

Walking through the small hedge garden at the back of the Freybrook mansion, Scarlett idly eyed the flowers that grew in small, cordoned-off patches here. She was surprised the plants were still flowering, to be honest, since November was fast approaching and it had started getting colder for a while now.

If she wasn't misremembering, they only had one gardener working here. The person was in charge of taking care of the whole estate by themselves, which felt like a lot of work for a single person to do. But what did she know? She'd never even cultivated a tomato plant in her life, much less several gardens.

At the center of the hedge garden, there was a small roofed alcove with a white stone bench under it. She walked over and sat down on the bench, taking a bit of time to just relax and take in the morning air. The atmosphere here was somewhat idyllic, with most of the other parts of the estate hidden by the hedges.

Their stay in Freymeadow this time had been relatively short. Only three days passed in there before they were locked out of the village. That meant that, in this current loop, Scarlett would only have one day left before the village was destroyed and things reset again. That was unfortunate, considering how well things had been going with Arlene. But there was nothing to be done about it. It was what it was.

Later today, in the evening, was when she and Evelyne were set to go and have dinner with Livvi and Count Knottley. Not exactly how she would have preferred to spend her time, but Evelyne had made a decent argument for why they should go. They had spent some time going over a bunch of dinner etiquette a couple days before—most of which Scarlett had read about but not experienced herself—to ensure she hadn't 'forgotten' anything important, so she wasn't exactly nervous about things.

Letting her thoughts wander for a bit, Scarlett eventually pulled the [Pouch of Holding] loose from her waist and placed it on the bench next to her. She wasn't only here to enjoy the sights. [Obedience's Solitude Loci] as well as a few other articles were removed and arranged on the stone next to her. It had been her choice to delay going over these until she was back from Freymeadow, but now she was a bit excited.

[Tiara of Lost Benediction (Legendary)]

{A tiara made for a forgotten muse, it holds the prayers that were lost to the world}

[Ring of the Soul harvest (Epic)]

{Sustaining the life of one always sacrifices the life of another. Be it wheat from the field or animal for the slaughter, all eat from the reaper's platter}

[Chromacloth (Epic)]

{This silken cloth has been enchanted through a unique blend of schools, sharing familiarity with all}

[Charm of Expeditious Change (Unique)]

{An artisan's work requires dexterous fingers and sharp eyes, yet even they like to save time on occasion}

Of the items they had gathered during their time in Autumnwell, these were the ones she knew she was interested in for herself. The rest would probably either go to members of her party or be sold off, though that was still up for change if some unknown effects were revealed when they were further examined.

She started by picking up the [Charm of Expeditious Change].

It was a thin silver ring with a bright blue crystal at its top and gold inlays running along its side. She put it on her left hand and immediately felt a connection form. Reaching into the pouch of holding again, she pulled out her [Garments of Form] as well as her usual travel attire and held them both up in front of her. Then she focused on the ring.

It took some trying, but eventually, both pieces of clothing disappeared into thin air.

With a thought, they reappeared on her, replacing the thick cyan dress she had been wearing.

She nodded her head. This item worked exactly as she expected it to.

Focusing on the ring once more, the [Charms of Apperception] hanging from her ears disappeared along with the [Depraved Solitude's Choker] around her neck.

This was a god's send. It had always irked her slightly, having to go around wearing the same artifacts and clothes all the time. While they didn't exactly look *bad*, it went against her Scarlett-inherited sensibilities. Now, she could both get ready for battles a lot faster *and* switch items when necessary.

The [Charm of Expeditious Change] had been handy in the game as well, since there were no macros or other ways of immediately changing equipment, but only for certain uses. You'd been limited to two ring slots, so it wasn't unusual to prioritize other rings that had better stats. Only certain builds actually *required* the ring. Personally, she'd mostly used it to switch between her actual combat sets and her more cosmetic sets that she used in cities and places like that.

But here, she didn't have to bother with that. This wasn't a game, and she had ten freely available fingers at her command. She wouldn't mind giving one of them up for something like this, and she'd already checked that the limit didn't apply in this world.

There *was* still a possibility that having too many rings meant they could somehow interfere with each other, but she hadn't run into anything like that yet, at least.

Turning her attention away from the new ring, she looked at the [Chromacloth]. It was a piece of square cloth of a deep red color. They hadn't gotten this from Abelard's Doll Mansion, but rather from one of the other dungeons they had cleared the day after that.

Picking it up—feeling the connection with the artifact lock into place—she created a weak flame above her right hand, then gingerly moved her left hand closer to the fire. The heat warmed her skin, but at this level, it wasn't too bad.

She put the cloth down and returned her hand to the flame. This time, the heat was much more noticeable.

Nodding her head at having confirmed another item's effect, she used the [Charm of Expeditious Change] to have the piece of cloth disappear as well.

From what she knew of [Chromacloth], as long as you had it somewhere on your body, it would give you a bonus in resistance against a certain school of magic. Which school was decided by the color, and it could be changed once a day. The options were pyromancy, hydromancy, terramancy, and aeromancy. The bonus wasn't anything ridiculous, but it was a nice little item to have, nonetheless.

Next, she picked up the [Ring of the Soul harvest]. It was a simple metal ring with a design of a sickle and wheat at its head.

The name *sounded* ominous, but she was pretty sure the ring itself didn't actually have any ties to necromancy. Otherwise, Leon would most likely have reacted to it when they originally defeated Abelard and looted things near the boss room.

As for what the ring's effects were...

Scarlett turned her head up, scanning across the surroundings. She'd asked Marlon to convey a small request to the gardener before she left Freymeadow—which was technically the previous day—so there *should* be something around here.

Standing up, she began by walking over to the nearby hedges and looking around near their roots. Eventually, she found a spot where the dirt had recently been dug up. Next to the small mound, there was a bowl with dirt in it. Frowning, she went back to the bench to pick up a pair of gloves from the pouch. Then she kneeled down next to the bowl and scooped up some of the dirt.

She grimaced as she spotted several worms in it. She hadn't minded worms *too* much before, but now...

She would have to take a bath once she was done here.

Fighting back the small urge to retch, she pulled off her left glove and pulled up a short dinner knife that she'd also removed from the pouch of holding. Using the blade, she made a tiny, barely perceptible cut on the tip of her index finger. Then she equipped the [Ring of the Soul harvest] and looked to the bowl of worms. A flame enveloped them and they were burned to cinders in under a second.

Narrowing her eyes, she inspected her finger and the cut she'd made. It closed on its own, leaving a thin red line where the wound had been.

A small smile found itself on to her face.

She hadn't been sure that would work.

The [Ring of the Soul harvest] was an item that healed you whenever a creature nearby died, that much she had known. But since she couldn't exactly go around killing things indiscriminately just to try the effect out, she had been trying to figure out how to confirm it. That's when she'd thought of using something small, like worms, though she had been

worried that creatures of this size wouldn't have any effect. But clearly, they did, albeit minor.

That did bring up the question of whether the ring *actually* reaped souls—and if worms had them—but she honestly didn't care too much, as long as it worked. The ring had a scary name, but she imagined it was more likely to be related to spirit magic rather than pure necromancy. Spirit magic dealt a lot more with the interaction of souls themselves than necromancy did, and since she knew Abelard dabbled in both it wasn't that much of a stretch either.

She stood up and returned to the alcove at the center of the garden. The [Ring of the Soul harvest] disappeared from her finger, transported to whatever spatial dimension the [Charm of Expeditious Change] stored things in.

Hopefully, she would never actually have need for the ring's healing effects. But it was good to have backups, in case Rosa or healing potions weren't an option.

She turned her eyes to the last item that she'd laid out on the bench.

The [Tiara of Lost Benediction] was a silver tiara of elaborate design that went over the forehead and had three small rubies at its face, giving off a cold, almost lonely air. Of the items she had chosen to keep for herself, it was the one whose effects she was most uncertain about. But since it was also the first legendary item she had gotten her hands on, she didn't simply want to let it out of her grasp.

Its appearance was a bit over the top, yes, and she couldn't say that she enjoyed the idea of others seeing her, a grown woman, walking around with it either. But now that she had the [Charm of Expeditious Change], she could at the very least make sure she only wore it when she actually *needed* it.

Which, if she had anything to say about it, would never be in Rosa's presence.

She brought the tiara up and placed it on her head. The connection formed, and a second later, things suddenly felt *clearer*, for lack of a better word. It was similar to the effect of some of Rosa's magic, although perhaps not quite as potent.

She summoned several Aqua Mines. The ease with which they formed surprised her. She had put a lot of oomph into these as well.

If she were to guess, all of this was simply a result of the 'stat boost' that the item gave as a legendary-tier. If she were to guess, it didn't have any special effect or anything like that—which would explain why her memory of it wasn't as good as with the others—but this was still pretty good.

She was curious how far she could go if she had this equipped along with Rosa's supporting magic. Perhaps that was something to try next time they visited Freymeadow. If she could convince the woman to wear a blindfold, maybe.

The tiara disappeared from her head. Then she looked at the last item lying next to her. It was the [Obedience's Solitude Loci]. She had left the hardest for last, but now it was time to figure this thing out.