

Another World 211

Chapter 211 - Blood Still not Cold

Zhao Hai and Green stood in the courtyard of Bluestone Villa, looking up at the flying blood-red eagle in the sky. It had eyes filled with intolerance and a powerful pressure that could not be helped.

It wasn't until the blood-red eagle disappeared without a shadow that the two of them returned to the parlor room. Meg served them some tea, but Zhao Hai and Green weren't in the mood to drink. Zhao Hai turned to Green and asked, "Grandpa Green, do you think the Purcell clan would help us? I think it's best to not recklessly confront Boric. Our current strength is still too weak. The time to fight isn't now."

Green nodded. "Yes. Ah, it is indeed too reckless a time. I also think that we should make a temporary compromise. It's for the best. If we let Boric know of our identities, then we won't be able to stay for even a day in the Aksu Empire. As for the Purcell clan, there wouldn't be any trouble. After all, they are still a major aristocratic clan and moving against them would cause a great deal of trouble. Unfortunately, I fear Laura will be in trouble."

Zhao Hai smiled bitterly. "It seems that this time, we have caused a large amount of trouble for Laura. It's enough when it were only the Markey Dell clan pressuring us, but now, with the Southern King, I fear Laura won't be able to stay in the Purcell Duchy anymore."

Green also smiled strangely. Behind Zhao Hai, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows felt somewhat strange. When Zhao Hai found out the Southern King was behind the attack, although he seemed worried, he acted more worried about others rather than himself. He didn't seem to care about his own safety, but why? Did they have a method to preserve their own lives?

Zhao Hai suddenly stood up and turned to Green, saying, "Grandpa Green, I think going to Casa City will be better. Just writing a letter will make it difficult to explain things. This situation is truly too big, and it will affect aspects of our relationship."

Green nodded. "I also think it's better to discuss this matter face to face. Alright, let's go to Casa City."

Meg looked up at the sky and said, "Grandfather, Young Master, it's quite late now. I think it's best to go tomorrow. Something bad might happen if you go this late."

Green and Zhao Hai looked up at the sky. It really was quite late. If they traveled to Casa City now, then it would be dark by the time they reached it.

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Alright, it seems we'll have to go tomorrow. This is also fine, it gives Laura the night to arrange her things. I think Laura will also share this information with Evan. By the time we go tomorrow, we'll know Evan's response."

Green nodded. Turning towards Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, he said, "Do we bring Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows?"

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked at Green, confused. He didn't understand what Green meant, but Zhao Hai did. With a low voice, Zhao Hai murmured, "If employers do not suspect, then there will be no suspicion. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows is under a blood oath and is now a clan member. This issue is something we should tell him as well."

Green nodded, which just made Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' mind more muddled. He didn't make much noise, however, as he did at least understand Zhao Hai's underlying meaning. It seemed Zhao Hai had an even greater secret.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows was somewhat touched. He was of humble birth, and only later went to school and studied martial arts. When he became a Rank Four expert, however, his family met with an accident. An aristocrat had seized his family's property. His father was killed on the scene while his mother was beaten until she vomited blood. As for his sister, she was caught and tortured to death by the aristocrat.

When Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows heard what had happened, he went all out against the aristocrat. He was seriously injured in the end, however, and his wounded body had been dragged back by his mother. She took care of him until she died of exhaustion.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows was stimulated by his mother's death until suddenly, he gained a Divergent Technique, his present Incarnation skill. Yet, he still wasn't a match for that aristocrat and therefore ran away. He became a mercenary and did tasks in order to earn money as he crazily cultivated. Finally, he had reached Rank Six and massacred the aristocratic clan. During that time, he wasn't only a Rank Six expert but could also produce four hundred avatars. That aristocratic clan was only a minor one and didn't have any strong experts on its side. Thus, it was extinguished by him.

After getting his revenge, he became an assassin and slowly made a name for himself. There were many aristocrats that wished to win him over, but he didn't agree since he hated the aristocrats.

Wandering for several years, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows soon found that it was difficult being a solo warrior. As such, he tried to make a few friends, especially with excellent magicians.

Afterward, he chanced upon the identity of a magician he was on good terms with and found out that the magician was an aristocrat. The magician invited Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows to join his clan and after some thought, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows finally agreed.

What he didn't think was that after joining the magician's clan, the magician wouldn't actually trust him. The magician didn't reveal anything about his clan and, worse, sent someone to monitor him.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows left the clan in a rage. He became a freelance mercenary and didn't trust anyone anymore. He became a solo merc. If a cooperation was needed, then he would just form a temporary team and didn't wish to stay a team member forever.

After hearing Zhao Hai's words of 'If employers do not suspect, then there will be no suspicion,' Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows felt his heart being persuaded. Although he was still forced to be a part of Zhao Hai's clan, those words uttered by Zhao Hai really did move him a great deal.

If Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows were a cold-blooded killer and his heart was dark, then he wouldn't have thought that pledge under the blood oath would be enough to gain Zhao Hai's trust. He also remembered that previously, he'd attacked and lost to Zhao Hai, so he shouldn't be trusted.

He wasn't a cold-blooded killer anyway. Although he worked as an assassin, his heart was still warm, else he wouldn't have let that magician that didn't trust him off.

It was precisely because of this that when he heard Zhao Hai say, 'If employers do not suspect, then there will be no suspicion,' he was moved.

Zhao Hai looked at Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows and spoke with a low voice, "Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, to tell you the truth, Stony Mountain is just a temporary residence of ours. It is so that we can extend our branches into the Purcell Duchy. Our roots are elsewhere. I will now take you to it, the place

of our Buda clan's roots. That place is an eternal secret. You must remember to never mention this to anyone. Even within your dreams, you must not utter a word . Understood?"

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows immediately moved to Zhao Hai's front and knelt before him. "I ask the Young Master to please feel assured that I, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, will not utter this secret, even after death. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows will not betray Young Master's trust."

Zhao Hai stood and said, "In that place, aside from Grandpa Green and the other old members of the Buda clan, there are also the slaves we had brought along. Those slaves cannot betray us. Besides them, there is only you, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows. Ah. Later, our Buda clan cannot be reached. Let us go see it."

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows nodded with effort. Zhao Hai helped him back up and turned his head looking into the parlor room and nodded to Green, saying, "Let's go." With his intent, they moved back inside the Space.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows suddenly saw flowers before him. Before he knew it, he'd been transferred to a mysterious place. It was a prairie, and in front of them was a villa. There was also a large plot of land divided into many blocks with various plants growing within.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows stared blankly at everything before he heard Zhao Hai say, "This is the place I spoke about earlier, and also my Divergent Technique. This is the Space, a place where everything obeys my command."

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked puzzledly at Zhao Hai, who gave a faint smile and said, "This is the Divergent Technique I have obtained. This Space can plant and raise magic beasts. Those undead you saw before were transformed by this Space. In this Space, I am god."

Startled, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked at Zhao Hai with an expression of shock. "Young master, do you mean to say that this Space is like one of those spatial tools, like a subspace?"

"Almost," replied Zhao Hai with a smile, "but they are not quite the same as this Space. You can say that there is a unique principle in this independent Space, and not for a subspace. This Space exists because I exist."

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows showed an expression of surprise. "Great, with this Space, Young Master wouldn't be afraid of any attacks. This is really a good place."

Zhao Hai was speechless. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' way of thinking was the same as Green's from when he first entered the Space. Zhao Hai felt happy. Now he knew and could say that Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' heart was truly with him.

Smiling, Zhao Hai said, "Alright, let's go and look at our domain."

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' vision blurred once more and suddenly, they arrived at Fort Iron Mountain.

Upon their arrival at Fort Iron Mountain, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked puzzled as he examined his surroundings. "Young Master, where are we? Why is there such a flower?" He was, of course, referring to the Hell Rainbow Flower.

Zhao Hai smiled. "Have you forgotten where the Buda clan manor is? We are in Fort Iron Mountain. Outside is the Black Waste."

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows was shocked. "Young Master, you said that outside is the Black Waste? Then does that mean we came from outside of Casa City to Fort Iron Mountain in the Black Waste?"

Zhao smiled as he said, "Yes, we went from Stony Mountain to Fort Iron Mountain. Hahaha." When they heard Zhao Hai, Green and Meg also laughed .

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows didn't smile with them. He was just too surprised. From Casa City to Fort Iron Mountain, even with a fast horse it would take a month of travel. Yet, they arrived here in just the blink of an eye. This was too godly, right?

Meirin and Woodhead arrived at this time. Meirin looked at Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows with confusion and asked Zhao Hai, "Young Master, this is?"

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' expression was too rich, and when Meirin looked at him she knew he wasn't an undead so she'd asked.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly. "This is Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows. He is now one of us. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows is pledged under a blood oath, so he won't betray us. Grandma Meirin, please feel relieved. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, this is Grandpa Green's wife, Grandma Meirin. The two over there are Woodhead and Stonehead."

Chapter 212 - Fighting Spirit

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Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows knew that these people were the Buda clan's genuine and most trusted subordinates. As such, he didn't dare to be neglectful. He moved forward and hurriedly greeted them. Meirin didn't say anything, but returned the greeting, and both Woodhead and Stonehead did the same.

After watching the greetings, Zhao Hai turned to Woodhead and Stonehead and said, "Woodhead, Stonehead, help make Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows familiar with the surrounding area and then lead him back to the parlor room."

Woodhead and Stonehead immediately complied and led Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows away.

Zhao Hai and Green led Meirin to the parlor room and Meg served tea to them as they sat. Zhao Hai then told Meirin the information they'd obtained from Lycra while also informing her of their decision.

Meirin frowned. With a sullen face, she said, "What the Young Master said is true. Our current strength isn't capable of confronting Boric. It seems that right now, we can only hide. This is too hateful."

Zhao Hai and the others had ugly expressions. When they talked about Boric, with regards to everyone, it was truly too big a blow for them. Their main source of income currently came from the Purcell Duchy. If they gave up their business there, then it was equal to breaking off from their source of income. To them, this certainly was too much like a deathblow.

Meirin frowned. "I'm afraid this matter isn't going to be simple. We still have a previous grudge with Boric. If he were to find out we're hiding, wouldn't he also go to the Black Waste and cause trouble?"

Both of them understood what Meirin meant. Although it could be said that Boric didn't know they, as Zhao Hai and servants, were members of the Buda clan, both sides already had a grudge against each other. If Boric knew Laura ran, then his fury wouldn't have a place to vent. Perhaps he'd send his subordinates to rush into the Black Waste and look for them instead. With regards to the Buda clan, this was troublesome.

Zhao Hai frowned. When he looked outside, he saw that currently, the seven-colored mist was a lot thicker than it was a few days ago. It was almost similar to the mist inside the Carrion Swamp.

Zhao Hai's mind flashed with an idea. He couldn't help but chuckle as he said, "It's fine, Grandma Meirin. You don't need to be worried right now. Fort Iron Mountain has been surrounded by the seven-colored smog. If Boric truly dares to send people here and look for trouble, then we won't be polite. It will also be good to let them stay."

As Zhao Hai said this, Meirin and the others became stunned for a moment. They looked outside and saw that the area truly was surrounded by the seven-colored smog. They laughed and understood what Zhao Hai meant. If Boric did intend to move against them right now, then it would be impossible for him to send most of his army. He could probably send one or two Rank Nine experts and take several days to arrive. Maybe, he wouldn't even send a Rank Nine expert. In that case, so long as they truly did intrude and get in range of the castle, then they were just courting death.

Before, they had been afraid of a Rank Nine expert. Now, however, Zhao Hai and the others currently had two Rank Nine experts on their side. If the opponent's Rank Nine experts dared to enter the smog, then Zhao Hai wouldn't be afraid of being found out. He could just directly slaughter those Rank Nine experts.

Green pounded the table with force and loudly said, "Good! This will work. If Boric dares to send people here, then let them come. We won't let them return. This will be us collecting interest. In any case, our position is covered with the seven-colored smog, and is similar to the Carrion Swamp. Even if they died inside the smog, nobody would dare to think anything odd."

At this time, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows and the other two had just returned from the outside. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked quite giddy at this time. He was truly excited as he hadn't thought Zhao Hai's Space could actually improve the Black Waste. When he thought about the Black Waste area, it made him want to laugh.

He had now completely regarded himself as a member of the Buda clan. First, it was due to the trust Zhao Hai had shown him. Second was the blood oath he had pledged, which made him unable to betray the Buda clan for the rest of his life .

Zhao Hai examined Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows' appearance and smiled faintly. "Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, how is it? Does the place look good to you?"

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows nodded. "Yes, the place is very good. Young Master, so long as we improve the lands here, our Buda clan will certainly become one of the top formidable clans."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, then took up a cup on the table and passed it over to Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows. "Drink this," he said.

Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows looked puzzledly at the cup he was given. The cup only contained clear water, which made him unable to understand Zhao Hai's intentions.

Zhao Hai looked at Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows and said, "The seven-colored smog around the castle is very toxic. It's the same smog as what is covering the Carrion Swamp. It poisons people slowly, so this water is used to detoxify it."

After hearing what Zhao Hai said, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows quickly lifted the cup and downed it. He suddenly noticed a slightly stuffy feeling in his chest. When the water reached his stomach, the stuffy feeling disappeared. He understood that he'd been unknowingly poisoned.

Zhao Hai knew that the others had already drunk the water inside the Space, which made them able to move freely within the smog and not be poisoned by it. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, however, had not drunk the water. Since he'd gone out to look around the area, Zhao Hai feared that he might have been poisoned. This was why he'd hurriedly given Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows a cup of Spatial Water.

Meirin looked at them and said, "This is good. Young Master, I will go ahead and prepare the food. You guys can go ahead and chat first."

Zhao Hai waved a hand and said, "Everyone, sit. Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, you already know of the situation. Narrate it to Woodhead and Stonehead." Since Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows already knew of the issue, it was better for him to speak of it.

Complying, Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows told Woodhead and Stonehead about what had happened. After a while, the two had finished listening and now understood what was being talked about.

After Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows finished, Woodhead turned to Zhao Hai and asked, "Young Master, what do you mean to do?"

Zhao Hai sighed. "We can only draw back for now. Not only will we do so, but we will also need to include Laura into our group. If Boric really dares to send people and cause trouble for us, then we will keep them here. Afterward, we'll draw away from Casa City and cut a path towards the Beastfolk Prairie and start our development there."

Woodhead nodded. "This is also good. Then, will Young Master not go to Casa City tomorrow? We should tell Miss Laura about this matter in detail. I think she will also have some businesses in the Beastfolk Prairie, and I also think we should look for other places on the continent. The number of commodities within the prairie is too little, and we cannot obtain much from there."

Nodding, Zhao Hai said, "I have also thought of this. If we didn't have the Space, then we would have to go to another country to develop. That is equal to losing all of our development here in the Black Waste. Since we have the Space, however, then so long as we establish a transfer point in another country, we'll be okay. Furthermore, our enemies are mainly concentrated in the Aksu Empire. So long as we leave and go to another country, we'll have far less trouble."

Green nodded. "I also agree with the Young Master's idea. With our present strength, no matter what country we are in, we'll be able to live a very good life. Yet, we cannot possibly lose the Black Waste as there are no other areas suitable for our development.

"If one wanted to go from the Beastfolk Prairie to another country, then they would still need to cross through the Aksu Empire. We don't need to do so, however, since we have the Space. We can just place

transfer points and connect to any place in the world from the Beastfolk Prairie. This is our greatest advantage. Young Master, I think we should go to the Rosen Empire. Although the Rosen Empire and Aksu Empire are close to one another, there is some friction between them. Since our relationship with the Aksu Empire isn't good, we should be very safe if we go to the Rosen Empire."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "That is something we can go and discuss about tomorrow with Laura. I also wanted to have a look and see how the Purcell Duchy will take this matter. If the Purcell Duchy will truly put up a reckless fight against Boric, then we will not join and fight with Boric head on. I don't think the Purcell clan will do so, though. This time around, the enemy isn't only Boric, but also the Markey Dell clan."

Green nodded. "At present, even if Evan is in power within the Purcell clan, he won't push hard for going against Boric, especially with the addition of the Markey Dell clan. For the Purcell clan's benefits, Evan will certainly withdraw from our alliance, leaving only Laura and us. We do not have the means to stand up against the combined forces of Boric and the Markey Dell clan."

Zhao Hai sighed. "The issue here is what Laura will do. It may not be possible for her to give up the whole of the Purcell Duchy. After all, she had established her roots here. For her, giving up on the duchy is just too difficult."

Green and the others were also silent. They knew that giving up all of one's businesses within the Purcell Duchy would be hard. For Laura to give up on everything she had, as a person it was truly too difficult.

Zhao Hai sighed. "If there is really no other way out, then we will receive Laura here. Anyway, Laura won't be able to stay in the Aksu Empire anymore, especially now that it isn't only the Markey Dell clan she shall be facing, but also Boric. The Markey Dell clan's strength in the Aksu Empire might not be strong, but Boric is different. He is the Southern King, the one who dared to challenge for the King's Throne."

Green nodded. "It seems like this is the only thing we can do for now. We have implicated Laura this time around, so no matter what, we cannot have her experience danger."

Sighing, Zhao Hai said, "In the end, it is our strength that is too weak. If we had the same strength as Boric, then who would dare to move against us? Hmph. Just you wait. Sooner or later, no one on the continent will dare to underestimate our Buda clan."

Green examined Zhao Hai's expression and smiled faintly. This time around, he thought the issues weren't that bad. This was especially so with Zhao Hai in such high spirits and morale, something rarely seen with Zhao Hai's body as it is.

Green had been confused at the different aura Zhao Hai had exuded when he'd woken up. Although he appeared very calm when managing things, he was actually quite impulsive and conservative, something quite disadvantageous with regards to the development of the clan. Green had also been thinking of how to make Zhao Hai get sharper through some other methods. He wouldn't have thought that this desire could actually be inadvertently reached.

Chapter 213 - 4:6 Split

With respects to Zhao Hai's worry about Laura, if one were to describe her current situation with a single word, then it would be miserable. After Laura received Zhao Hai's letter, she was stunned. How could she imagine things would end up like this.

Nier looked at Laura, who just sat there foolishly and motionless, and was scared for a moment. Then she ran as fast as she could to look for Quinn John and to inform Karen.

When Quinn John entered Laura's room, he saw Laura staring blankly as she sat on a sofa. She held a letter in her hand, but was obviously just staring blankly at nothing, not even giving it a glance.

Startled, Quinn John immediately went over to Laura's side and softly said, "Laura, Little Laura, what happened to you?"

As if she'd just stepped on a cat's tail, Laura jumped. Her eyes began to tear as she said, "Grandpa Quinn John, what do we do? What should we do?"

Quinn John was scared when he saw how Laura was acting and hastily asked, "What is it? What has happened? Little Laura, calm down and talk to grandpa."

Laura was consoled by Quinn John's voice and slowly calmed down. Her tears still fell, however, and she sobbed lightly as she passed the letter in her hand to Quinn John.

Quinn John took the letter and carefully read it. The more he read, the more ugly his face became. He never would have thought that such a situation would happen. Originally, the Markey Dell clan by itself was already a large headache. Adding in the Southern King, and it was no wonder Laura became so agitated.

After he read the letter carefully, Quinn John placed it on the tea table. He looked at Laura and sighed. As he was reading the letter, he had begun to weigh things in his heart. Finally, he concluded that they couldn't stay in the Purcell Duchy anymore. It wasn't just the Purcell Duchy, but couldn't stay the whole of the Aksu Empire.

Quinn John went to Laura's side and patted her shoulder gently. "It's alright, Little Laura. Now is not the time to cry. First, think of what we should do."

At this time, Karen also arrived. When he saw Laura's tear-stained appearance, he couldn't help but start and say, "Laura, what's the matter? Why are you crying? Who bullied you?"

Quinn John smiled bitterly and just passed the letter to Karen. After he read the letter, Karen's complexion changed. He clearly understood the meaning behind the letter. Although he didn't go out much, he still knew how strong a character the Southern King was. Now that he suddenly began to intervene, the issue became much more difficult to manage.

Karen placed the letter back on the table and turned to Quinn John. "Uncle, what are your thoughts?"

Frowning, Quinn John said, "Anything we say now is useless. Even if our three sides were to cooperate, we cannot fight against Boric. I think we need to tell Evan of this matter. Then we must prepare to leave the Purcell Duchy as soon as possible. It would be better to leave the Aksu Empire itself."

Karen also frowned as he said, "We're going to leave the Aksu Empire. Leave the Aksu Empire in order to avoid being hunted down by Boric. Yet, what about the Markey Dell clan? The Markey Dell clan is situated in the northern area of the continent and possess a very strong influence there. Even if we leave the Aksu Empire, it will be very difficult for us to run away from them. Don't forget, we have already withdrawn from the clan."

Quinn John nodded. "This is something I understand as well, but so long as we go to another country, even if we face the Markey Dell clan, it would be alright. By doing so, at least we won't have to fear Boric going ahead and becoming our enemy."

Karen thought about it for a while, then nodded. Compared to facing two formidable enemies, it was without a doubt better to face just one. Furthermore, in other countries the Markey Dell clan wasn't omnipotent.

Laura had calmed down by this time. She cleared away the tears on her face and said, "I'll immediately go to the Grand Duke's Mansion and explain the situation to the Grand Duke. Grandpa Quinn John, I'll leave you here to begin the preparations."

Quinn John nodded as Laura stood. She told Nier to prepare the carriage as she rushed towards the Grand Duke's Mansion with the fastest possible speed. The situation must be explained to Evan, especially since Evan had been so good to her. She thought she shouldn't hide such an important matter.

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When Laura arrived at the Grand Duke's Mansion, Evan was informed of her coming. He immediately welcomed Laura to the study. When he saw Laura enter, he was stunned to see her red eyes, which were obviously caused by crying. Evan didn't know what matter could make Laura cry this much.

Evan hastily said, "Little Laura, how are you? What happened?"

Laura looked at Evan and bitterly smiled. She reiterated the contents of the letter Zhao Hai had sent. Evan listened to Laura's explanation and couldn't help but frown. He hadn't thought this matter would become so troublesome.

After Laura finished, she looked at Evan and said, "Uncle Evan, the situation this time is very troublesome. We have already come up with a plan. We are ready to temporarily withdraw from the Purcell Duchy. We won't need to clash with both Boric and the Markey Dell clan that way. What are your thoughts?"

Evan looked at Laura and sighed. "Little Laura, your uncle cannot deceive you. With this kind of situation, our Purcell clan is incapable of participating. Furthermore, we cannot assist you. It is truly better for you to leave. Be at ease that I can keep your stores as is. I will send people to take them over and send you the monthly income. This will work, even if I am temporarily taking them over."

Surprised, Laura didn't think Evan would give such a proposal. She couldn't help but be moved. Laura knew Evan wasn't seizing her stores. If Evan wanted to seize them, then there was no need to say those words. So long as they leave, it would have been okay for him to take them over freely. Obviously, Evan was doing this out of sincerity.

Laura knew it was risky for Evan to do this. It wasn't only a possibility of him offending Boric, but he would definitely be offending the Markey Dell clan. She didn't outright turn down the offer as she thought Evan might get offended, thus, she shook her head as she said, "It's alright, Uncle Evan. Although you are the patriarch at present, if you really did such a thing, the Elders Assembly will oppose it. It just wouldn't give any advantages to the Purcell clan, only harm. As such, they will not agree."

Evan snorted. "I, Evan, never hits a friend when they are down. You can be at ease and feel relieved about giving me the stores. So long as you leave, I can just tell them you sold the stores to me. With this, they cannot say anything. Although the Southern King is formidable, people with high positions invite criticism. In addition, mud cannot be thrown at our Purcell clan so easily. He won't dare to do much to us."

Laura agreed to what Evan said as there was no other way. If she didn't agree, then Evan would think she were looking down at him. She nodded and said, "Alright, I'll return later and arrange it. I'll also discuss with Mister when it is convenient and ask him to not break off the supply of Taoyuan products."

Evan stared as he nodded. "This is good. I'll see you off as you leave. The stores will be turned over to our Purcell clan and managed by us. They won't have any reason to take those stores away from us. If they dare to act unreasonably, then don't blame me for how I react."

Laura smiled faintly. "Since we must leave, the stores will naturally be turned over to Uncle Evan's management. Uncle, however, cannot just take care of us and get nothing out of it. If you buy some stakes in the stores, then looking at this, we can divide the proceeds. How about a 4:6 split? We'll take 4, and the Purcell clan can take 6."

Evan's face sank after he heard Laura. "Little Laura, what do you mean by this? Are you looking down at your Uncle Evan? Am I that inadequate? I'm helping you manage the stores, so how can you give me so much money?"

Laura smiled and said, "I won't ever look down on you, Uncle Evan. But uncle, don't forget that you are now the Purcell clan's patriarch. If you don't do it for the Purcell clan, then they will start to gossip and think, 'You are sitting in the patriarch's position, yet you won't help us?' I will give you the stores to manage and 60% of the income. This is so those elders of your clan won't be able to say anything. I haven't sold the store at a low cost, right?"

Evan calmed down as he understood that Laura was correct. He was the Purcell clan's genuine patriarch, so he must take the Purcell clan into consideration. In fact, when he decided to help Laura deal with the Markey Dell clan, some of the clan elders were somewhat discontent with the decision and thought it wasn't worth it. If he now chose to help Laura manage the stores and didn't get any benefits in return, then the clan elders would definitely disagree.

With this thought, Evan's heart couldn't help but feel intolerant. Although he now held real power, he found that there were still many things he couldn't simply call the shots on. After all, the Purcell clan didn't practice the idea of 'What I say goes.' Those elders also had a certain amount of authority. He couldn't just completely disregard what they felt.

Evan looked at Laura and couldn't help but smile bitterly. "Alright, I'll do as you say. If one day, however, you do come back to the Purcell Duchy, I'll hand the stores back to you."

Laura nodded with a smile. Her heart actually ached as she couldn't believe she would be able to return to the Purcell Duchy one day. She had offended Southern King Boric here in the Aksu Empire. Unless one was from a large aristocratic clan like the Purcell clan, it was impossible for someone like her to return to the Purcell Duchy. She feared she wouldn't even be able to return to the Aksu Empire.

After discussing this matter with Evan, Laura left the Grand Duke's Mansion and returned to Faith Mansion. Faith Mansion didn't show any signs of confusion as most of the servants didn't know of the situation. One must know that Laura controlled nearly 50% of the shares of the entire Purcell Duchy's daily necessities. If they panicked here, then the entire duchy's daily necessity prices will fluctuate. That was something Laura didn't want to see.

When Laura entered the study, she found Quinn John writing a series of letters. Laura looked at the letters and found that they were to be sent to the Higanbana store managers. It seemed that Quinn John was planning to dissolve the whole of the Higanbana store chain.

Placing the letter back down, Laura said to Quinn John, "Grandpa Quinn John, you don't need to write these letters. I have reached an agreement with Grand Duke Evan. We will let him handle the stores and the profits will be split between us, 4:6. We'll take 4, he'll take 6."

Chapter 214 - Young Miss

Stunned, Quinn John dropped his pen. He looked up at Laura and said, "Did Evan really say that? Did he really agree to this?"

Laura nodded and said, "Yes, Grand Duke Evan has agreed to it. He stated right at the beginning that he will help me manage the stores. When I looked at his expression and saw that he was earnest, I knew he didn't wish to seize our stores. That was when I proposed to a 4:6 split, which he agreed to."

Quinn John thought about it for a while, then nodded. "This is amazing, but you should have clearly explained the entire situation to Grand Duke Evan. Since the managers of our stores are our trusted subordinates, if we need them in the future then he must let them go."

Laura understood what Quinn John meant. With regards to merchants, the need for talented individuals was very important. Since they needed to leave the Purcell Duchy and Aksu Empire and head to another country, they would need to continue to do business in order to live. Doing business with untrusted subordinates wouldn't be good. This was Quinn John's meaning.

Nodding, Laura said, "Please don't worry, Grandpa Quinn John, I will tell him that later. As matters stand right now, however, we will need to change the contents of the letters."

Quinn John nodded. "Then let us have them come to Casa City all at once. Once they are here, we can explain the situation to them and let them make their preparations. I will send Searle to clean out the treasury and bring anything we need to pack up. Fortunately, Mister had sent us several of those Spatial Bags, else we wouldn't be able to take much with us."

Laura smiled wryly and turned to Quinn John. "How about my father?"

Quinn John forced a smile and said, "In his eyes, is there anything more important than his darlings? He's going to pack up his darlings."

Laura couldn't help herself and smiled bitterly. She knew what Quinn John meant. Those 'darlings' Quinn John referred to were the magic array books Karen had collected throughout the years, along with several of his experimental notes and testing tools. These were all more important to Karen than anything else.

She looked at Quinn John as asked, "Quinn John, have you thought about where we will be going? Are we going to directly leave the Purcell Duchy?"

Quinn John placed his pen down and thought for a while, then said, "Leaving directly wouldn't be good right now. We currently have two options. First is to move to the Beastfolk Prairies where we have several businesses set up. If we go to the Beastfolk Prairie now, then no matter if it's the Markey Dell clan or Boric, neither are strong enough to directly contend with the Beastfolk Prairie's strength. If we go there, then they wouldn't dare to send out experts to deal with us. We should be safe there."

Laura nodded. "There isn't any problem with going to the Beastfolk Prairie, but we cannot stay there forever. We can also go to other places on the continent through the Beastfolk Prairie. There are three roads with the first being the Purcell Duchy. The second road leads to the Elven Forest, and the third is the sea route. Going back to the Purcell Duchy is definitely impossible, so that only leaves us with the Elven Forest and the sea route.

"The Elven Forest is the domain of the elves. With regards to them, they aren't friendly with the other races. We don't have much time on our hands, so we cannot prolong our actions, thus going through that route is not feasible. The last route, the sea route, is a dangerous one. Although the other countries can send trade fleets towards the Beastfolk Prairie, their trade fleets are easily exposed to pirate attacks. This also isn't a feasible option. Is there any other way?"

Quinn John looked at Laura and smiled faintly. "There is another, more simpler way, and that is Zhao Hai. The matters this time won't allow Zhao Hai to stay in the Purcell Duchy. Their identity would be exposed otherwise. I had heard, in the past, that the Buda clan's misfortunes all stem from Boric. If they allow Boric to know they are here, then they will be in danger. Therefore, they will most certainly leave.

Zhao Hai has a treasure that can be used to easily transport things, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to so easily deliver food to the Purcell clan in their time of need. This time, we can go and find him. For sure, he will be able to take us to safety. However, that treasure may be an important clan treasure, so if he does use it for us, then there will be conditions attached."

Laura couldn't help but blush when she heard what Quinn John said. She remembered what 'condition' Zhao Hai had proposed to her before. If she wanted to know the true secret of the Buda clan, then she must marry Zhao Hai. With this thought, Laura couldn't help but turn a deeper shade of red .

Quinn John smiled when he saw Laura's reaction. For the condition Zhao Hai had told Laura, Quinn John knew of it. Laura's many contacts with Zhao Hai had been something Quinn John had paid attention to. After all, for these past years, Zhao Hai had been the only real man Laura set her eye on. Therefore, every time Laura came back after visiting Zhao Hai, Quinn John would find the opportunity to ask Nier about what Zhao Hai said. As such, the condition Zhao Hai had stated to Laura was naturally passed to Quinn John.

When Laura saw Quinn John looking at her, she became even more red. She saw his expression and knew that Quinn John understood what she was thinking. It could only be Nier that told him.

She couldn't blame Nier for telling Quinn John about this matter. Laura was just a bit shy about it. She was still a girl, after all. Furthermore, she really did have some interest in Zhao Hai. Yet, she was slightly afraid of meeting Quinn John's eyes.

In the end, Laura clenched her teeth and said, "Alright, let's go to Brother Hai so that we can leave with him. Furthermore, we can discuss the future whereabouts of Brother Hai. Later on, we will need to cooperate with him."

After hearing what Laura said, Quinn John's eyes shone brightly. He understood what she meant. It seemed Laura really did have feelings for Zhao Hai, since saying such things was equal to accepting Zhao Hai's condition.

Actually, Quinn John quite liked Zhao Hai. Since he knew Zhao Hai possessed a mysterious Divergent Technique, his future was limitless. Moreover, since Laura would be with him, this made Quinn John very happy.

Laura looked up at Quinn John who smiled faintly and said, "Alright, we'll finish packing up here and then go to Zhao Hai. Young Lady, it's better to send a letter to Zhao Hai first and not just go directly."

Nodding, Laura looked up at the sky and said, "I'll write a letter and send it tomorrow. It's quite late now, and we have to rest early. Oh, by the way. Grandpa Quinn John, we've forgotten something."

"Forgotten what?" asked Quinn John.

Laura's eyes flashed coldly. "We've forgotten about Alodia."

Quinn John was stunned after he heard what Laura had said. His face sank as he said, "Yes, we've forgotten about his group, but I would still like to keep them. Contact Zhao Hai since he's a Divergent Warlock. Although I don't know what his Divergent Technique is, looking at all his undead, he possibly knows how to turn people into undead. If we can truly use these fellows by letting Zhao Hai turn them into undead, then that'll be good."

Laura didn't oppose it since she had a mutual hatred against Carlo now. Incidentally, they also hated Alodia, so she naturally didn't go against Quinn John's words.

They discussed several more matters before finishing and going off to rest. None of them could afford to be flustered right now and instead should act normally. Otherwise, flaws might be discovered.

* * * * *

The next morning, Zhao Hai and the others got up early. After eating their breakfast, Zhao Hai led Green, Meg, and Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows towards Casa City.

When they arrived at Casa City, the city gates had just been opened. Zhao Hai immediately entered the city and went straight towards Faith Mansion. Since events were happening quickly, they didn't want to lose much time.

Zhao Hai going towards Faith Mansion was something Laura had just found out. She was prepared to write a letter, but didn't know Zhao Hai would arrive this early.

They welcomed Zhao Hai and his group into the study. Laura looked puzzledly at Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows and asked, "Brother Hai, this is?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "This is Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows. He was previously invited by Carlo to move against me, but has currently taken a blood oath to serve me. Miss Laura needn't be worried."

Laura was surprised for a moment, but immediately recovered and greeted Shue of Ten-thousand Shadows, who then hurriedly greeted her in return. Afterward, he moved back to his previous position behind Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai turned his head towards Laura and said, "I came today to ask after your preparations. Also, have you told Evan about the situation clearly, and do you have any plans?"

Laura and Quinn John looked at one another, then Laura said, "I have already explained the matter to Grand Duke Evan. The Grand Duke said he cannot participate in this matter, but can keep our stores intact. We can keep the stores open and he'll look after their management. I have reached an agreement with the Grand Duke to split the income, 4:6 — I will get 4 parts, he will get 6. I do hope, however, that Brother Hai won't break off the Taoyuan supply."

"That's fine," Zhao Hai replied. "There will be no problem in the supply of Taoyuan products. What's more, you can retain your stores, which is for the best. I was really worried about this matter."

Laura relaxed after hearing Zhao Hai's reply. Her complexion couldn't help but give off a happy glow as she said, "This time, we are prepared to leave the Aksu Empire. We must ask, however, if Brother Hai will be able to help us in delivering us to a safe place. What is Brother Hai's intent?"

After hearing her words, Zhao Hai couldn't help but be surprised for a moment. He looked at Laura's blushing face and understood what she meant. Zhao Hai couldn't help but tease her as he grinned and said, "There's no problem in taking you to someplace safe, but Laura, do you agree to my conditions?"

As Zhao Hai spoke those words, Green and the others stared closely at Laura. They were waiting for her reply, which made her face even more red. She finally gathered herself up and gravely looked at Zhao Hai, saying, "Please, Brother Hai. Help me."

After he heard what Laura said, Green couldn't help it anymore and laughed. "Good, great! It seems like we'll have to change what we call Miss Laura and instead call her Young Miss."

Laura's face became redder, and Zhao Hai also blushed. He didn't think Laura would actually comply, so he felt a bit awkward. Behind that awkwardness, however, was a bit of excitement. Even if Laura wouldn't have complied, he'd still have told her his secret. Now, however, since she did agree, it made things a lot better.

Chapter 215 - Do You Hate Me?

Quinn John sighed. Although he knew this day would come, it still made his heart uncomfortable. After all, he'd watched Laura as she grew up. Now, suddenly, she said she agreed to Zhao Hai's condition to marry him. It was like saying she would leave him forever. It was a very uncomfortable feeling.

After a while, Zhao Hai calmed down. He looked at Laura and asked, "What else do you need to prepare? If you have anything you need to carry off, tell me and I'll help you do so."

When she heard what Zhao Hai said, Laura relaxed and said, "We're almost finished tidying things up here. It's really fortunate Mister gave us several of those Spatial Bags as they're really helpful. Still, we'll need a few more carriages in order to take away everything. Moreover, we need to explain several matters to the rest of our clan here, and that will take several days."

Zhao Hai thought for a while before saying, "Alright then, we'll stay here for a few days. Please arrange a room for us. When you finish whatever you have to do, we can leave together."

Laura froze for a moment, then nodded and said, "Okay. The mansion has a guest room. You can stay there for the next few days."

Nodding, Zhao Hai said, "You should speak to Evan. After we leave, he can send people to Stony Mountain every five days to get the commodities. Once they are at Stony Mountain, they just need to knock on the ground three times. We will arrive the next day and they can pick up the commodities from a warehouse. If they don't knock, however, then they can't get the products."

Laura nodded. "Alright, I'll tell him that. Also, I have some of Carlo's subordinates held captive. I wish for them to pay for their crimes. What do you think?"

After thinking for a while, Zhao Hai said, "That's fine. How do you want me to deal with them? Do you wish them to be silenced?"

Laura looked at Zhao Hai and sighed. "I don't really want to silence them, but we can't control them. The threat they represent is too large. While Alodia and his team have been obedient these past few days, we already have some sense of them. As such, I don't trust them."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Alright, I understand. Hand them over to me and I'll deal with them."

Laura nodded. She turned to Nier and said, "Nier, take Brother Hai to his room to rest. Tend to whatever needs Brother Hai has."

Nier complied and stepped up to Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai stood and said to Laura, "This matter needs to be solved as soon as possible since Boric and the Markey Dell clan both have their eyes set on us. We will need to leave immediately."

Laura nodded and Zhao Hai followed Nier.

After waiting for Zhao Hai to walk out, Laura turned her head towards Quinn John and said, "Grandpa Quinn John, we need to finish taking care of our issues as soon as possible. When the store managers arrive, we'll tell them about everything and then we will need to leave immediately. What Brother Hai said about us not being safe now is correct."

Quinn John nodded and said, "Relax, the matter of cleaning up here has already been assigned to Kiel and the other trusted subordinates. Furthermore, they are determined to come with us, so rest assured. Oh, right. We forgot to ask Zhao Hai how many people we can take along. If he can take many people, then everything will be fine."

Laura frowned. "I forgot to ask. Let's talk about it at when it's time to eat. Anyway, he'll be staying for the next few days, so there's no need to worry."

Quinn John nodded and gave a faint smile. "I noticed that Zhao Hai is very concerned about you. In fact, he'd probably take you in even if you didn't accept his request."

Laura paled as she glanced at Quinn John. Sighing, she said, "To be honest, I have a very good impression of Brother Hai. We've met with great misfortune at this time, and only Brother Hai could and would help us. Moreover, from our previous meetings he didn't say much. He didn't try to coax a girl with his words. The condition he put forward was actually a proposal in disguise. With his disposition, doing such a thing was already being forward. Why wouldn't I comply?"

She relaxed. In all honesty, with her business running all year round, as well as the people she dealt with, Laura's disposition was a great deal more open than Zhao Hai's which was a bit nerdy. In terms of love, she was braver than Zhao Hai and dared to say what she liked and what she hated. Therefore, she accepted Zhao Hai's condition.

Quinn John smile faintly. "I'm afraid you can't see the point. Although Zhao Hai is good to you, he really isn't good to others. He also isn't very consistent with the rumors, the one where he's said to be a dandy, yet now he isn't. If you marry him, he'll certainly be good to you. At least he's stronger when compared to those other dandies, so I'll feel more relieved."

Laura snorted. "I'd rather find an honest man than a dandy if I could. Zhao Hai looks honest and capable, so I'll choose him."

Quinn John laughed and said, "Ah, you're not a shy little girl anymore. You actually said those words."

Laura had finally calmed down by now and chuckled. "This is what we call seizing the opportunity. If I miss this chance, then it would be an injustice. You might not have noticed, but that Meg has been covetously eyeing him at the same time."

Quinn John and Laura smiled, and the depressing mood seemed to have dissipated from their hearts.

For the past few days, Laura had felt depressed. She had worked hard these last few years to lay down the foundations for her business, yet now they were forced to leave their homes. With the current situation, how could anyone describe the depression she felt.

Due to her mood influencing her, Laura had complied with Zhao Hai's condition, a marriage proposal in disguise, in return for him rescuing her. She'd said words of compliance, and was now smiling. She had been suppressing the mood in her heart, most of which had already disappeared. Right now, she was thinking about Zhao Hai's conditions. Since she complied with it, there didn't seem to be anything harmful within it.

There was silence for a time, then Quinn John turned and looked at Laura. "Little Laura, you agreed to Zhao Hai's condition, but you should be clear about some matters. Zhao Hai is the only successor to the Buda clan. As such, Green will certainly make Zhao Hai find other wives in order to increase the clan's fertility. This will allow the Buda clan to grow branches and leaves and thrive. In the future, you will need to keep up with many women ready to rob your husband away."

Laura sighed. "I know that, but there are few men who only have a single wife in their lifetime, especially aristocratic men. I like Brother Hai, and he also likes me. If, one day, he doesn't like me anymore, then I'll still earn my living. In any case, even if I don't have any man in my life, it'll still be the same since I can live without one."

Quinn John sighed. This was a woman's intolerance. On the Ark Continent, although women have the right to inherit and had standings similar to men, when you really looked back, women have a weaker status than men. There wasn't any law that could solve this matter.

After chatting for a bit, the store managers from Laura's shops arrived in Casa City. Yesterday, Laura had sent letters to the store managers, telling them to come to Casa City because she had an important matter to discuss with them.

To the large merchant firms, they already knew Casa City was in a turbulent period. It was like some important matter was about to happen. Because of that, they didn't feel it was strange when they saw Laura's actions.

These store managers were the genuine aides trusted by Laura as she had personally trained them. They had obligations towards Laura and were therefore dead set on following her. Since Laura had called for them, they knew that an important matter had recently popped up.

After she called for them, they quickly arrived at Casa City. Those who came from afar rode wind chasing horses since late last night. They had tied several horses in order to lessen the need to make a stop and swap. Noon the following day, all store managers had arrived.

Laura didn't immediately meet with the store managers. Instead, she first let them eat and rest till later in the day. At noon, she invited Zhao Hai to eat in the dining room.

The food served by Laura was quite different from what Stony Mountain had. They ate the best veal with other delicious dishes and also had very fine wine.

Zhao Hai, however, wasn't used to eating such things and only ate the veal steak.

After their meal, Laura led Zhao Hai to the parlor room. Once they all sat down, Laura asked Zhao Hai, "Brother Hai, how many people can you help me take away? How many items? It'll be easier for me to prepare if I know."

Smiling, Zhao Hai said, "Relax. No matter how many items you wish to bring, you can bring them. The same goes for people. There is one thing you need to ensure, however. Those people must be completely trustworthy."

When she heard Zhao Hai's reply, Laura's expression turned joyful. "Rest assured, they are all naturally trustworthy. Otherwise, exposing the Buda clan's secret would be troublesome."

Meg smiled and said, "Miss Laura hasn't gotten married. Have you already started planning for the Buda clan? Isn't the Young Miss getting anxious about this marriage?"

When they heard those words, Green and Quinn John both smiled.

Laura's face reddened. She stared at Meg and said, "Hmph, you're talking nonsense. I won't let Brother Hai marry you."

Meg's face also reddened. She hadn't thought Laura would unexpectedly see through her thoughts. Zhao Hai also didn't think Laura would tease Meg like that and it made him embarrassed. He glanced at Green and said, "Grandpa Green, Grandpa Quinn John, everyone can leave first. I wish to talk to Laura alone."

Green and Quinn John looked at each other simultaneously and both saw a happy expression on the other's face as they turned and left. Zhao Hai and Laura were thus left alone in the room.

This was the first time Laura was alone with Zhao Hai. She was somewhat anxious as she looked at Zhao Hai; she didn't know what Zhao Hai wanted to say.

Zhao Hai had an infatuated expression as he looked at Laura, which made her heart beat faster. After some time, Zhao Hai said, "Laura, do you hate me?"

Laura was surprised. She didn't understand what Zhao Hai meant. They were now engaged, so how could he suddenly speak about hate?"

When he saw Laura's puzzled look, Zhao Hai sighed and said, "If I didn't appear, these matters wouldn't have happened. You won't be compelled to leave Casa City, to leave the Aksu Empire. You wouldn't need to give up everything. Are you not angry?"

"Earlier, you were right when you said I'd marry Meg in the future. We grew up together and she was beside me, taking care of me during the toughest time of my life. I won't deny I have passionate feelings for Meg, but I also love you. Making me give up either of you is something I cannot do. Am I too greedy?"

Chapter 216 - This Moment

Laura stared blankly at Zhao Hai. She didn't think he would say that, which surprised her. All the same, she was moved by those words.

On the Ark Continent, there wasn't a law that dealt with monogamy. If Zhao Hai wanted, he could definitely marry any woman he fancied. Laura accepted this idea completely as it was natural on the continent.

In Laura's view, Zhao Hai's words meant he truly liked her. Because he liked her, even loved her. Thinking that another person was in his heart felt as though he was betraying Laura. This had made him feel guilty, and that moved Laura the most.

Laura stood up and walked before Zhao Hai. She looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, I'm not blaming you for all of this. To be honest, I was afraid you wouldn't accept me. After all, Meg has been with you since childhood. You know a great deal more about her. Furthermore, you are the Buda clan's patriarch. As the only successor of the Buda clan, it's impossible for you to marry only me if you take the clan's future into consideration. I won't oppose you marrying Meg. To be honest, Meg also likes you. I had seen this and prepared myself already. You don't need to worry."

Zhao Hai stared at Laura. He told Laura about these matters because he couldn't cross that ridge in his heart all by himself. His world view had been formed from almost three decades of living on Earth. Don't say he could just change his view, Zhao Hai truly felt affection for Laura and that had caused him to feel sorry towards her.

Now that he heard Laura's feelings, Zhao Hai felt a bit better. He looked at Laura and pulled her into his arms. Laura was surprised, but didn't resist. Instead, she gently leaned her head onto Zhao Hai's chest. They didn't speak, but during that moment, they both felt the other's warmth.

After some time, Zhao Hai said to Laura, "Laura, I'm sorry for making you lose your business after you did everything you could to painstakingly take care of it. If it wasn't for me, you wouldn't have fallen to such a state today."

Laura sat down and leaned against Zhao Hai's arms. She looked at him and said, "Brother Hai, don't say such things. I could have such success because of you. If not for you, it would have been impossible for me to achieve all I have today. Just as I said before, I am now your fiancée. If you're going to be so polite towards me, I'll be angry."

Zhao Hai watched Laura's expression and saw that she was only pretending to be angry. His heart was filled with warmth as he looked at her. Laura's beauty, intelligence, and compassion all attributed to the warmth Zhao Hai felt. He was moved.

He couldn't help but cling tightly to Laura, as if to crush her against his body. Laura felt his stirred emotions and smiled sweetly as she was held tight. At this moment, their hearts were tied together and couldn't be separated.

With Zhao Hai's intent, Laura and he moved and appeared inside the Spatial Villa. Laura suddenly felt her surroundings shift, as though she wasn't in her study anymore. When she took a more curious look around, she truly did see that she wasn't in her study.

Laura whispered uneasily to Zhao Hai, "Brother Hai, we're in a strange place."

Zhao Hai loosened his embrace of Laura and smiled faintly. "This isn't a strange place. It's our Buda clan's greatest secret. This is my domain."

Surprise, Laura looked around puzzledly. Zhao Hai smiled and pulled Laura up. They then went out of the villa and looked at the prairie outside.

As Laura looked around, she found many fruit trees, bamboo rice plants, radishes, and other crops. Most importantly, she saw fire fishes within a hot spring.

Upon seeing these, the intelligent Laura immediately understood. This was where the Taoyuan products came from. But, she didn't know where exactly they were.

Zhao Hai looked at Laura and smiled. "Do you now know why I said only through marriage would I tell you my greatest secret? It's because of this place. This is the Divergent Technique I obtained. This entire Space is mine, and I am god here. When I plant crops here, such as fruit oil trees, they will mature in only a few days. Bamboo rice can mature several times a day. Furthermore, the water and soil from this Space can make the lands of the Black Waste arable enough to plant crops there. Lastly, placing undead in here will make them my summonable creatures. This is a world of infinite possibilities."

Laura was confused as she looked around. While she could understand the explanation Zhao Hai gave, she couldn't clearly process the whole of what he said. Some things were still unclear.

Seeing Laura's expression, Zhao Hai smiled. "Simply put, this Space is like a Spatial Bag. This Space has its own separate and independent laws, but is also not a subspace. This Space instead coexists with the outside. Neither the outside nor the Space will affect one another. In this Space, however, I am god."

Laura stared emotionally at Zhao Hai. She now understood what he meant. This pleasant surprise was truly too large for her and she couldn't believe it.

Zhao Hai looked at her and smiled. "Don't be so surprised. This Space is the place where I produce the Taoyuan products. Others won't be able to enter this place unless I allow them. This is our Buda clan's greatest secret. If it is exposed, then there wouldn't be a place for us on the Ark Continent."

She nodded in agreement. "If this place is known, then you really wouldn't be able to stay on the continent. Rest assured that I won't say a word about this."

Zhao Hai looked at Laura and smiled. "Even if you wanted to let this be known, it's already too late. Remember, you're now my fiancée. Haha." He hugged Laura as he spoke those words.

Laura glanced snappily at Zhao Hai but didn't say anything. She instead smiled as she knew Zhao Hai had already accepted her.

Zhao Hai led Laura around in order to help her familiarize herself with the situation of the Space. After a look at the ranch, they left the Space.

When they came back to Laura's study, they called for Green and the others to come back. As they arrived, Green and the others saw that the two had a different air around them. A sort of understanding passed between them and they smiled. None of them asked the couple anything as it was a secret between the two of them.

Now that Laura knew of Zhao Hai's ability, she had more confidence. After the noon meal, she immediately met with her people, the store managers. So long as she clearly explained the situation to them, the Higanbana stores would continue their normal operations.

In fact, this matter was rather simple. She simply told them that if any issues were to arise in the future, they could go to Grand Duke Evan and directly ask him for help. In order to keep a convenient mode of

contact, Laura also told them of the Eagle Virtuous Phantasms. If Laura had any issues herself, she could send the Eagle Virtuous Phantasms to look for them. If the store managers needed Laura, they could just go to Stony Mountain.

After explaining the current situation to them, she moved on to the people of Faith Mansion. Not all of them would be going with her. Aside from Quinn John, Karen, Nier, and Kiel, they only allowed their most loyal servants come along. As for the others, if they wanted to become commoners, then they would receive severance pay. If they wanted to stay and work in the Higanbana stores, Laura could tell Evan of it.

They finished packing their things up as, later on, they wouldn't be living in Faith Mansion anymore. These past couple of years, Laura had accumulated a great many good things. Since this was the case, she couldn't let others take care of them for her. As such, she'd take them all away.

After eating dinner, Zhao Hai called for Karen, Quinn John, and Nier and had them gather in the study. He then led them into the Space. In any case, since they would be following Zhao Hai from now on, Zhao Hai wasn't afraid to let them know his secret.

Karen was shocked when he arrived in the Space. This place had a very good environment. The first thing that came into his mind upon seeing his surroundings was that it would be a good place for his experiments. He immediately fell in love with the place and, without hesitating, occupied the basement of the Spatial Villa and set it up as his experiment room.

Zhao Hai had no way to make Karen's account for the matter. To be honest, Zhao Hai really did admire Karen. Although in the eyes of everyone else, Karen's research was useless, Zhao Hai saw that Karen's value couldn't be compared to others.

The Ark Continent was currently in the initial periods of magic and machine school of learning. Zhao Hai thought that the unfolding future would be dependent upon people like Karen. As such, Karen's approached to matters was something Zhao Hai allowed without regret.

Zhao Hai also brought Quinn John and the others to Fort Iron Mountain. This was, after all, their rear base. As such, he must let Quinn John and the others know of it.

He then led them back into the Spatial Villa to continue their discussion on what to take with them. Laura proposed a major move, which Zhao Hai and the others weren't opposed to.

If it wasn't for Zhao Hai's Space, then Laura wouldn't be able to take away so many things. Since Zhao Hai did have the Space, however, Laura was confident that she wouldn't need to lose anything. After she moved the things out of Faith Mansion, she only left a few things there and didn't remove them. She then began to purchase a great deal of basic necessities.

Naturally, it was impossible to leave with a lot of things from the Higanbana stores. Laura's intent was to slowly move things one after another to Faith Mansion, then move them into Zhao Hai's Space.

As a result, there was a great deal to prepare, so they had to push the time allotted to them before they could leave. Fortunately, Laura had given the Higanbana stores to the Purcell clan. Since the Higanbana stores were now completely handled by the Purcell clan, many of the things she took away would be deducted from her part of the store income.

Laura took these things away for not only her use, but for trading within the Beastfolk Prairie. Zhao Hai had asked Laura about her plans earlier and she said she'd already established a business there. The issue Zhao Hai wanted to discuss was the matter of trading inside the Beastfolk Prairie, so he told Laura about it. She naturally agreed and this was the reason they'd bought a lot of commodities.

Chapter 217 - Poison

Ten days. For an entire ten days, the people of Casa City watched as various commodities streamed towards Faith Mansion. The whole of Faith Mansion seemed like a giant beast that ate and ate without worry about being full. It just kept devouring things and never let any of it out.

Although the people of Casa City felt it was strange, they didn't say anything. Laura, on the other hand, selected those items with a great deal of discretion. Aside from the belongings taken from Faith Mansion, there were commodities that would be of use within the Beastfolk Prairie.

One must know that there were many commodities within Casa City that weren't suitable for trade within the Beastfolk Prairie. This was due to the fact that the needs of the beastfolk were different from the needs of Casa City commoners.

It was because of this that Laura's actions didn't cause much change in the prices of the Purcell Duchy's daily necessities market. Furthermore, those firms were more than willing to sell their wares to Laura.

The hands of those large firms weren't necessarily clean. When they did business with the beastfolk, they resorted to smuggling. This matter was something they always did, so when they saw the items Laura had bought, they understood Laura's intentions. They didn't stop her. Although they wouldn't earn much by selling to her, it was still an instant transaction. These were also goods that could be quickly transported from the back, so there wasn't anything strange about it.

On the tenth day after Zhao Hai's arrival in Casa City, Zhao Hai, Laura, Quinn John, and Green had all gone to Laura's study.

Laura received a report about their current situation. With that in her hands, she faced the others and said, "I just received a report with regards to the situation in the Purcell Duchy. Today, a few mercenaries entered the Purcell Duchy from the back. They're moving towards Casa City and have unknown intentions."

Quinn John snorted coldly. "It's nothing unclear. They're here to deal with us. Since they definitely know Zhao Hai is also in Casa City, they want to deal with all of us in one go."

Green nodded. "I also think this is the case. Let them come. We'll tidy them up before withdrawing immediately. I want to see what they can give us."

Laura turned towards Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, what about resolving Alodia's matter? Why haven't we moved on them these last few days?"

Zhao Hai nodded. "I need to resolve them. These past few days, they found out too much. I wasn't resolved to killing them since I didn't want to kill those who don't have the power to fight back, but I have no choice now."

When Zhao Hai said this, Laura and the others understood. Zhao Hai needed to find an excuse for himself, an excuse that allowed him to kill them.

This behaviour might seem ridiculous and self-deceiving. On the other hand, this behaviour also had some good points. At least it would allow them to feel a bit better.

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After eating their evening meal, Alodia and the others returned to their rooms. All of their weapons had been taken away. Through their observations these last few days, Alodia understood that Laura had the determination to kill them.

Unfortunately, Alodia couldn't do anything. They didn't have any weapons and were surrounded by all those undead. No one could escape from such a thing.

All they could do was stay in their room honestly. If Laura really wanted to kill them, then all they could do was go all out against her.

Sadness. Alodia felt unprecedented sadness. He was thinking about how high-spirited he had been before. No matter where he went within the Aksu Empire, so long as he revealed his identity as Carlo's subordinate, no one would dare to undermine him. Now, however, he had fallen into a situation where he could only wait for his death. It was like he were a blue-eyed rabbit taken to the slaughterhouse, waiting as they readied their knives. This was a very unpleasant feeling.

He was thinking of resisting, but it would be of no use. No matter how restless they became, the undead could easily contain them. So long as they approached the undead, they would immediately be attacked. They wouldn't even attack to kill, instead, they'll be disabling them twice before tossing them back into the courtyard. It was as simple as that.

If they were dealing with humans, then Alodia could have tried to communicate with them. He could have tried to take advantage of them and have them spare his life. Right now, however, they were not dealing with humans, but undead. He wouldn't even waste his breath with them—undead couldn't be bought. Even if he had all kinds of schemes, they wouldn't be tricked.

These last few days, Alodia looked aged as his spirit was constantly tormented. He didn't expect such a day would come. What's more, he never would have thought Laura would be the one to hold them. She could easily kill them at any time.

Alodia, however, still held some faith within him. For the past several days, he firmly believed that Carlo would send people to rescue him. As Carlo's most trusted aide, Alodia was clear about some matters. Behind Carlo wasn't only the Markey Dell clan, but also Southern King Boric. At this crucial moment, Carlo would certainly ask Boric to move. This was what Alodia's spirit was hanging onto.

For the last few days, Alodia had been diligently gathering information about Laura. This was possible to do so long as they didn't leave the front gate of the yard—they could still move around inside Faith Mansion freely. Alodia wanted to collect information about Laura that could be of some use in the future.

Laura's actions these last few days were clear to Alodia since he could see her movements. This had boosted his confidence to go on living. What Laura had shown clearly stated that they were going somewhere else, that they had to run. There was only one explanation for this: enemies had come.

He knew Laura had one enemy, and that was Carlo. Since he saw this, his determination to live was strengthened.

At the same time, Alodia noted several warehouses in the rear yard of Faith Mansion. Seemingly, these warehouses were constantly being filled. Carriages continued to pull up and fill the warehouse with commodities, but it was like the warehouse was a bottomless pit.

Alodia didn't suspect the use of spatial equipment within the warehouse. He instead thought that there was a secret passage inside. That they were using that to ship commodities out. He secretly wrote this down in order to inform Carlo.

Alodia knew, however, that this would be difficult. He knew Laura wouldn't let them off. Since he was able to notice the commodities entering Faith Mansion, he knew Laura didn't try to avoid their attention. As such, he knew Laura decided not to let them off. Yet, he was still holding onto the belief that, somehow, they would be able to go on living.

That night, as per usual, Alodia observed and counted. Since the time Laura had begun transporting commodities into Faith Mansion till now, it had been a full ten days. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that the amount of commodities was enough to fill the whole of Faith Mansion. Oddly, everything that entered Faith Mansion seemed to have disappeared. Alodia didn't truly understand how Laura was able to move those things.

Alodia lay quietly on the bed, thinking about Laura's recent actions. He didn't understand why Laura was doing such things so suddenly. Why did she suddenly dare to challenge Carlo. Who was it that she depended on? Was it only due to the virtue of Evan's few words? That's highly unlikely, no?

As he thought about this, Alodia suddenly smelled a fragrance. The smell grew stronger and stronger until he found it difficult to breathe. Alodia woke up fiercely. He wanted to jump out of bed and tell everyone that Laura was poisoning them.

Even though his mind issued the jump, his body wasn't able to carry it out. His body felt as though it weighed half a ton. He wanted to shout, but found that he couldn't, that it was too strenuous to do so. Alodia couldn't help but marvel at what kind of poison this was. It was truly too fierce. These were his last thoughts.

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This poison was naturally derived from the toxin of the seven-coloured flower. It was Zhao Hai who had Cai'er place this poison. Since Alodia and his team had to die without much noise, Zhao Hai decided to let Cai'er use the poison.

The poison taken from the toxin of the seven-coloured flower was further strengthened due to the Space. Compared to how it was before, it wasn't only just formidable. Before, it could be regarded as a simple chronic poison. Now, however, it was merged with the toxicity from the Space's pesticide and could now be described as highly poisonous.

That night, the silent execution of Alodia and his team didn't cause too much noise. Zhao Hai turned them into undead afterwards. Unfortunately, Alodia didn't seem to know much. Aside from his knowledge of the relationship between Carlo and Boric, Lycra knew more than him.

Although Alodia shared some information on Carlo's situation, this wasn't very important to them. Compared to the powerful Southern King Boric, Carlo was, at best, a jumping clown.

On the eleventh day, Laura didn't transport anything to Faith Mansion. The commodities they'd transported the last several days had already been excessive and might soon affect the necessities market within the Purcell Duchy. Laura didn't want to offend the Purcell clan in their last moments.

Laura started to send people away. If they wanted to be free commoners, Laura gave them severance pay and allowed them to go home. The rest were the most loyal part of her subordinates and would follow Laura. Quinn John had already counted them before and, altogether, they amounted to a total of fifty-four people. Twenty-two of them were warriors while the rest were slaves Laura had bought when she first started out in the Purcell Duchy.

These people weren't stewards and the matters they handled couldn't be considered important. On the other hand, it could be said that they were the most loyal of her subordinates. Three of them were carpenters, and another three were blacksmiths. There were also six who were specialized in raising magic beast, also called grooms if they were on Earth.

Besides those people, the remaining individuals were clan members. The men were generally servants while the women were maidservants or cooks.

Adding in Laura, Quinn John, Nier, Karen, Kiel, and Searle, there were a total of sixty people joining the Buda clan. Starting today, they were no longer members of the Markey Dell clan, but people of the Buda clan.

Chapter 218 - Wait

After everyone finished preparing, Zhao Hai took them away. Laura, Green, Quinn John, Nier, and Meg, however, stayed back in Faith Mansion along with Zhao Hai.

They were waiting, not for anyone else but Carlo's people. How many of his men were currently in Casa City? They would tidy them up before leaving.

Right now, they were forced to leave Casa City and the Purcell Duchy. They'd suppressed that anger in the heart, but if they couldn't vent, then it would become very uncomfortable.

Zhao Hai knew that in two days time, those mercenaries would arrive in Casa City. When that time comes, they would make their move. For the past two days, they lived honestly. They were in seclusion, the gates of Faith Mansion completely closed as they declined any visitors. Nobody came in or out. Compared to the busy atmosphere from before, it seemed like another world.

Even though the forces within Casa City thought it was strange, they weren't too surprised as Laura had sent away many of her people. They thought she'd already secretly left with the supplies stored in Faith Mansion. The large firms didn't care much. For large merchants like Laura, they each had one or two of their own secrets. Commodities could easily be moved through a secret passage.

Big firms had big businesses as their livelihoods. The top merchant firms on the continent created headquarters within major cities and made secret passages to move from inside the city to outside. This was an open secret, and no one would know how vast the passages were or where they led to.

It could be said that these passages were secrets the large merchant firms used to maintain their livelihoods. They were the clans' most valued secrets. Nobody knows of it except the core members of the clan. This was why the large firms weren't that concerned about the whereabouts of those commodities.

Conversely, Laura's actions made those firms think of another point. One must know that the secret passages were used as a clan's final lifeline. So long as one didn't face a life and death crisis, one wouldn't use it. With Laura moving through the secret passage, it showed that they were facing a situation. This puzzled those who didn't know of Boric.

The large firms thought Laura's retreat was due to the Purcell clan withdrawing their support of her. Because of that, Laura couldn't stand against the Markey Dell clan, so she decided to give up on everything and prepare to leave.

Those large firms, however, still didn't make a move against Laura. In their opinion, although the Purcell clan wouldn't help Laura, they still thought she wasn't affable. A few days ago, Zhao Hai had entered Faith Mansion and hadn't left. They had seen how formidable Zhao Hai was. With that recognition, they didn't want to offend such a powerful black magician.

Laura's stores were still continuing their business. Nobody dared to grab those businesses because the Purcell clan had made a public statement that said she'd transferred the Higanbana stores over to the Purcell clan. From now on, they were a part of the Purcell clan.

The large firms attached great importance to this news. Higanbana stores now controlled 40% of the Purcell Duchy's daily necessities market. This was really too high. Laura had cooperated with the Purcell Duchy before, so she hadn't been suppressed. Now, however, it was different. Those shops were now

owned by the Purcell Duchy. In other words, within the Purcell Duchy, the Purcell clan now controlled the bulk of the daily necessities market. Wishing to storm into this line of business in the future would be impossible.

Since they knew Laura had to leave, they didn't feel in the mood to pay her any attention. Instead, they placed their attention towards the Higanbana stores. The Higanbana commodities had been turned over to the Purcell clan. Future changes to the daily necessities market within the Purcell Duchy would be difficult to foresee.

The mercenaries didn't let Laura and Zhao Hai wait too long. On the fifteenth day, the mercenaries entered Casa City.

When they entered Casa City, the Purcell clan set their eyes on them. They had to know what movements the mercenaries would make and report it to Laura. Evan had felt quite guilty towards Laura, and thus wanted to compensate by doing something for her.

Laura was grateful with regards to Evan's good intentions. Although she had her own intelligence network, she didn't move them. After all, the Higanbana stores had already been given over to the Purcell clan. She'd make the Purcell clan unhappy with her petty actions. As such, she'd wait for the gust of wind to cross first. Then she'd make use of her intelligence network at that time.

These days, Laura didn't idle. Those that were willing to leave with her were sent to Fort Iron Mountain. Zhao Hai hadn't intended to place humans at Stony Mountain, so Cai-er had withdrawn her seven-colored flowers and vines. Furthermore, the black fog had dispersed. But since it was still a known domain of Zhao Hai, no one dared to go up because of his reputation.

As a place where a black magician had stayed, not many had the guts to venture there. They feared the toxins. Other than that, there was a stipulation set for an individual's property. This stipulation had defined provisions. For example, Zhao Hai bought Stony Mountain, so if anyone broke into it there would be repercussions and Zhao Hai could kill them.

They weren't afraid that those sent to Fort Iron Mountain would run away. Even if there was a spy among them, Zhao Hai wasn't scared. Outside of Fort Iron Mountain were undead defending the area, along with Eagle Virtuous Phantasms patrolling the skies. Simply put, even if they knew of the situation within Fort Iron Mountain, it was simply impossible for them to pass on the news.

Moreover, these past few days, Laura had arranged for the things she'd moved from Faith Mansion to be placed in Fort Iron Mountain. The problem was that Faith Mountain wasn't small and there were many good things in there. Zhao Hai hadn't decorated Fort Iron Mountain before, so there were only a few simple furnitures placed within and it looked very rough. Since Laura now transferred her items over from Faith Mansion, Fort Iron Mountain exuded a little more of a noble's aura.

During their wait, Zhao Hai led Laura and the others around and let them adjust and understand the situation within Fort Iron Mountain. He brought them to the tarn and mine tunnels where he raised the rabbits. Quinn John and Laura sighed and sighed after seeing those places. They hadn't expected Zhao Hai to have achieved so much in such a short period of time.

Zhao Hai didn't hide the truth from them and led them to the Space Ranch in order to check it. It was now Level 5. We can say it was now Level 5 due to Laura. Previously, Laura gave Zhao Hai many magic beasts that he then raised within the Space. Some of those were many-legged insects or long-haired swine .

With the help of those, Zhao Hai's ranch was upgraded. Furthermore, he could now raise a hundred more animals, which made Zhao Hai happy. He immediately raised a number of those long-haired swines.

The Space's rating for those long-haired swines was Level 4 magic beast. Outside the Space, however, it was given a rating of Level 1 since it had no aggressiveness and was known as the continent's most common carnivore .

Zhao Hai didn't raise many of the long-haired swines since the Higanbana stores weren't something Laura considered anymore and was just being managed by the Purcell clan. Zhao Hai raised them for the purpose of providing meat and saving for future use.

Laura and the others now had quite a good understanding of the Space after several days of observation. In regards to the Space's magical items, they had become used to them. The most free and unfettered of them now, however, was Karen.

After taking over the basement of the Spatial Villa, Karen made it his experiment room and rarely came out. He was busy doing experiments inside and once he tired out, he'd pass out asleep or take a stroll outside in the prairie. He was completely loose and unburdened and passed the days comfortably.

In Zhao Hai's view, Karen was simply more of an otaku than himself when he was on Earth. He stayed home all the time and never went out. Aside from eating and sleeping, he would mostly be staying inside his experiment room. When he was tired, he'd just take a short stroll but never said anything about leaving the Space.

In Karen's words, he didn't like to see many people. Back in Faith Mansion, he didn't leave the mansion and only went in and out of his room when he was tired. He'd also walk around in the courtyard, but never passed the gates of Faith Mansion.

When Zhao Hai heard him, he became speechless. Karen was simply a higher quality otaku. He also wanted higher quality goods than Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai was tolerant. Wanting an otaku to contact the outside was a very difficult thing to do. Not to mention that Karen was focused on his research, so he was that kind of otaku. Making him get involved with others and wanting him to change was too difficult.

Zhao Hai didn't want him to change anyway. Now that Space had grown, he could go out and stroll around whenever he wanted. Not wanting to leave his room was alright as well since the air within the Space was good. He didn't need to fear any dangers occurring and it was actually good for his body to stay inside the Space .

Zhao Hai didn't inquire into Karen's experiments. Even if he did ask, he wouldn't be able to understand it anyway. What Karen researched were magic arrays and formations. Although Adam had known about magic in the past, he didn't dabble in magic arrays and formations. It was due to his ignorant and incompetent disposition back then. Nowadays, Zhao Hai was also busy and didn't have the time to study such things, so he didn't understand them.

In the end, he had people keep watch over Faith Mansion. This was due to Evan occasionally sending them information. Zhao Hai and the others were counting on this information.

The info they received today was very simple. This evening, the mercenaries would attack Laura. Moreover, the mercenaries had visited Evan and told him to not interfere with their matters tonight.

Originally, Evan had wanted to scold those people. He endured their tone in the end, for the Purcell clan. Evan, however, told them to not make any large moves, else he would be impolite.

Chapter 219 - Black Magician Alliance

With the information she held in her hands, Laura smiled wryly and said to Zhao Hai, "This situation is somewhat difficult to handle. Boric even told the Purcell clan to not interfere with what's going to happen tonight, and the Purcell clan agreed. Luckily, Grand Duke Evan is a good person, else he would just pretend to cooperate with us, but is in fact working with Southern King Boric to deal with us. Even if we have Brother Hai's Space, I fear it will be difficult to escape this unharmed."

Quinn John nodded as he understood what Laura meant. Although Zhao Hai had the Space, if not for Evan being in an alliance with them, Zhao Hai wouldn't have been able to travel to Casa City. If not for all of these matters being pushed forward, Zhao Hai and Laura wouldn't have come to such a result.

These kinds of feelings required a due process. Love at first sight. Such a thing only existed in legends. Even if there was truly such a thing, it wouldn't have been borne within Zhao Hai and Laura's bodies.

What was undeniable was the fact that Zhao Hai had saved Laura's life. This had created a favorable impression of Zhao Hai from Laura. Zhao Hai, on the other hand, also had a favorable impression of Laura, and this was somewhat due to her likeness of Taylor Swift. Aside from that, Laura had helped him a lot by selling the crops he harvested from within the Space. This was equal to helping Zhao Hai in a big way and deepened his impression of Laura.

Although they had a very good impression of each other, the time they'd spent with one another was still too short to reveal much. Now, however, they were being forced to leave their homes and face an unclear future. This was a person's most vulnerable time, and was also a time where sentiment can be easily built up. They would be more impulsive and even the smallest of emotions could be boundlessly enlarged.

Zhao Hai and Laura had a mutually favorable impression of one another. Adding their emotions to this fact, and the couple had sparked something to life. Their hearts and minds were open to the other and had reached this current stage.

Now, after deciding upon this matter, Zhao Hai and Laura were able to confidently face the opposing party. Their feelings have already reached the destination and their hearts have already recognized the other as their lover. This naturally calmed them and made them more confident.

Individuals were like this. When things happen, their hearts would feel uneasy and cower easily in the absence of positivity. When they truly faced something head on, however, and solved the matter, they would naturally feel more confident.

All that had happened were a series of coincidences. If not for Carlo pressing harder and harder, some of this may not have been borne. Even if it did, it wouldn't have been so quick. One could say that Carlo's actions had been the catalyst that sped up this relationship.

Zhao Hai smiled lightly. "No wonder Evan, though he has a large clan, is still able to manage it. He has achieved this degree of power and is still good. After all, unlike us, he didn't have to give up everything here and leave the Aksu Empire. So long as he is still within the Aksu Empire, he has no choice but to give Boric several points of face. This, however, doesn't apply to us. As such, we can just deal with this attack."

Laura faintly smiled. "Yes, we can deal with it. These days there has been a foul air. The feelings in my heart haven't yet been released."

Quinn John and the others smiled. They weren't afraid of the oncoming attacks at all. Even though they could also be attacked by strong Rank Nine experts, they also had two of their own Rank Nine experts. So long as the black smog continued to cover Faith Mansion, people on the outside wouldn't be able to see what happened within. With this, they could openly fight.

Boric, however, probably didn't dare to truly send Rank Nine experts to Casa City just to chase them down. If he really did send one, then it would be equal to giving no consideration for the Purcell clan's face. This would cause the Purcell clan's Rank Nine expert to be impolite.

There was an unwritten rule within the continent. For a city guarded by a Rank Nine expert, other Rank Nines weren't allowed to enter without a reason. Otherwise, it would be seen as a challenge towards the guarding Rank Nine expert.

Although the Purcell clan was still uncertain of Wind Saint Buffy's fate after he'd entered the Carrion Swamp, they still had the Universal Origin Sword Saint to assume command. The Universal Origin Sword Saint was very famous within the continent. Most wouldn't dare to stroke a tiger lightly.

It was precisely due to this that Zhao Hai wasn't worried. So long as there wasn't a Rank Nine expert, Green could just deal with them. As such, they needn't be afraid.

Just then, Green's complexion suddenly changed. With a cold voice, he said, "You out there, come out. Otherwise, don't blame me for being impolite."

A gloomy voice sounded, "You are indeed ferocious. Worthy of being a peak Rank Eight expert to be able to see through my Ghost Sneaks Technique ."

Upon hearing the voice, Zhao Hai immediately stood up. Meg took out her Sealed Magic Iron Tome and cast a great deal of light element protection magic upon Zhao Hai. Quinn John also moved to protect Laura's back.

Green stared at a corner of the room and coldly said, "Rank Eight black magician. A powerful existence has suddenly appeared. It's a pity you aren't all that proficient in using the Ghost Sneaks Technique."

Ghost Sneaks Technique was an advanced level black magic. This magic was mainly used for assassination or for running away from an enemy. This was a specialized black magic technique and there was no way for other magicians to learn it.

This Ghost Sneaks Technique, once used, allowed one to become invisible like a ghost and stop others from feeling their existence. Due to these characteristics, it was called Ghost Sneaks Technique.

Green had, however, seen this Ghost Sneaks Technique before. On the battlefield, the opposing force would do anything to kill the other side. Green became famous and was known as the Spiritwind Battle General during such a time. As such, assassinations aimed for his life was a common occurrence. This Ghost Sneaks Technique was something he'd witnessed several times. This had caused him to become experienced in its use, otherwise he'd have been unable to detect the presence of the black magician just now.

As soon as the person heard what Green said, he chuckled a few times. Although it was a laugh, there was a gloomy air about it. It didn't weaken the sound, but it did make them feel uncomfortable.

As the laughter echoed, a man slowly emerged. He wore a black magic robe that looked a bit old and held a wooden magic staff. Although it was made of wood, it was completely black. At two meters long, it was covered in many strange symbols and the head of the staff was carved into an odd shape. It looked very strange.

Green looked coldly at the person and said, "Who are you? Who sent you?"

The black magician smiled and bowed to them. "Please allow me to introduce myself. This one is an elder of the Black Magician Alliance, Maru."

Zhao Hai and the others looked puzzledly at Maru. This was the first time they had heard of this so-called Black Magician Alliance. Don't even mention Zhao Hai, the well-informed Laura also hadn't heard of such an alliance on the continent.

Maru obviously saw their puzzled looks and faintly smiled. "I see everybody hasn't heard of the Black Magician Alliance, but this isn't surprising. The establishment of the Black Magician Alliance dated back only five years ago. As such, besides the black magicians that have joined, nobody else knows of the organization's existence."

Green knitted his brow and said, "Don't waste your breath with so many words. Just tell us your purpose for coming here."

Maru wasn't angry. Instead, he smiled faintly and turned to Zhao Hai. "I came here this time to invite Mister Zhao Hai to join the Black Magician Alliance."

As soon as Zhao Hai and the others heard what Maru said, they all gawked. Zhao Hai looked at Maru and asked with confusion, "What is the reason for inviting me?"

Maru smiled and said, "Please allow me to sit before explaining."

Aside from appearing without warning in the beginning, Maru's words had been very polite and he seemed like a gentleman. Zhao Hai and the others' vigilance within their hearts had lowered. With Green's presence, Zhao Hai wasn't worried about his own security, so he let Meg put away her Angel of Protection and allowed Maru to sit down.

After he sat down, Meg gave Maru a cup of tea. Maru's expression showed politeness and this made Zhao Hai curious about him. From the beginning until now, Maru's performance gave off the air of a noble, one that was a great deal higher in status than him who was just an ungraceful aristocrat.

Maru sipped his tea before placing the cup down. He looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister Zhao Hai is a black magician, so you should certainly feel that black magicians have been isolated on the continent. Walking outside is very inconvenient. Most feel badly of us and compare us to mercenaries, that is, killers, thieves, swindlers. They look at us as though we are evil, that we would eat humans at any time."

With regards to this, Zhao Hai had felt it as well. Although it could be said that when a black magician arrived, no one would dare to annoy them, in truth it was just as Maru said. Black magicians were being pushed into isolation by the humans of the continent. In their eyes, black magicians were synonymous with evil, which wasn't a good thing.

Maru saw Zhao Hai's nod and continued, "In fact, it wasn't like this in the beginning and people didn't think of black magicians like that. Although black magicians are somewhat strange, we do develop pharmaceuticals and research black magic to treat people of their wounds in order to help them. We black magicians were once called creatures of the dark and were an indispensable part of an aristocrat's or major force's army. Our essential battle strength had made it so that none would dare go wild at night."

This time around, it was Quinn John's turn to nod. Quinn John had dealt with many people, so he knew what Maru said was true. Before, many aristocrats and countries tried to please black magicians. It was due to their characteristics of increasing their battle efficiency during the night that black magicians became an indispensable part of their army. As of now, however, most national armies didn't have a single black magician within their ranks.

Maru watched them and the smile on his face grew larger. He quickly put away the smile and said to Zhao Hai and the others, "This situation, however, has slowly changed. I don't know when such a rumor spread throughout the continent, but black magicians soon became a symbol of evil, the incarnations of devils. People slowly began to isolate the black magicians. At first, we didn't realise the problem, but later on this became a very big issue and we had already been isolated from the people on the continent.

Here, Maru's voice held a trace of heaviness. It was very obvious that the seriousness of the problem had exceeded his imagination. As such, he became very solemn.

Chapter 220 - Radiance Church

An occupation, but isolated by all. This meant it would have no way to continue its existence and was destined to perish. An occupation needed to be inherited; what it needed were the people. This was the most important part, the people. Unfortunately, no one favored the occupation, so no one could continue it. An occupation that loses its inheritance is similar to a clan that loses its inheritance. Sooner or later, it would perish.

This was the reason why Maru was so serious about the matter. The inheritance of black magicians would be broken if no one was willing to become one. With regards to black magicians, this wasn't good news.

Maru said, "Since this situation occurred, we immediately began to investigate. These rumors didn't appear on the continent for no reason at all. It's certain that some people were specifically aiming for this. After careful investigations, we found that the ones behind these rumors and promoting it amongst the people came from Radiance Church."

To be honest, this answer wasn't out of Zhao Hai's expectations. On the continent, black magicians had been isolated, yet light magicians earned a great deal of respect. The reason for this status was their extermination of black magicians everywhere.

If these rumors were said to be unrelated to light magicians, then no one would believe it. Yet, for those in power, this issue didn't harm them. Radiance Church's religious doctrine stated that the commoners shouldn't bitterly stand against their rulers and stay in their status quo. The reasoning given by Radiance Church's religious doctrine was that by going against them, you would suffer hardship and wouldn't even be able to enter heaven after death.

What is heaven? Nobody has seen it, but the Radiance Church's religious doctrine states that it is a world of beauty. It is a place where people didn't need to do anything, yet would be able to eat good food and wear extravagant clothes.

Without a doubt, such a doctrine was favored by those in charge and wouldn't be opposed by many who ruled countries. As such, Radiance Church missionary work went unimpeded and they continually suppressed the black magicians while also taking an uncaring attitude to everything else.

Maru looked at Zhao Hai and found that he didn't look that surprised. He smiled bitterly as he ridiculed himself. He'd observed that these people already knew of this issue. Zhao Hai and the others looked as though they'd already guessed this before while those on Maru's side had spent so long to come to such a conclusion.

Maru smiled bitterly and said, "It was due to this insight that the black magicians set up their own organization, the Black Magician Alliance. There are two main purposes for this organization. First is to oppose the Radiance Church. The second is to pass down the magical techniques of black magicians."

Zhao Hai nodded and looked Maru in the eye. "So this is the reason you looked for me? To have me join the Black Magician Alliance because I am a black magician?"

Maru nodded. "Yes, it is because you are also a black magician. A black magician like you will certainly be hunted down by the Radiance Church. Some time ago, Garan had tried to harm you. It was actually the Radiance Church that sent him to deal with you. Furthermore, you still do not know how strong the Radiance Church is. Their power is a great deal stronger than what was displayed back then."

Zhao Hai and the others looked at Maru, who also looked back at them. "You may not believe it, but right now, many small duchies are currently being directly controlled by the Radiance Church," Maru said with a cold voice. "Furthermore, Southern King Boric is a Protector Knight of the Radiance Church and was also ordered to deal with you. So aside from Carlo, this was definitely due to the Radiance Church."

This was contrary to what Zhao Hai and everyone else anticipated. They didn't think that the powerful and influential Southern King Boric would willingly become a Protector Knight of Radiance Church. This truly surprised them.

Maru looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Don't be so surprised. Radiance Church is composed of three divisions. First are the various archbishops headed by the Pope. Next are the Protector Knights of the Round Table Knight Order . The last division are those who follow the teachings of suffering monks and make up the Monk Order , and the three groups are relatively independent of one another.

“The main task of the Pope is to manage the daily operations of the church. The Round Table Knight Order protects the church while the Monk Order’s main duties constitute missionary work.”

Zhao Hai and the others listened quietly. Hearing such a detailed explanation from Maru showed that they hadn’t been investigating Radiance Church for only a few days. It seemed like the phrase, “the person you understand the most is your enemy,” wasn’t wrong.

Maru continued, “Although the Pope manages the daily operations of Radiance Church, he doesn’t have the power to control the Round Table Knight Order, nor the Monk Order. The knights within the Round Table Knight Order of Radiance Church are in fact made up of members that are powerful figures of various countries. The identity of each individual isn’t simple and they manage the Round Table Knight Order, which is similar to managing the entirety of the church’s armed forces.

“The Pope, in addition to managing the daily affairs of his archbishops, also controls some of the church’s outside powers, such as a few assassin organizations and mercenary groups. Compared to these two, the Monk Order seems relatively weaker, but could be considered Radiance Church’s most devout followers. They generally wear coarse clothing and travel for a long period of time around the continent in order to spread the teachings of the Radiance Church. As they do so, they heal people of their illnesses and do not possess riches. They do not hunt for their food, but instead rely on charity. The Monk Order is composed of magicians, but since the church is getting more and more rich, fewer individuals are willing to become suffering monks. There are only a few true suffering monks left.”

After telling them of such, Maru couldn’t help but reveal a color of admiration. It was clear that he had a high level of approval of those suffering monks. It was sad, however, that they were now enemies of the Radiance Church.

This was the first time Zhao Hai had heard of such self-torture as an occupation. It sounded relatively similar to what he knew of monks, but they were also different. They sounded a great deal stronger than regular monks.

Maru sighed. “If the Radiance Church could be like those suffering monks, then the continent would be very lucky. What a pity. Nowadays, only a few of those magicians could endure such hardship and become a suffering monk. Right now, the Radiance Church is controlled by the Pope and the Round Table Knight Order. They resort to finding ways of increasing and enhancing the status of the Radiance Church in the hearts of the people on the continent. They are hanging onto the laws of the land in order to make money. They are greedier than merchants and have a darker heart than politicians .”

Maru clenched his teeth as he said this. It was obvious that the suppression of the black magicians had been led by the Pope and the Round Table Knight Order.

Maru calmed down and looked at Zhao Hai, saying, "You may not believe it, but previously, the Immortal Mercenary Group that had attacked Laura was controlled by the Radiance Church. It was also the same with Garan, and those three black magicians that had been hired to attack you. The ones behind the scenes is the Radiance Church. No one knows of this, however. On the outside, the Radiance Church shows a benevolent and compassionate appearance, but are actually secretly participating in evil deeds comparable with devils."

Zhao Hai and the others were shocked. This news, for them, was truly too shocking. They had no way of knowing who had commissioned the Immortal Mercenary Group. They never thought that such shadowy killing organizations like this had links with the Radiance Church. Moreover, Maru knowing this information meant that they'd carried out a detailed investigation. It seemed that the Black Magician Alliance wouldn't be a good crop.

Maru watched Zhao Hai's face and smiled faintly. "These issues are matters we investigated clearly. If we didn't have such strength, then we wouldn't be able to match up against Radiance Church. The reason why they pitted Boric against you was, first, because they wanted to get their hands on your Taoyuan products. The second reason was because you are a black magician. They are afraid that you'll join the Black Magician Alliance. If you did so, then with your financial support, the Black Magician Alliance would become a greater threat to them."

Zhao Hai and Laura were both surprised for a moment. The two of them couldn't help but look at one another. Although Maru's words meant nothing on the surface, Zhao Hai had actually deciphered the fact that the Black Magician Alliance was lacking in finances.

They weren't fools. Maru could give such a confidential performance because he had a reason. At first, Zhao Hai didn't know what it was. Now, however, he understood. To put it bluntly, they needed him for his money.

Maru saw their expressions and immediately knew what they were thinking. With a righteous air, he said, "Please, Mister Zhao Hai, don't misunderstand. I invited you to join the Black Magician Alliance not because of your money. As an organization, we, the Black Magician Alliance, do not have distinctions between upper and lower ranks. The alliance does not have a leader, but an Elders Assembly. The Elders

Assembly will not order its magician members. If they want a magician to do something, then they would first listen to the magician's opinion on the matter.

"This time, the main reason we are asking Mister to join the Black Magician Alliance is simply because you are a black magician. Aside from those controlled by the Radiance Church, we invite all black magicians to join the alliance."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "After joining the alliance, what will I need to do?"

As soon as Maru heard what Zhao Hai said, he knew this matter had passed through open doors. Thus, he immediately said, "There are no excessive requirements, just two. First, since it's difficult to meet all the magicians in the alliance, members should lend a hand to each other when they can. The second is to collect any information on the Radiance Church and deal with them however possible on one's own. These two are the only requirements."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "What can the alliance provide me then? Of course, I don't mean in the financial aspect, but what can they provide me in other aspects?"

Maru smiled slightly. "Of course there will be benefits. The alliance can provide you with information and intelligence. We can also provide you with manpower to help you. Naturally, the manpower provided will require a cost to be handed to the alliance. Furthermore, you will need to commission every person you take in."