

Those who were particularly arrogant usually failed to reach the Silver Rank. They would have already been killed by the detectives hired by the local priests.

Those who needed to act in the name of a transcender were almost always "Bronze Rank" on the surface. At the same time, those who wore Silver Rank jewelry. For example, Annan's displayed identity was not a transcender but an ordinary person.

The only exception was Gold Rank.

They had to empty their elemental power to pretend to be a Silver Rank with slightly higher attribute points. Otherwise, their status as a Gold Rank could not be hidden. Instead, they could only be physically hidden. In other words, it was staying away from the world of mortals.

As long as the elemental power was stored in the brain, it would gradually distort the surrounding world. Moreover, if the Bronze Rank Transcender looked directly into the eyes of the Gold Rank Transcender, it would cause a sanity drop.

For example, there was a Gold Rank Soul Snatch Wizard who hid his identity by modifying the cognition and memory of others. However, he could disguise himself as a Silver Rank at most.

Silver Rank was the limit of mortals.

Attaining Gold Rank would signify a person throwing away his humanity.

But even for a Gold Rank powerhouse, it was possible to face a lot of trouble to have the details of his curse leaked.

It was possible to fall into a plot and lose one's life.

But it wasn't because Lin Yiyi and the others were too arrogant and reckless in accepting these jewelry pieces. On the contrary, none of the three of them were fools.

Lin Yiyi guessed that the other party wanted to see if they were liars.

In other words, were they stray transcendents? Did they have any organization? Did they know the rules that had emerged in the past ten years? There might be more detailed considerations, such as testing their mode of action, but taking this step was enough.

Obviously, it was too dangerous for a transcendent to wear silver jewelry; if the three of them were Silver Rank Transcendents disguised as Bronze Rank, gifting silver jewelry could also be regarded as a bluff that "I already know your identities."

However, Lin Yiyi also had plans in choosing to accept the silver jewelry instead of returning it.

Lin Yiyi had prepared a silver bracelet beforehand, but neither Jiu Er nor Suuankou did so.

They would stay here for a long time and probably go through advancement here.

Instead of going out to buy silver jewelry for advancement and revealing that "they are transcendents who came here to advance", it was better to accept it openly and admit that they were about to advance.

However, Lin Yiyi did not anticipate Nefertari to misunderstand her actions.

Report

Chapter 487: The Nefertari That Has Gradually Gone Haywire

In the bright study, there was a unique lamp immersed in water.

It was not a smokeless lamp made of “Green Fire” as fuel. On the contrary, the light emitted was bright, but it was glaring by the standard of a study. Worse still, it wasn't pleasant for the eyes.

After all, underground folks were sensitive to light.

Money, leisure, status, and skills—Nefertari had high requirements for her quality of life.

The walls and curtains of her study were pure wooden furniture made of evening primrose and secret oil. This opaque material had a strong light absorption, which could keep the study from sunlight even at noon. In return, it would prevent the light in the study from being reflected through the curtains, thus leaking privacy.

For sound insulation, a special ointment was applied.

This ointment could be extracted from the skin secretions of the Silent Realm's summon, a xenomorph-like monster called the Mute.

Her crystal desk lamp was made of a hollow irregular cube with a lot of seawater and dozens of “light-concealing ice cubes” to make a desk lamp with adjustable brightness. As she pressed the knob, seawater would flow through the mechanism to the other side without ice, and the brightness would also decrease after reducing the amount of water.

This simple invention was also the product of the “Wise”.

They were unlike the Alteration Wizards of Swamp's Black Tower, who wanted to develop a reagent with complex functions or conduct research and development at a deeper level.

Instead, they used a large number of existing ritual products to make appropriate combinations. Most of the Wise Council's inventions were at this level. After all, the Wise were not Alteration Wizards and were not scholars researching deeper-level technology.

However, using the fundamental theories and products of Alteration Wizards to optimize was surprisingly efficient. Moreover, the sales of various products they produced were superb.

Like the light-blocking curtain mentioned above, it was called “light-proof linen” in the Noah Kingdom. Each piece would cost 8 silver coins... almost 10 times the cost.

The Wise might be physically defenseless, but wisdom was a lethal weapon for them.

The young female ritualist with skin as pale as a marble stone and flaming pupils was searching the bookshelves.

She had 8 bookshelves filled with books, and she used the Mysterious Lady ritual to overlap the bookshelves' positions. In this way, the bookshelves would only occupy the space of one bookshelf, but she could consult the information on multiple bookshelves simultaneously. Moreover, she could continue to add more books in the future.

“Found it!” Nefertari whispered.

She took out an ancient leather book from the bookshelf giving out dark blue ripples.

The book was made of elf skin and trembled slightly like a living thing when touched by the hand. It seemed to have some consciousness, resisting Nefertari's reading.

Nefertari put her hand on the page and whispered,

“Silence. Six. Light ant.”

Then, she turned the book pages and recited the password she had set, “Glow Worm. Three and one-seventh. Nefertari.”

After resolving two layers of passwords, the text on the page was restored to its original state.

Her cautiousness was justifiable.

This was because the book was a genuine “original”.

The book was called [Jungle Adventure 1096], a diary written in the Fourth Age about the secrets of deities and extraordinary beings.

Nefertari had roughly read through this book. That was why she was able to pinpoint this book accurately.

“Wise” would use a special esoteric ritual to allow themselves to skim a book, leaving a clear impression of it without eating up memory. In this way, they would avoid a lot of undue influence when reading the “originals” or avoid being entrapped by the hidden rituals in the book.

When they needed to search for information, they would immediately know where the information could be found in their mind.

It was similar to a search engine that filled in data by itself.

"It's here!" Soon, Nefertari found the passage in her memory, "...When we marched to Natta County, Blind Monty, Captain Justice, and I finally made up our minds. We have decided to corrupt our souls.

"Blind Monty gave us a suggestion: This is a technique used by the ascendants of the 'Tooth and Iron Alliance' when the elves and centaur ruled the world, and it can effectively resist betrayal. This is a good technique. It's recorded down below:

"When the trio is preparing to corrupt their soul at the same time, they can disclose the oath curse that protects the soul to one of them; when they are trying to condense the soul, they can tell the other person about the oath curse that represents the core of the soul.

"In this way, it is guaranteed that everyone will know the oath curse of the other two after the soul condensation is completed. However, it is impossible to kill anyone among themselves with a jinx alone; at the same time, everyone is the secret keeper of the other two. The other two people will protect him. It prevents him from suddenly losing the secret keeper and becoming unable to suppress the curse.

"At the same time, having each other's deepest secrets is also one of the easiest ways to form a friendship. This ritual usually chooses two transcendents of the same sex and one transcendent of the opposite sex. This is to prevent the opposite sex from intervening in this stable triangle structure and to prevent anyone among them from deceiving vital information. When one's critical flaw is held in the hands of another, anyone in the team has a reason to exclude all those who come close.

"They don't exist as a relationship as a couple, but an overly close 'secret keeper' relationship that is better than lovers and relatives. Usually, they don't need friends of the opposite sex. It is said that under the background of having friends of the opposite sex who can share their hearts, all the opposite sex will appear superficial and dull.

"In ancient times, the 'Sun Council' produced actual power in this ritual. [The Fifth Luminary of the Sun is the light reflected in the pupils of the world.] The relationship between people can also become a strength. (Also: Blind Monty said that the Sun Council is not called the Sun Council, but its name cannot be pronounced or written down.] Thus, it is referred to as the Sun Council here. The following "Sun Church", "Eight Luminaries Council", and "Eight Luminaries Church" refer to the same).

Nefertari only read until this point.

After reading the materials she needed, she closed the book rationally and calmly.

Essential qualities of a ritualist were not curiosity, fanaticism, and seeking knowledge.

Instead, it was reasoning and calmness.

Even if she only inquired about such information, she was forced to read a piece of occult knowledge about the “Fifth Luminary of the Sun”. It had a pronounced effect on her mind. When she closed her eyes after looking at the light, she could feel the light dancing in her eyes, seeming she couldn't even close her eyes the next moment.

The learned Nefertari knew that this was the Novice Influence named the [Radiant of Rapture]. She needed to put herself in a dark environment and lie on the ground for more than ten minutes to let the “living light” in her brain and eyes escape.

“Still, I have achieved my goal.” Nefertari frowned slightly.

According to Nieusel's feedback, the three of them lived in one house but stayed in three different bedrooms.

This magical relationship made it difficult for Nefertari to judge the situation.

After Lin Yiyi accepted the three jewels, this abnormal behavior immediately startled Nefertari as if it reminded her of something.

But after checking the information now, Nefertari suddenly realized,

[The name of the organization cannot be read or written down.], [Starting from Bronze Rank, they act in a group of three], [Two of the same sex, one of the opposite sex, but it is not a couple relationship], [Taking the role of “secret keeper” for each other when advancing]...and most importantly, possibly related to [the Sun].

When they met for the first time, Nefertari was sharp enough to perceive something related to the influence of the “sun” from them.

As we all know, the “eye” was one of the appearances of the Sun.

I'm right!

Everything just so happens to coincide!

There is no doubt that the Secret Eye is this ancient organization that has existed since the Fourth Age... even in the age of elves!

Nefertari thought contentedly.

Could “Secret Eye” be referring to a solar eclipse?

What does solar eclipse refer to?

Could it be the zeroth day of the Sun? There is no such saying either.

“Or... are they worshipping the Seventh Luminary?” Nefertari murmured.

After all, only the Seventh Luminary has yet to be born. Therefore, to say “light that does not exist”, that could only be the Seventh Luminary.

But the concept is too abstract...

Sure enough, I should stop speculating. Let's rule out this possibility first.

Report

Chapter 488: The Stuck Team Is Slacking

Overseer Nieusel, who had curly brown hair and green pupils emitting a mystical green light, visited Lin Yiyi's house.

He took a sip of the tea Lin Yiyi made for him with a cheerful and sunny smile.

Nieusel looked at least 1.85 meters tall, with thick shoulders and burly muscles. However, the smile on his face looked a little innocent. He appeared like a fourteen years old, carefree youth.

His smile was seemingly contagious.

“This tea is not bad. I suppose this came from the Noah Kingdom!” Nieusel clapped his hands, happily picked up a piece of pastry, and praised, “It has excellent quality. It should only be available in Noah's capital. I still have some tea from the Papal Kingdom at home, and I will bring it to you when I have time. Oh, this snack is not bad!”

“It's just a normal snack you can find on the street.” Lin Yiyi smiled helplessly.

In their world, an extroverted person like Nieusel should be a real person.

Those people were generally pretty nice people.

He could chat happily for two hours with someone he had only met twice. Moreover, he was almost the only one talking. Lin Yiyi hardly said a few words.

Under such circumstances, Nieusel would not feel embarrassed and could still smile so brightly. So much so that even Lin Yiyi, who did not have much to say, was led to chatting for a while by him. She even felt that her mood had improved.

This was probably why the person behind Nieusel sent him an Overseer to interact with them.

It was precisely because the other party was familiar with Nieusel's character and knew that he could mingle well with other people, so he was sent to the players' side every day.

But what was this for? What did they want? The Overseer did not patrol the streets nor stay in his office. Is it fine to come over to chat and drink tea?

He had never come empty-handed either. This time, he sent a few bottles of wine and a few sets of clothes. There was also special coffee powder from the United Kingdom—yes, the players had been in this world for so long, and this was the first time they had encountered coffee.

Of course, the coffee was not referred to as coffee.

According to Nieusel, the beans were called “Alpine Wine” and were a specialty of the Alpine Island in the United Kingdom.

The raw material of “Alpine Wine” was called “Alpine Fruit”, which was generally used by local people as a kind of wild medicinal material. While energizing the brain, its most effective function was preventing nightmares' sudden arrival.

When the Influence was about to take effect, taking a small bottle of “Alpine Wine” stewed with about 80g to 100g of coffee powder could maintain a sleep-free state for nearly a day. In some places where it was unclear whether there would be nightmares, this reagent could effectively maintain wakefulness.

Lin Yiyi thought to herself. If she were to have tael of coffee beans in her stomach, she probably would not be able to fall asleep even if she did not undergo any ritual.

People in this world also believed that “natural things would be better for the body”. The Alteration Wizard could also make sobriety mixture and energy recovery medicine, and the effect was better.

However, “Alpine Wine” was a natural plant, after all. Many nobles of the United Kingdom preferred to take this stuff and would give it to each other as gifts for friends. There would also be some nobles who would take a small amount of “Alpine Wine” for health care and “supplement to the brain”.

However, this item was not worthy of being popularized as a drink at present due to its price.

Indeed. According to Nieusel, the Alpine Wine was costly.

Lin Yiyi was already thinking. When the players could roam the world freely, should they head to the United Kingdom to dig out a few coffee trees?

The Noah's soil was fertile, and the land was cheap.

She planned to get some "Alpine Nuts" to see if they were real coffee beans.

No matter what, this thing looked like coffee. Thus, they might be the same thing. If their nature were similar, she would look up some information or buy a coffee tree cultivation guide so the players could start farming.

Isn't it convenient to use a teleportation waypoint to achieve this?

It would be great to be involved in the business. After all, the players did not know how long they would stay in this world. Although doing missions to earn money gave a sense of adventure, it felt a bit boring after some time.

Just in case, let's do some business first.

Old Goose's group went to Natta County to see if they could get involved in the "Demon Blood" industrial chain. Longjing Tea had also made an agreement with Salvatore and would recommend some new players to go to Swamp's Black Tower, which was destroyed once. These players would ascend their profession into Alteration Wizard.

On the one hand, it was because Swamp's Black Tower had a lot of formulas that could make serious money. On the other hand, Salvatore needed such a group of "genius wizards" as the pillar to continue the development of Swamp's Black Tower.

But then again, coffee is so expensive.

Why do they gift them to us?

All three of us are Bronze Rank Transcenders, and there is no shortage of transcenders in the underground city.

It stands to reason that there is no need to befriend us.

Could they already know that we are working under His Royal Highness Annan?

Considering that Annan was about to inherit the Austere-Winter Dukedom and the "Sporeggar Mill" was just below the Austere-Winter Dukedom, it seemed logical to establish a good relationship with Annan.

Still, they should refrain from supervising the players in challenging the dungeon instance.

Could it be "work slavery"?

This was already his second trip to this place.

When he came to deliver the gifts last time, he had chatted with the three of them for a long time like this.

Although they were delighted during the chat, they discovered they had unknowingly wasted a lot of time after the conversation. With this time, they would rather study how to challenge the dungeon instance or hang around the forum for a while.

If Old Goose or Longjing Tea were here, they would enjoy the chat. Unfortunately, the other players probably did not have that kind of leisure.

So when Nieusel visited for the second time, Jiu Er and Suankou pushed Captain Lin Yiyi out to handle him.

“—Please, elder sister.”

“—You are the senior.”

The duo continued to nestle on the bed, browse the forum and enjoy snacks. They were having the time of their life.

No matter how much they ate in this world, their body in reality wouldn't get fat. Not only their body won't get fat in reality, but their body in this world wouldn't even get fat either. After all, the body of a battle-class transcender required a lot of energy. After realizing the good news, the players consumed snacks and barbecue daily, falling into madness.

In fact, after the three players arrived in the underground city “Sporeggar Mill”, the first thing they did was to ask passers-by about the shops to buy delicious snacks.

They were prudent.

After all, they had a lot of money now. Suuankou sold a few sets of traps when he was in the capital; Jiu Er worked as a thug for a month, hacking about twenty people to death. Many of them were transcendents, so she had earned a lot of money.

However, Lin Yiyi earnt a little bit more.

When she passed by Treasure Diamond Island for the first time, she bought a lot of cheap gems relying on Bishop Daryl's reputation. When these gems arrived at the Noah Kingdom, even the price of the least expensive gems had doubled or tripled. A polished piece of ruby the size of a thumb was sold for 30 gold coins.

This had supplemented the cost of buying her gemstones for advancement after she lent some money to Old Goose.

Lin Yiyi was also in a complicated mood.

She never expected that smuggling gems would obtain her first pot of gold in the game.

Except for Longjing Tea, who came from Swamp's Black Tower and was directly filled with equipment and reagents, they were almost the wealthiest players.

Of course, other players did not expect them to bring back any special products. After all, as long as they could successfully establish the teleportation waypoint, other players could teleport over at any time.

The premise of everything was to have the teleportation waypoint established smoothly.

“By the way, Nieusel.” Lin Yiyi changed the subject abruptly and asked instead, “[Sporeggar Mill] nightmare has been with you for so long. Do you have any information for reference?”

Yes.

It was embarrassing to say.

From the second day they moved here, they had been stuck in progressing through the nightmare for two days.

Report

Chapter 489: The Life We Chose

A few days ago, when Nieusel gave the players the house, he gave them a “key” into the local nightmare at Nefertari's instruction.

The players had to lock the door before bed and tie a strip of cloth around the left ankle. This was the key to the “Sporeggar Mill” nightmare.

Yes.

The local nightmare of this underground city was called Sporeggar Mill.

It was a nightmare on a distorted level, and its content leaned toward horror and puzzle. The puzzle in this horror game had many traps laid in it. Imagine the game that suddenly made the player fall into the crypt to death while walking or investigating something, or the games that killed the player when their attention was captured elsewhere for a while.

Worse still, the players were not kicked out of the nightmare immediately after dying three times in it.

It had a unique exit point, and the dungeon challenger must go to that location to exit. Suuankou only found out about the exit point on the second day.

Lin Yiyi's group spent eight hours in a row on the first day of adventuring, and they did not wake up until six in the morning.

Although they were in the underground world where the sun could not reach, Mr. Ray dutifully woke them up.

In this dungeon instance, which increased the erosion rate by 1% every time the challenger died, Lin Yiyi's erosion rate had risen by 17% before entering a chase or encountering an enemy with an HP bar.

Jiu Er's erosion rate had increased by 15%. She was currently the fastest progressing challenger. At the same time, she even told the rest of the group about the map.

That was because Jiu Er was a player who relied on instinct. She had avoided many pitfalls subconsciously. This also caused her to skip many traps without noticing them.

However, Suuankou's erosion rate rose by 31%.

This was not because Suuankou was more stupid than the other two. On the contrary, he might be the best player at deciphering the horror puzzle among the players. In the same eight hours, he did not die twice at the same place despite the high death count. It meant something that was enough to prove his strength.

But, he had a bad habit which was his curiosity.

Even without the blessing of the skill [Skillful Hands] and [Eagle Eye], his eyes were sharp. Coupled with being familiar with this area, Suuankou could always detect something that might be dangerous if he investigated it at the first moment.

Yet, he could not resist his curiosity.

So, he went to test his limits anyway.

The result was his death.

25 of his 31 deaths occurred in this manner.

He would not step on the mushrooms he detected. However, if he guessed that "Teemo [1] might have buried a mushroom somewhere", but he was not 100% sure, he wanted to step on it without scanning. If he did not explore it, he would always feel that the surroundings were dangerous and uncomfortable.

However, it was still uncomfortable after stepping on them.

Thus, Suuankou's progress did not advance much, but he almost tried out all the death traps.

This was also why Lin Yiyi and Jiu Er did not want to progress yet. Anyway, Suuankou loved the landmines so much. They would prefer Suuankou to progress for a while first.

With the strategy he summed up, the two could avoid some erosion.

After all, it cost Annan's affection rating to clean the erosion rate to zero.

Although they had been saving their affection rating, they felt like the premium currency of the game.

If the Mist Continent were a mobile game, then Lin Yiyi would pay to get those affection ratings directly.

However, the problem was that they could not deposit their money for this game!

To avoid a meaningless increase in erosion rate, they uniformly arranged Suuankou to explore the nightmare first. He was tasked to identify the nightmare's mechanism and then come back and tell the rest of the players later.

However, they said that the younger brother was meant to be sacrificed.

It was still a little distressing to have the younger brother to sweep the landmines.

It just so happens that Nieusel is so enthusiastic. Why don't I ask him, a local, if there is any strategy for reference?

"...For example, where are the traps? Where are the more convenient items?"

Lin Yiyi asked with a smile, "You have been here for so long, so you should have some tips, right?"

"It seems that you have really entered the nightmare." Nieusel touched his face, a little surprised.

Do you even suspect that we won't enter the nightmare at all?

Lin Yiyi resisted her desire to complain.

Where is the most basic trust between people?

—I have told you clearly. We came here to tackle the dungeon instance! So you didn't believe us at all!

"Don't be mad," Nieusel saw Lin Yiyi's face turn sour and apologized immediately, "I'm just a little surprised..."

“After all, Sporeggar Mill has a reputation for being a 'massive nightmare with almost no solution'. Many priests came here to overcome it but couldn't figure out a way.

“Although the nightmare was only at the level of Silver Rank at the beginning, this nightmare had a troublesome characteristic. It is impossible to quit even after dying many times in the nightmare, which directly makes those who come to solve the nightmare die in the nightmare instead. In the end, the nightmare range expands and has advanced to the Distorted level. Originally, the nightmare only encompasses the Black Mushroom Mill, but now it has expanded to more than half of the city.”

So far, no one had cleared the nightmare.

Although it was not so easy to trigger the key to entering this nightmare, it was still possible to trigger it.

A nightmare that the challenger would respawn immediately after death and would not be kicked out no matter how many times the challenger died. For irrational mortals, it meant death once they entered it by mistake. Although the person could escape if he just stayed still and waited until dawn or he could escape at a special location, mortals who could not maintain rationality in their dreams must not be able to do so.

“So, we don't keep records here.” When Nieusel said this, he couldn't help but smile, “After all, we don't have our own priests here.”

“...Oh, right.” Lin Yiyi reacted.

This was the deityless Underground Federation.

Whether it was the Mysterious Lady or the Silent Lady, there was no shrine for them here. This meant that there would be no priests in the underground world who “see the purification of nightmares as an honor and duty”.

Those who came here to purify the nightmare must have sought strength from the nightmare.

When a nightmare difficulty was overly serious, no one would bother to solve it.

It was because it was “not worth it.”

“Haven't you ever entered this nightmare before?” Lin Yiyi asked.

Nieusel shrugged, “Will you charge against the artillery?”

“I don't think I'm more competent or experienced than those seniors who died in this nightmare. They have already verified for us with their lives that this nightmare is unsolvable. Then, I will naturally not make any attempt.

“This is the result of respecting them. Instead of directly purifying nightmares, controlling the spread of the 'key' will be more effective. When you go to other underground cities, you will gradually understand this. There will be several difficult nightmares in each city, and even some cities are named after nightmares... such as us.”

This handsome and tall man with a gentle personality waved his hands. Then, he said those cruel words casually, “Without the priest going forward to purify the nightmare, we can only choose to compromise and coexist with the difficult nightmare. The good news is that our Sporeggar Mill's [key] is not so easy to trigger.

“Those young people who are full of passion but cannot see reality clearly and dream of becoming a transcender... Only they will try to enter the most dangerous nightmare where the 'key' is directly disclosed to the public. That's because they cannot get keys to the nightmare that can be purified more easily. Thus, this is their only choice left.

“—Each city has unique rules. This is our life and the reason why many townspeople relocate.

“Of course, this is also the life we choose.” The man paused and smiled wryly.

Report

Chapter 490: Nieusel In Deep Veneration

Perhaps it was because the Gray Mists would not invade the underground world even without the barrier's protection.

The underground folks did not have an intuitive feeling of “we were being protected by two deitydresses” even though their birth, the development of the underground world, and many underlying technologies in the underground world were blessings from the two deitydresses.

Instead, the underground folks would see it as “a matter of the ancestors”. After all, hundreds of years had passed.

That was far too distant.

The underground world had no national traditions. Many underground dwellers did not even know how the federation was built or when they started living underground. Worse still, many people were illiterate, and the educated rate was relatively poor. This country had the lowest literacy rate among all other countries.

After all, the Mysterious Lady and the Silent Lady were upright deities who were not very keen on education. Many of their priests were mystics or elitists.

As for the deities in comparison, Silver Sire knew that it was necessary to improve the quality of the general public to promote trade and increase consumption power. As the

Deity of Tradition, Old Grandmother taught her descendants to read books and learn life skills. Then, there was the Elegant Elder, the Deity of Art. Although his people were biased toward continuing the legacy of artisans or folk artists, they were generally educated.

There wasn't much to comment on the Papal Kingdom. Although the seven upright deities were cooperative and had a good relationship, the priests under them were not like this. Each church had racked its brains to compete for new blood and resources, conducting various plans, events, and festivals. The benefit of providing free education has been given since hundreds of years ago.

However, the underground world was different.

The underground world had a group of outstanding "Wise", and the people at the bottom lived quite happily. Coupled with the possibility of becoming a "Digger" and getting rich overnight, very few people had the patience to study. Anyone who could become the Wise was a powerhouse with both will and talent.

In this environment, ordinary people did not even know their country's history.

There was no "standard examination" designated. The citizens had sufficient resources, no pressure in life, and even a life-gambling shortcut to becoming a big shot was available. This led to the lack of desire and motivation for ordinary people to learn.

In hundreds of years, nine generations had passed.

This was enough to have short-lived mortals forget the past kindness.

The underground folks no longer recognized the status of the priest as being higher than the regular citizens. Funds were no longer provided for the church construction, and the believers of the Mysterious Lady could no longer directly become a Wise. These were the new rules that just appeared in the last decade.

Of course, since it saved urban expenses and led to the reduction of tax rates, the public generally supported this.

Ordinary people did not know what the Gray Mists were, what harm they had, and what their ancestors owed to the two deitydresses. Their perception of nightmares was "not to be involved". They did not understand the transcended world at all. The priests of the two deitydresses were unlike the Silver Sire priests who "served with a smile". Instead, they monopolized the federation's education, publicity, and financial resources.

The people's understanding of the church was "dispensable".

If the nightmares couldn't be purified, they would move.

However, they could feel the benefits of tax cuts directly.

Those in power want to gather power, and ordinary people want to pay fewer taxes. So everyone had what they wanted.

As a result, the priests of the two deitydresses were driven out of the underground world instead.

However, these two deitydresses were kind, or they simply did not care. Their presence was not prominent in the territory, and they wouldn't punish the folks for betraying them. This was also one of the reasons why the underground folks dared to do so.

If their deities were the grumpy Father Flint, Red Knight, Motherly Moth, or Cup-holding Lady with an unpredictable personality, they would naturally not dare to do this.

As a direct consequence of not having churches, there would be no authorities of any kind other than Digger and the Wise. Coupled with the abundant resources in the underground world and the above-ground world did not bother to invade them, these folks could live comfortably.

However, no one would be willing to sacrifice their lives to purify the nightmare for them.

Even if someone purified the nightmare, they only did so to improve their strength. To make the nightmare last longer, the person who had cleansed the nightmare would not leak the "strategy". Instead, the nightmare was preserved as a resource, or they would deplete it in one go.

In a sense, the underground people are like the players' economics.

Hearing what Nieusel said, Lin Yiyi immediately had this thought.

"So, can I ask a question?" Since the conversation had reached this point, Nieusel did not hide anything anymore.

He asked curiously, "How many times have you died in Sporeggar Mill? Can you tell me?"

"There are about 70 deaths in total." Lin Yiyi thought for a moment and replied, "My younger brother has died more than 30 times."

Hearing Lin Yiyi's words, Nieusel was stunned.

His hand that raised the teacup stopped. Then, he looked at Lin Yiyi steadfastly as if he had been petrified.

Nieusel seemed to hear something unbelievable, "Is he your younger brother?"

“Ya, blood-related brother.” Lin Yiyi replied positively, “My brother is two years younger than me.”

“So, has he died at Sporeggar Mill over 30 times?” Nieusel seemingly only knew how to repeat Lin Yiyi's words.

Lin Yiyi nodded.

“Right about 30 times only.” She smiled and said naturally, “Our plan is not to leave until we resolve the nightmare.”

Nieusel opened his mouth but closed it again.

For a moment, he did not know what to say.

She saw with her own eyes that her own brother had one-third of his soul eroded by the nightmare. Furthermore, the nightmare was not even in their own country or the city where they lived.

He expanded his soul as a painful price for a group of strangers who had never met and would never see each other again.

Even so, he still did not give up.

Even a social butterfly like Nieusel was speechless for a while. He did not know whether he should comfort Miss Yiyi or praise her brother as a warrior. He felt he did not seem to have the position to say such a thing.

The original joyful mood gradually calmed down because of this shame and embarrassment.

The big boy was silent for a while, then stood up.

He bowed deeply to Lin Yiyi.

“Thank you very much.” Nieusel looked down at Lin Yiyi, who was in a daze, and said seriously, “I would like to thank you for the people of this city.

“I know my gratitude is nothing, and I can't help you. It's hypocritical to say my thanks. But please take it as a personal tribute. It's not emotional blackmail, and I don't expect you to purify this nightmare. If you want to leave, I will never stop you.

“And you will always be my friends.”

“You're blowing it out of proportion.” Lin Yiyi did not react in time. She smiled a little embarrassedly, “It's just to purify the nightmare. This is our task and our mission.”

She was referring to establishing a teleportation waypoint.

“Our other colleagues will come here later. After all, there are many nightmares in the underground world.”

What she meant was to grind [1] the dungeon instance.

“...What.” Then, Nieusel remembered.

Nefertari said they were members of the Sun Church and followers of light.

Are they trying to bring light to the lightless underworld?

Or is it to illuminate the darkness deep in our hearts and let us understand how humble we are?

That's deeply respectable.

He shook his head, sat down again, and said in a deep voice, “I understand.

“But I don't quite understand why your mission is to help us purify our nightmares. I mean, why Sporeggar Mill?”

“I don't know that either.” Lin Yiyi said frankly, “This is about our leader. You can understand it this way. Our leader determines the location.

“He should be here soon. If you want to know, I'll ask the leader if he can chat with you alone.”

I don't think there is anything wrong with saying this.

Not to mention that the underground folks might have already guessed Annan's identity. Even if Annan's identity can't be revealed, the name “Ghirlandaio” can be made public.

In fact, Annan is supposed to come down after a stroll. It should be fine if he arrives in a different batch than the three other players. I just don't know if Annan is occupied by something else...

“Your leader?” Nieusel murmured.

Is the leader of the ancient mysterious organization coming to Sporeggar Mill?

As an Overseer, Nieusel immediately felt the pressure.

Although it might seem a little naive or they might be bluffed, Nieusel, at this instance—at least before communicating with Nefertari, would stubbornly believe that the members of this organization were kind.

He was so stubborn, a man as simple as a golden retriever.

Report