

Chapter 1620

“You were asking about God Lord, right? His real name is Apollo and he’s the supreme ruler of Jaellatra! He lives in the God Temple!” explained Nori.

Hearing that, Gerald now realized that his actions must’ve already caught the attention of Jaellatra’s supreme ruler...

“Actually, why the sudden interest in him, Gerald? Just so you know, God Lord isn’t as simple as you may think he is. According to rumors, he’s already trained enough to attain the Seventh-soul-rank in the Sage Realm! With that said, he truly is a terrifying individual!” added Nori.

Even though Nori was clueless as to why Gerald was asking about the God Lord, it was clear that she was warning him against trying to mess with Apollo.

After finding out that Apollo had possibly already entered the Seventh-soul-rank in the Sage Realm, Gerald felt a shiver run down his spine... If that was really the case, then Apollo was surely someone with monstrous strength...

Since Gerald was now only nearing the Second-soul-rank within the Sage Realm, the gap between him and Apollo was almost astronomical... If he were to anger Apollo at his current strength, Gerald would no doubt be killed in seconds, completely unable to even defend himself...

“...I see. Then... Do you know of a man donning black robes who acts as a follower of the God Lord?” asked Gerald.

After thinking for a while, Nori then replied, “I... do recall such a man, yes... I think his name was Hisham... Regardless, he’s one of God Lord’s henchmen, and he mostly aids Apollo in managing matters around Jaellatra. Since the God Lord himself hardly ever shows up in public, Hisham is the one who usually does all that needs to be done.”

Hearing that, Gerald found that it all matched up. Based on Nori's description of him, Gerald was now pretty sure that Hisham was the person who had tried to test him back then.

Still, Gerald had a hunch that Apollo wasn't particularly going after him yet. After all, Hisham had left almost immediately after testing Gerald's capabilities.

"Don't... tell me that you've already offended the God Lord, Gerald..." mumbled Nori as she looked at Gerald, concern in her eyes.

Shaking his head, Gerald then replied, "Don't worry, I'm not stupid enough to piss off someone who's attained the Seventh-soul-rank in the Sage Realm!"

Relieved to hear that, Nori then said, "I'm glad to hear that... Speaking of which, why did you ask for so much money from Johnie? Are you short of money or something?"

Though a hundred million dollars wasn't that much to Nori either, it was still a sum that would be able to sustain an ordinary person for life.

Chuckling in response, Gerald simply replied, "Putting it bluntly, it's much more fun spending someone else's money when shopping! Speaking of shipping, I've heard that Jaellatra is famous for its secret technique talismans... Could you bring me over to the place that sells them? I've been itching to get my hands on some!"

Upon hearing that, Nori now understood that Gerald had returned to Jaellatra to obtain some secret technique talismans. It also explained why he had asked for so much money from Johnie.

"Of course! Though... Are you sure that a hundred million dollars is enough...?" asked Nori rather doubtfully.

After all, secret technique talismans were rather rare, even in Jaellatra. With that said, they were exceptionally pricey, with even the most common of talismans costing around a few thousand dollars. With that in mind, the more advanced secret technique talismans were undoubtedly priced much, much higher than that...

"I believe that the earnings I got off Johnie should be sufficient. Even if it isn't, I have my own money as well. Regardless, let's go have a look at the talismans first before anything else!" replied Gerald with a calm smile. After all, money had never really been an issue for him, and he wasn't about to start worrying about not having enough.

Regardless, with all that out of the way, the duo then quickly finished their coffee before heading off to the largest secret technique talisman sales center in Jaellatra, Talisman Hall.

All the secret technique talismans in Jaellatra were made there, and the one responsible for crafting the more advanced ones went by the name of Boshier, the Great Talisman Master. Either way, upon completion, the talismans would then be placed in the Talisman hall where they would then be either auctioned or sold...

Chapter 1621

As they approached the Talisman hall, Gerald saw that the entire building was plated in gold. There also appeared to be a huge stone tablet carved into the shape of a secret technique talisman in front of the building.

Since it was located near the entrance, it was only fair to assume that the tablet was the symbol of the Talisman Hall...

Not many people came to the Talisman Hall in general, and those who did were usually dressed in luxurious clothing. That didn't really come as a surprise, however, since this place was even fancier than even the most expensive of locations within Jaellatra.

Regardless, upon arriving at the main entrance, Gerald and Nori were greeted by the sight of a man donning a robe that looked similar to a court robe.

Naturally, one needed to fulfill certain conditions to even be able to enter the building, and the man acted as the doorkeeper of the Talisman Hall.

After looking at a charm that Nori fished out from her pocket, the doorkeeper's eyes instantly lit up as he smiled before respectfully saying, "Welcome, Miss Zahn!"

The charm was an identity charm, and such charms were used to symbolize one's status within Jaellatra. Since Nori was the eldest young lady of the Zahn family—a rather prestigious family within Earth Capital—the doorkeeper naturally knew who Nori was.

Either way, after nodding in response at the doorkeeper, Nori then asked, "He's my friend, so he should be allowed to enter a well, correct?"

"Yes, by all means! Please, come in!" replied the doorkeeper respectfully as he opened the door of the Talisman Hall before gesturing for them to enter.

"Thank you!" replied Nori with a polite tone before leading Gerald into the Talisman Hall's main lobby.

Once they were inside, Gerald was immediately flabbergasted by the number of exquisite secret technique talismans displayed within the hall.

"The secret technique talismans within the lobby are the most unique ones in all of Jaellatra. After all, there's only one of each talisman! With that said, they're all extremely rare and precious! Do note, however, that since all these talismans are of perfect quality, they aren't ever going to be sold or auctioned off!" explained Nori as she pointed at the talismans displayed in the lobby.

“Now, you may or may not know this, but secret technique talismans are divided into six main categories, them being basic, common, middle, high, rare, and perfect! As I said earlier, apart from the few talismans within this hall’s lobby, no other perfect talismans exist!” added Nori who was starting to sound more and more like a tour guide.

“Aren’t the most skillful advanced secret technique talisman crafters able to produce talismans of perfect quality?” asked Gerald.

Shaking her head with a slightly bitter smile, Nori then replied, “Even though Boshier is already a great master in making secret technique talismans, he’s only capable of producing ones of the rare quality. He hasn’t been able to improve his skills enough to create a talisman of perfect quality!”

“The perfect ones you see in the lobby were created a few decades ago by the first secret technique talisman crafter, Master Kyzer. Throughout history, nobody’s been able to surpass Master Kyzer’s skill, and nobody has any idea how he even managed to make such perfect talismans! It’s been an ongoing mystery, you know?”

After hearing all that, Gerald’s interest in secret technique talismans slowly grew. Eventually, he couldn’t help but ask, “I do wonder if there’s a way for one to learn how to make talismans...”

“Of course, there is! Essentially, one has to first join the Talisman Union, and there also needs to be a special tutor willing to accept that person as their student. Without those two, it’s near impossible to learn anything about talisman making,” replied Nori.

So, he first needed to get himself a tutor before he could even begin learning how to make talismans... This was going to be a challenge for Gerald. After all, the only person he knew in Jaellatra was Nori.

Forget tutors, he didn’t even know a single teacher here! With that in mind, it was certainly going to be difficult for him to learn how to make secret technique talismans...

Chapter 1622

“Still, why are you suddenly asking me about this? Could you be interested in learning how to craft secret technique talismans?” asked Nori as she smiled at him.

Seeing that she seemed to have caught on, Gerald didn't deny it and simply nodded slowly.

“...Well, if you truly are interested in learning, I could introduce you to someone I know. He's a Second-rank Talisman Master within the Talisman Union, and his name is Chace Hunt. He's an old friend of my father!” suggested Nori.

“Is that possible? I mean, I'm not even a local to Jaellatra. Am I qualified to learn how to craft secret technique talismans...?” asked Gerald, knowing full well about the prejudice many people from Jaellatra had against those from earth. There was simply too massive a difference between the people from the two lands.

“Don't worry, Master Hunt is a nice person, so I'm sure he won't mind! Besides, my father isn't one to ostracize those from outside Jaellatra!” replied Nori, convincing him not to worry too much about it.

“...Well, alright then. However, I still have some matters to attend to, so I won't be able to start learning just yet. I'd appreciate it if I could start learning when I return here again!” said Gerald after thinking about it for a moment.

“No problem!” replied Nori as both of them finally made their way into the hall where the talismans were sold.

Noticing their arrival, a sales staff smiled brightly as she quickly walked over to the duo before respectfully saying, “Welcome! How may I help you?”

People who were able to enter the Talisman Hall weren't ordinary folk, so the sales staff was well aware that he had to be on his best behavior in front of them.

"My friend's here to buy some talismans!" replied Nori.

"Ah, I see! Please, come this way, then! I'll first be showing you the new talismans made by Great Talisman Master Boshier first!" replied the staff as he led them to a display counter decorated with gold. Within it, a row of talismans could be seen...

"These are the latest rare quality talismans that Master Boshier made. There are attack spell talismans, defense spell talismans, stratagem spell talismans, as well as space spell talismans," explained the staff in great detail.

Upon seeing them, Gerald couldn't help but feel overwhelmed. While the talismans were nothing short of marveling, each of their price labels—which were displayed at the bottom of each talisman—started with units that began in the millions! No wonder Nori had earlier asked him whether he was sure if he had enough with him! As it turned out, the hundred million dollars that he had obtained from Johnie was only sufficient to buy two talismans at most!

Judging from the expression on Gerald's face, Nori was immediately able to tell that he didn't have enough on him. With that in mind, she then leaned a bit closer to Gerald before whispering, "Is there anything you fancy, Gerald...?"

Upon hearing that, Gerald simply shook his head before turning to look at the staff again and asking, "Are there any other talismans here apart from these?"

Since this place was so huge, it was only fair to assume that much cheaper talismans were also sold here.

Chapter 1623

“But of course! Please, follow me!” replied the staff as he led Gerald and Nori into another hall.

Upon entering, a multitude of talismans could be seen hung dazzlingly on the walls. With all of them seeming to have varying levels of quality, Gerald quickly began browsing to see which ones he needed.

Thankfully, the ones inside this hall were much affordable, ranging only from prices between a few thousand to several million dollars.

It took him about an hour, but by the time Gerald was finally done, he had bought a few hundred middle and high-quality talismans. He got himself a few dozen rare quality ones as well.

In total, the final sum amounted to a whopping hundred and thirty million dollars! Naturally, Gerald had used his own money to cover the extra costs. Still, Gerald now knew how pricey these talismans could get!

Even so, they were a necessary purchase. After all, he wanted to have them ready for self-defense and also in case of emergencies. The best thing about talismans was that not only did they have varying functionalities and powers, but they were also easily carried around and used.

Regardless, now that he was done shopping for talismans, both Nori and Gerald left the Talisman Hall.

Now that they were out, Nori turned to look at Gerald before asking, “So... What do you intend to do next?”

Not seeing the need to hide anything, Gerald then replied, “I’m heading to Sunniva City on earth!”

“Oh? Why?” asked Nori in a curious tone.

“Well, there are still a few Quartermains I haven’t taken out yet... More specifically, I haven’t exterminated those from the second clan of the Quartermains, the Quantocks of Sunniva City!” explained Gerald.

Upon hearing that, Nori understood what Gerald had earlier meant when he said he still had business to attend to. Sure enough, if he didn’t take care of the Quantocks as soon as possible, they would surely cause him future troubles.

“...I see! Well, please be careful, alright? And if you need any help, you can just contact me and I’ll try my best to lend you my aid!” replied Nori.

“I’ll keep that in mind!” said Gerald with a smile before rapidly leaping away...

Staring at his quickly disappearing back, Nori wondered whether he would one day accept her...

Meanwhile, Johnie had finally managed to limp all the way home in his wretched state. With his hair messy and his usual temperament—as the young master of the Lager family—completely gone, Johnie now looked more like a beggar than anything...

Upon noticing Johnie’s return, a man—who honestly looked quite similar to Johnie—found himself surprised as he asked, “Johnie? What happened to you? How did you end up like this?”

“I... I was beaten up by someone, brother...!” replied Johnie as he looked at Jonas Lager with a defeated expression.

Jonas was Johnie’s eldest brother, and he had entered the First-soul-rank of the Sage Realm.

With such great strength, Jonas was also a member of the Fury Squad, one of the more well-hidden underground forces in Jaellatra. The Fury Squad’s members consisted of a group of assassins as well as strong cultivators. Together, their job was to accomplish missions given to them.

“What? To think that someone would actually dare to beat you up! Tell me who that man is so that I can avenge you!” roared Jonas.

“I... I don't know him very well... I only know that he seems to be Nori's boyfriend!” replied Johnie in a bitter tone, feeling both angered and pained every time he thought about Gerald.

After all, for the young master of the Lager family to be beaten up by some brat... It truly was a disgrace to the Lagers!

“So, the Zahns are involved! It appears that they're getting more and more arrogant as time goes on...! How dare they go against our family...!”

Chapter 1624

Jonas's expression seemed to darken exponentially as he howled in rage.

Truth be told, both the Zahns and the Lagers were equally powerful in Jaellatra. Since neither family was weaker than the other, both families made sure never to offend each other.

Due to Gerald's involvement in Nori's matters this time, however, it appeared that the two families were finally going to have a dispute...

“Don't worry, Johnie, I'll definitely help you out with this matter. In fact, I'm telling father about this! Let's see what the Zahns are truly capable of!” growled Jonas as he narrowed his eyes before supporting his brother back to his room to get some rest...

Fast forward to that night, the Quantock family manor could be seen brightly lit and servants of that family seemed to be standing guard all over the place.

Zaki himself was standing in the lobby, looking at everyone before him rather anxiously. After all, the three elders had been gone for almost an entire day now! Despite that, they hadn't reported back at all...

Seeing how worried his father was, Shawn then said, "Don't worry, father! The three elders are exceedingly strong, remember? They'll surely be able to get rid of Gerald!"

"I can only hope so!" replied Zaki, his brows tightly furrowed.

Just as Zaki's sentence ended, however, Gerald's voice could suddenly be heard shouting, "Tough luck! Instead of hoping for the impossible, why don't you start thinking how you're going to explain your deaths to the rest of the Quartermains?"

Hearing Gerald's voice echo throughout the manor, Zaki and the rest of his family instantly fell into panic, desperately trying to see where Gerald was hiding.

However, the very next second, Gerald appeared right behind Zaki and lifted the man with a single hand!

Squeezing onto Zaki's neck, Gerald then added in a frigid tone, "You're a stubborn old thing, Zaki! Did you really have to force me to come to Sunniva City so soon?"

His face now reddened, Zaki could only flail feebly as he tried to break free from Gerald's grasps. Naturally, there was no way that was happening, and Zaki was now finding it exceedingly difficult to even breathe.

"Release my father, Gerald!" roared Shawn as he glared at Gerald.

Ignoring Shawn's words, Gerald simply ordered, "Kneel! All of you!"

Upon hearing that, all the Quantocks simply exchanged glances with each other. In the end, not one of them was willing to obey Gerald's orders.

"I see how it is! Well, since nobody took my advice, enjoy your trip to hell!" scoffed Gerald as he tightened his grasp around Zaki's neck...

With a sickening 'snap' Zaki was no longer among the living.

"F-father...!"

"Master...!"

Upon realizing that Gerald had really done the deed, Shawn and the other Quantocks could only shriek in terror!

Unable to hold back his rage, Shawn then charged toward Gerald while roaring, "You b*stard...! I'll kill you...!"

Sadly, his efforts were completely useless. Gerald had come to Sunniva City specifically to eliminate the Quantocks. Just like how he had exterminated the Quartermains, he wasn't about to spare anyone in this family.

'To be soft to the enemy is to be cruel to oneself,' was a saying that Gerald came to learn as he matured...

And just like that, both the Quartermains and the Quantocks ceased to exist.

With his job now done, Gerald then quickly left Sunniva City to return to Jaellatra.

Chapter 1625

It was the next morning when a few luxurious cars could be seen parked before the Zahn family's manor. Notably, each of the cars' license plates began with the word 'Lager', making it clear who was paying the Zahns a visit.

After the beat-up Johnie returned home yesterday, Jonas had reported the incident to his father—who was also the head of the Lager family—, Augustus Lager.

Upon hearing that someone had hurt his second son, Augustus was rightfully enraged. It certainly didn't help that he was a man who was very protective of his children.

Unable to stand the fact that his beloved son was injured, he was here today to argue about this with the Zahns.

"Master Zahn, if you weren't aware, your daughter's boyfriend beat up my son! How do you plan to settle this? I won't leave till you give me an acceptable answer!" shouted Augustus who was currently sitting cross-legged in front of the leader of the Zahn family, Yoshua Zahn.

Before Yoshua could even reply, Nori—who had been standing by his side—retorted, "The answer is simple! Your son's been endlessly pestering me so he got what he deserved!"

"Quiet, Nori!" shouted her father.

Upon hearing that, Nori didn't dare utter another word and simply stood meekly by his side.

Following that, Yoshua turned to look at the Lagers. While Augustus appeared to be rather gloomy, Jonas—who was standing beside his father—had a frigid expression on his face.

Sensing how powerful Jonas's aura was, Yosha could instantly tell how strong the boy was. With that in mind, Jonas was definitely not someone to mess with.

Regardless, after a slight pause, Yoshua said in a monotonous tone, "The way I see it, both of us are responsible for this matter, Master Lager. While I'll certainly apologize to your son on behalf of my daughter, as Nori said, it was your son who started all this. With that said, once my apology is made, I hope your son doesn't pester my daughter any further!"

As the leader of the Zahns, Yoshua was well aware that he couldn't compromise too much with the Lagers.

"Cut the crap, Yoshua. Look, your daughter had better apologize to my son in person today! Fail to do that and I'll destroy your family!" threatened Augustus as he slammed his hands against the table.

Hearing that, Yoshua instantly frowned. To think that Augustus would be arrogant enough to claim to want to destroy his family! He truly didn't appear to respect the Zahns at all!

"Getting a bit too arrogant, aren't we, Master Lager? I hope you remember that my family's already managed to gain a foothold in Jaellatra! With that said, we won't be an easy target!" retorted Yoshua icily.

"Oh really? I'd like to see you try defending yourselves against us!" scoffed Augustus with a disdainful snort before waving a hand.

A split second later, over ten strong-looking men in black rushed in, instantly alarming the Zahns!

“How imprudent! This is the Zahn family manor! Do you really think that this is a place for you to do as you please?!” yelled Nori as she glared at Augustus and his men before moving for the door, unable to stand being in the presence of the Lagers anymore.

However, her path was easily blocked by Jonus who—while glaring daggers at her—then threatened, “I’m sure you’re well aware that my brother likes you, Nori. Look, if you accompany my brother for an entire day, I’ll consider sparing the Zahns. Fail to comply, however, and I’ll make sure you pay dearly! What do you say?”

“What exactly do you have in mind when you say, ‘pay dearly?’” scoffed Nori, barely intimidated by Jonas’s threats.

“It’s simple really... It simply means that I won’t show you any more mercy!” roared Jonas as his pressuring aura immediately intensified!

“Lay a finger on her and I guarantee that you won’t be leaving this place alive!”

Chapter 1626

The second Jonas’s sentence ended, Gerald’s voice could suddenly be heard!

Recognizing that voice anywhere, Nori then exclaimed, “Gerald!”

Following that, Gerald walked in rather casually with his hands in his pockets.

While Gerald’s surprising arrival made Nori’s heart race, Jonas and Augustus’s faces instantly turned red in rage!

“So, are you the one who hurt my son?” growled Augustus as he glared at Gerald.

Turning to look at him, Gerald then snorted before scoffing, “That’s right! After all, your arrogant son was the one who challenged me to a duel! What? Is he now trying to get others to take revenge for his sake after he lost? How pathetic can he be?”

Hearing that instantly sent Augustus’s blood boiling! For a brat, Gerald really knew how to pinpoint his weakness!

As Gerald had said, Johnie would surely be a laughing stock should people come to realize that he got his family to take revenge for him after losing to a duel that he started!

“Whatever the case is, you still beat up my brother! I can’t just let this pass! With that said, I’m challenging you to a duel now!” growled Jonas as he walked toward Gerald.

“What makes you think you’ll be my match when your brother couldn’t even lay a finger on me?” retorted Gerald as he looked at Jonas with disdainful eyes.

Upon hearing that, Jonas was so enraged that he ended up clenching his fists so tightly that his veins bulged hideously on his arms!

“That doesn’t answer my question. Or are you chickening out now?” provoked Jonas who couldn’t wait to tear Gerald into pieces!

Gerald, for one, could instantly tell what was on Jonas’s mind. Gerald hadn’t been afraid of the man in the first place, and since Jonas was asking for his doom, Gerald had no problem with granting his wish.

“Oh, I accept the challenge alright, on one condition. If you lose, you and the rest of the Lagers must stop pestering Nori. Sound good?” replied Gerald.

“Deal! However, what if you lose?”

“You can do whatever you want with me if that comes to be!” said Gerald rather nonchalantly. After all, from what Gerald could tell, Jonas wasn’t anywhere near his match.

With the conditions agreed upon, both men then began walking out to begin their duel.

As the others quickly followed along, Nori ran over to Gerald’s side before whispering, “Gerald, his brother isn’t as weak as Johnie is... Are you sure about this...?”

Smiling in return, Gerald simply replied, “Don’t worry, he’s barely even a match for me!”

Seeing how confident Gerald’s smile was, Nori could instantly rest assured. After all, she knew that Gerald was the kind of person who would only say such a thing if he was absolutely sure of his victory.

Now outside, Jonas then glared at Gerald before yelling, “I hope you enjoy watching me crush your bones!”

“Talk is cheap!” sneered Gerald.

Jonas was honestly severely underestimating Gerald’s capabilities. After all, though his brother had failed to take Gerald out, Jonas knew for a fact that the gap between Johnie’s and his strength was extremely vast. With that in mind, Jonas was confident that he could defeat Gerald easily.

“Bring it on!” roared the infuriated Jonas as his aura flared up! Following that, the man began charging at Gerald with immense speed!

Chapter 1627

His fist aimed at Gerald's head, Jonas was sure that upon collision, Gerald's skull would instantly split open!

However, he was a fool if he thought that Gerald was going to grant that chance to him. With great ease, Gerald simply stepped to the side to dodge the attack!

Even so, as Jonas's fist flew right past Gerald's face, Gerald could feel the immense power in the punch... As someone who had entered the First-soul-rank of the Sage Realm, Jonas was undoubtedly a strong one...

Unfortunately for him, his opponent was Gerald.

Realizing that his attack had actually missed, Jonas was left slightly shocked. To think that Gerald was actually this fast!

Quickly recovering his wits, Jonas then swiftly turned around to launch a lethal kick at Gerald!

However, once again, Gerald dodged the attack without any trouble.

From that alone, the difference in the duo's capabilities was made clear as day. In the world of martial arts, the speedier one always had the advantage, and this was clearly illustrated by the fact that Jonas hadn't been able to land a single hit on Gerald. Gerald was just so much faster than him!

With that in mind, the winner of this battle had already been decided....

Though he knew that, Jonas refused to admit defeat! After all, he had sworn to himself that he would avenge his brother by defeating Gerald!

“Humph! Are you only capable of dodging?” taunted Jonas with a snort.

Though he said that, Jonas was honestly feeling greatly humiliated. After all, it seemed like Gerald wasn't taking him seriously at all! Even so, he now accepted that Gerald wasn't any weaker than he was. After all, none of his attacks had landed!

“I'm just worried that you'll get knocked out from a single attack!” retorted Gerald with a contemptuous smile on his face.

Upon hearing that, Jonas's fury spiked as he clenched his teeth. How prideful!

“You arrogant brat...!” roared Jonas as he charged up all his power before attacking Gerald with all his might!

Of course, Gerald easily avoided it, though the second Jonas's attack missed, Gerald calmly stood in place. Since Jonas wanted him to attack so much, Gerald would gladly oblige!

It only took a split second for Gerald to kick Jonas right in the stomach. Gerald's movements were so rapid that Jonas couldn't even react in time!

Momentarily finding himself soaring, it was a second later when his entire body crashed to the ground!

Seeing that his son—who was now coughing out blood—was barely even able to take a single kick from Gerald, August's face instantly paled. He hadn't thought that his son would actually lose to Gerald!

Staring at the injured man, Gerald then called out in a monotonous tone, “You've lost!”

Though Jonas clearly appeared unwilling to admit to that, Gerald was right. Understanding that, Jonas could only choose to accept his defeat. After all, choosing otherwise would surely make him a laughing stock to the public...

Chapter 1628

Following that, Augustus quickly led Jonas into one of their cars before leaving immediately.

Seeing that the Lagers had left, Nori joyously cheered, "You did it, Gerald! You're so strong that even Jonas wasn't your opponent!"

As Nori continued praising Gerald, Yoshua the other Zahns could only continue staring at the youth, still surprised by the outcome of that battle.

Noticing that her family was speechless, Nori then took the chance to introduce Gerald to her father.

"Father, this is the person I was talking about earlier! His name is Gerald Crawford!"

Hearing that, Yoshua simply nodded before signaling them to return to the hall for now...

Once seated, Gerald took the initiative to greet, "It's a pleasure to meet you, Master Zahn!"

“The pleasure is mine. You know, Nori’s been telling me how powerful you were for a while now... After witnessing the events of today, I can safely say that I agree with her!” replied Yoshua, looking at Gerald with a satisfied expression.

“You flatter me, Master Zahn. Since I’m good friends with Nori, her troubles are mine as well. Regardless, it was my impulsiveness that started all this trouble in the first place. With that said, I hope you accept my apology!” declared Gerald in an apologetic tone.

After all, had he not beaten Johnie up, the Lagers wouldn’t have come over to confront them in the first place.

“There’s no way this is your fault, Gerald! I’m clearly the one wrong here for using you as my shield!” said Nori as she took a step forward to defend him.

“Alright, that’s enough blaming yourselves. I never liked that Lager kid in the first place. It’s honestly not the first time I’ve heard of him pestering Nori either. With that said, you did a good job, Gerald! With your help, Johnie will hopefully come to realize that not everyone in the world is afraid of him! Hell, who even are the Lagers? They’re still lightyears away from being capable enough to harm our family!” declared Yoshua.

Truth be told Yoshua wasn’t afraid of the Lagers at all. However, if they really ended up becoming enemies, Yoshua knew that both families would suffer great losses. Even so, Yoshua would’ve been willing to battle it out for the sake of his daughter...

At that moment, Nori appeared to suddenly remember something. With that, she quickly turned to face her father before asking, “Father, you’re an old friend of Master Hunt, right? From the Talisman Union? I need your help with something!”

“...Hmm? Are you thinking of joining the union?” asked Yoshua rather curiously.

“Not at all! I’m just asking on Gerald’s behalf! He’s interested in learning how to make secret technique talismans!” replied Nori as she shook her head before turning to look at Gerald.

From that, Yoshua easily caught on that his daughter must have fallen for Gerald. Though she had earlier said that she had only used Gerald as a shield, Yoshua was well aware that his daughter liked Gerald.

Regardless, Gerald then smiled at Yoshua before respectfully saying, “She’s right, Master Zahn. If it isn’t too much trouble, I’d like to ask for your aid in this!”

Yoshua, for one, already had a rather good impression of Gerald. After all, not only was he already this powerful at his age, but the youth was also close friends with his daughter! With that in mind, there was no way Yoshua would refuse to help.

“Don’t worry, the most it’ll cost me is a few words. How about this? I’ll contact Master Hunt and invite him over so that both of you can meet first. If he’s willing to accept you as his disciple, I congratulate you. However, if he declines, I won’t attempt to force him either. How’s that?” asked Yoshua as he proposed the best arrangement he could think of.

“I’ll gladly accept your arrangements! Thank you for your efforts, Master Zahn!” replied Gerald without even thinking twice about it.

After all, the fact that Yoshua—whom Gerald wasn’t even well acquainted with yet—was willing to help was already a pleasant surprise to him. In the end, all this was thanks to Nori...

It wasn't long after before an old man donning long robes entered the Zahn family manor.

With a gold badge pinned near his chest, the individual was none other than Master Chace Hunt himself, a Second-rank Talisman Master in the Talisman Union...

"Ah, you're here, Chace!" said Yoshua as he quickly walked over to greet the old man when he saw him.

"So, what exactly did you want to meet me for, Yoshua?" asked Chace without beating around the bush.

With how casually they were talking to each other, it appeared that both of them were old friends.

"Well, I'd like to introduce you to someone who has interest in learning how to craft secret technique talismans. I figured the details could be sorted out better face to face, which is why I invited you over!" replied Yoshua with a smile.

Slightly startled when he heard that, Chace then joked, "Don't tell me you're trying to make your precious daughter my disciple!"

Instantly laughing in response, Yoshua then replied, "I'd be overjoyed if she actually had interest in talisman making at all! However, she has her own plans. Regardless, he's the person I'd like to introduce you to!"

Following that, Yoshua then positioned a hand toward Gerald's direction.

As Chace stared at Gerald, Yoshua then added, "Gerald, this is Master Chace Hunt, a Second-rank Talisman Master in the Talisman Union!"

Upon hearing that, Gerald instantly greeted Chace in a polite tone, "It's a pleasure to meet you, Master Hunt! I go by Gerald Crawford, and I've heard many tales of your great achievements in the craftsmanship of secret technique talismans! With that said, I hope you'll accept me as your disciple and teach me the ways of making secret technique talismans!"

Raising a slight eyebrow after hearing that, Chace then turned to look at Yoshua before saying, "I'm sure you recall that I don't just take anyone as my disciple, Yoshua..."

To be completely honest, Chace wasn't too interested in taking Gerald under his wing. Now, if it was Nori who wanted to learn from him, Chace would have agreed to do so without a second thought. After all, she was Yoshua's daughter, and he, for one, would certainly give face to Yoshua.

Gerald, however, was a complete stranger to him, which was why Chace was already slightly reluctant to accept him.

"I remember, however, do know that he isn't an ordinary person... He's quite talented and extremely strong! He's also Nori's best friend, so..." muttered Yoshua as he nodded at the old man.

"So, you're telling me to make an exception and take him as my disciple, right? Hmm... How about this, I'll give him a test, and if he passes it, I'll accept him. How does that sound?" suggested Chace.

Being an old friend of Yoshua's, Chace knew he still had to give him some face. With that in mind, he figured that testing Gerald would be the fairest way to decide things.

Upon hearing that, Yoshua then turned to look at Gerald to see his response.

Naturally, Gerald barely hesitated as he said, "I agree! And if I don't pass the test, I, Gerald Crawford, swear not to bother Master Hunt anymore!"

Hearing that, Chace then waved his hand, prompting a brush and blank talisman to manifest before both him and Gerald.

“Very well, then! My test is simple. If you truly are as talented as Yoshua says, then you’ll be able to copy my talisman. If you pass, I’ll take you as my disciple!” explained Chace.

Following that, Chace held onto his brush before quickly drawing on his talisman...

Chapter 1630

A few seconds later, Chace lowered his brush before tossing the talisman into the sky... And just like that, the talisman transformed into a golden phoenix that then soared away!

“This talisman is called the Soaring Golden Phoenix!” explained Chace as he signaled for Gerald to begin.

Getting the hint, Gerald then closed his eyes before carefully recalling each of Chace’s previous brush strokes.

Seeing that Gerald wasn’t writing anything after a while, Chace then said, “You know, you can just give up if you can’t do it!”

‘Give up...?’ Gerald thought to himself, feeling slightly upset. When did he ever admit defeat? Giving up just wasn’t in his dictionary!

After a few more seconds, Gerald suddenly opened his eyes wide before reaching out for the brush and beginning to draw a talisman similar to Chace's. With how fluid his movements were, it almost felt like Gerald was guiding water down a river as he drew.

It was so fluid, in fact, that Chace found his initial disdain quickly changing into surprise. He couldn't help but admit that Gerald was actually quite talented in the crafting of secret technique talismans...

What more, Gerald had managed to memorize the strokes and patterns of the talisman in such a short amount of time! Naturally, Gerald wasn't able to draw the talisman as fast as Chace could since this was his first time doing this. Even so, his performance was still beyond satisfactory for Chace.

After around ten seconds, Chace saw that Gerald had managed to make an exact copy of his talisman!

Following that, everyone watched as Gerald tossed the talisman into the air... and a crisp shriek of a phoenix followed!

A split second later, a golden phoenix materialized and began encircling everyone in the air... With such majestic wings, the soaring phoenix looked truly marvelous...

Regardless, Gerald had succeeded!

Clapping his hands, Chace had a bright and satisfied smile on his face as he said, "Not bad! Yoshua really wasn't kidding when he said you were talented! Fine, then! I'll be taking you as my disciple as we agreed!"

Hearing that, Gerald instantly thanked Chace in a respectful tone, "I appreciate the compliments, Master!"

Even Nori and Yoshua were pleased to see this. Nori in particular was especially happy for Gerald. She truly hadn't expected Gerald to be able to replicate Master Hunt's talisman so perfectly!

“Since I’ve now taken you under my wing, there are two strict rules you need to abide by!” said Chace with a sudden stern expression on his face.

“Do state them, Master! I’ll obey anything you say!”

“Nicely said! First of all, you must use any of the secret technique talismans within Jaellatra. Secondly, you must never teach others how to make the talismans!” said Chace.

Both rules were the commandments of the Talisman Union, and nobody was allowed to break them. Once broken, the rule breaker would instantly be expelled from the union and lose their status as a member!

Though Gerald easily memorized the rules, he found the first rule to be slightly confusing.

He mustn’t use any of the secret technique talismans within Jaellatra? Did that mean he could still use them back on earth...?

Regardless, after telling him the rules, Chace then said, “Right, then. I’ll now bring you to the Talisman Union for registration. After that’s done, you’ll be an official member of the union and my chief disciple!”

As Gerald and Chace left the Zahn family manor to head to the Talisman Union, Chace made sure to tell Gerald that the process of making talismans wasn’t easy. He also took the time to tell Gerald that the Talisman Union was extremely prestigious within Jaellatra. With that in mind, those who were part of the union had statuses comparable to those of nobility within Jaellatra.

Chapter 1631

Once they arrived at the Talisman Union, Chace brought Gerald into the main hall.

A man wearing the same outfit as Chace came to greet them, and a young man was accompanying him.

“Master Hunt, it looks like you have finally gotten yourself a disciple!”

The man greeted Chace with a bright smile.

“Master Griffin, where are you going?”

His name was Llyod Griffin. Like Chace, he was also a Two-rank Talisman Master in the Talisman Union. So, it could be said that they were fellow brothers.

However, Lloyd started taking disciples much earlier than Chace.

“Haha, Master Griffin, where are you going?”

Chace smiled subtly and replied to Llyod.

“Master Griffin, my disciple has produced a middle-quality talisman. I’m bringing him to meet the Great Master to ask him to grant him the title of a One-rank Talisman Scribe!”

Lloyd told Chace rather proudly.

The hierarchical structure of the Talisman Union was divided into four levels, which were, from the bottom to the top, Talisman Scribe, Talisman Scholar, Talisman Master, and Talisman Great Master.

Only when the disciple was acknowledged by his tutor would he be able to receive the title of a Talisman Scribe. After getting the title, it would mean that he had garnered himself a place in the Talisman Union. It was a symbol of his identity.

This was why Llyod Griffin was so excited.

For so long, Lloyd had already started taking disciples, but Chace hadn't been able to find a candidate he liked. So naturally, he had been lagging behind a little.

Now, Lloyd's disciple was getting the title of a One-rank Talisman Scribe, but Chace was just getting himself a disciple. This somehow made Lloyd look down on Chace, thinking that Chace was very far behind him already.

"Then, I shall congratulate you, Master Griffin. However, my disciple is also getting the title of One-rank Talisman Scribe soon!"

Chace, not wanting to lose, replied to Griffin confidently as he was very confident in Gerald.

In Chace's opinion, Gerald was far more talented than Lloyd's disciple, and he was definitely going to surpass him.

"Great! I shall wait for that. When the time comes, we can have a match to see whose disciple is more powerful!"

Llyod challenged Chace in advance.

"Why not?"

Chace accepted the challenge immediately without fear.

After that, Llyod left with his disciple.

After Llyod had left, Gerald looked at Chace with a curious face. He asked, "Master, why are you so confident in me?"

Chace laughed heartily and explained, "Because I know you can do it. You are very talented. You will definitely become a very powerful Talisman Master!"

Hearing his praise, Gerald felt a little embarrassed.

He hadn't even started learning, but Chace was already having so much expectation and confidence in him. Therefore, he had to work very hard and not let Chace down. Otherwise, he would make Chace lose face in the Talisman Union. He had to surpass Llyod's disciple!

Later, Chace helped Gerald with the registration to join the Talisman Union and got his membership badge. Then, Chace pinned it on Gerald's chest himself.

Chapter 1632

Looking at the shiny badge, Gerald was overwhelmed.

He had finally become a member of the Talisman Union as well as a disciple of Master Chace Hunt. Now, he could learn how to make secret technique talismans.

“Gerald, you will be staying with me for these few days. I’ll teach you some basic knowledge about secret technique talismans and the ways of drawing the strokes. Although you are very talented, there are things that you still need to learn to master the skills. Talent is an inborn advantage, but you still need to learn a lot of things. Don’t be too proud, understand?”

Master Hunt looked at Gerald and advised him sincerely.

“Yes, Master Hunt. I understand. I will do as you say and work hard in learning how to make the secret technique talismans. I will not embarrass you!”

Gerald looked at Chace with great determination and nodded.

Master Hunt had such high expectations for him, of course he would not let him down.

Having said that, Chace brought Gerald to his residence, and they started the journey of teaching and learning right away.

Time passed quickly. A few days had already passed.

During Gerald’s stay in Chace’s house, Nori came to visit a few times, but she merely came to see how Gerald was coping.

Today, Gerald was practicing alone in the garden.

After learning for a few days, Gerald had fully grasped the basics of the making of the secret technique talismans as well as the stroke patterns.

Chace was very satisfied with Gerald's performance. He was sure that he had not chosen the wrong person. Gerald's talent was extremely high. In just a few days, he was already able to produce a middle-quality talisman easily. Moreover, those talismans were of high grade in that category, and Chace found it rather surprising.

Thinking about his days back then, he did not have Gerald's talent when he was learning how to make talismans. So, he was only able to make middle-grade middle-quality talismans.

As the saying went, talent works, genius creates.

Gerald was the genius. With just a little guidance, he was able to grasp it immediately and then create surprisingly amazing things.

At the moment, Gerald was drawing on the talisman in front of him swiftly. It was a golden dragon. Gerald had seen this golden dragon pattern in an old book. He reckoned it was mysterious and challenging, so he decided to give it a try.

That old book had been given to him by Chace for his learning. Apart from those patterns that were used to make perfect quality talismans, Gerald had basically learnt all the other patterns. This golden dragon was one of the patterns used in perfect quality talismans.

Gerald had long heard that the perfect quality talismans were very difficult to be produced as they required skills and the strokes were extremely detailed and unusual. Hence, nobody was able to produce a perfect quality talisman until now.

However, Gerald did not want to buy it. He thought that there was nothing insurmountable in this world. The only problem was that the way to do so had not been discovered yet.

Ding!

At the end of his first experiment, Gerald threw the talisman in his hand into the sky.

The talisman immediately turned into a golden ray and disappeared.

The first trial was a failure!

“No. It must be the wrong strokes. I want to keep trying!”

Gerald did not give up and started his analysis. Then, he started drawing again.

A few minutes later, after he had finished his drawing, he threw the talisman into the sky for the second time.

Again, the talisman turned into a golden ray and disappeared. But this time, the ray was brighter with a hint of silver. It seemed he had improved a bit.

Seeing this, Gerald’s confidence heightened. He felt that he was improving. So if he kept on working he would eventually succeed. Thinking of this, Gerald started his third trial.

Chapter 1633

On his third attempt, Gerald changed the way he did the strokes.

Honestly speaking, this golden dragon pattern was unusual. Starting the strokes at different spots would bring about different outcomes. Only when he found the right spot to start the strokes would he be able to produce the perfect quality talisman.

A few minutes later, Gerald had finished the drawing for the third time.

This time, he had improved a lot.

Although he wasn't able to produce a perfect quality talisman, he had successfully produced a rare quality talisman.

A shiny silver dragon surrounded by golden light gushed out from the talisman and circled Gerald.

"Gerald, how's your practice?"

Just then, Chace came back from work., and he walked into the garden as he asked Gerald.

The next second, Chace opened his eyes wide, and his face changed drastically. He put on a surprised look on his face.

"A rare quality talisman!"

Chace strode forward and shouted as he looked at the silver dragon.

Just as he said that, the silver dragon disappeared before Gerald. The talisman had expired.

Every talisman could only last for a few tens of seconds, one or two minutes at most. Once the time was up, the effect of the talisman would be gone.

"This... Gerald, did you make this?!"

After quite a while, when Chace was finally able to react, he asked Gerald.

Gerald nodded gently and said, "Yes, Master. I made this!"

"How did you manage to produce a rare quality talisman?! Do you already know the strokes used for making rare quality talismans?"

Chace asked Gerald in confusion.

It was impossible for a novice to learn the strokes for making rare quality talismans in such a short time, let alone produce one. He had to learn it step by step in order to reach this stage.

Yet now, Gerald had already produced a rare quality talisman successfully. It was simply mind-blowing.

"Master, I was just practicing here by myself. I kept changing the way I did the strokes, and then I succeeded!"

Gerald explained to Chace calmly.

Chace looked at the wasted talisman papers on the floor. He knew Gerald was not talking big. This was the result of his hard work and practice.

"Come with me to the Great Master Hall. I will take you to meet the Talisman Great Master!"

Chace could no longer bear it and grabbed Gerald's arm as he spoke. The tutor and disciple left the house quickly and headed toward the Great Master Hall.

The Great Master Hall was the residence of the chairman of the Talisman Union, the Talisman Great Master of the Talisman Hall, Chadrick Gibson.

Chace had to report such shocking news to the Talisman Great Master, Chadrick Gibson, and let him grant Gerald the title of One-rank Talisman Scribe.

Soon after, Chace had already arrived at the Great Master Hall with Gerald.

Coincidentally, they met Llyod and his disciple, Nolan Jacobs, at the door.

“Yo, Master Hunt. Are you looking for Talisman Great Master, too?”

Seeing Chace’s arrival, Lloyd sneered.

“Master Griffin, why are you here as well? Didn’t your disciple already get the title of a One-rank Talisman Scribe?”

Chace asked calmly. He wondered why he kept bumping into this man wherever he went.

Chapter 1634

Chace would have a headache every time he met with Llyod because this fellow always liked to annoy him, and he would occasionally mock him. Conversely, he would brag about himself. That was just so annoying.

“The Talisman Great Master has gone into seclusion since a few days ago. That’s why my disciple hasn’t gotten his title yet. I heard he was coming out today, so I quickly came to see him. Master Hunt, are you bringing your disciple to get a title as well?”

Lloyd explained to Chace before he asked suspiciously.

“That’s right! My disciple is very talented. He improves very quickly, so I brought him here to get his title!”

Chase replied with high confidence.

Lloyd was a little taken aback when he heard him. He knew that Chace had just accepted a disciple a few days ago, but now, the disciple was already going to get a title. This was a little too fast in his opinion as his disciple had spent almost two months learning before he was qualified to get a title.

“Master Hunt, getting a title is not a trivial matter. You cannot joke around with it. Are you sure your disciple is qualified for that already?”

Lloyd reminded him, looking at Chace in disbelief.

Of course, Chace knew what Lloyd meant. Lloyd clearly did not believe what he had said.

‘Are you kidding me? Gerald has successfully produced a rare quality talisman, and it is worth mentioning that he did it without any guidance. He learned it all by himself! With such talent and ability, how could he not be qualified?’

But of course, Chace would not tell him the truth about Gerald.

“Haha! Of course I know that. Still, I believe that my disciple will not disappoint me!”

Chace chuckled and replied to Llyod.

After listening to his reply, Lloyd sneered silently in his mind. He wanted to see how Chace embarrassed himself later. He wouldn't believe that Chace's disciple could have succeeded in making a talisman in such a short time.

After a while, the door of the Great Master Hall opened. Chace and Llyod quickly brought their respective disciples into the hall.

An old man wearing a golden silk dragon robe was seated in the hall. He was the Talisman Great Master of the Talisman Hall, Chadrick Gibson.

"Chace, Lloyd, why are you here?"

Seeing them, Chadrick asked slowly.

"Great Master, I brought my disciple to report to you about his success and to get the title of One-rank Talisman Scribe for him!"

Without waiting for Chace to open his mouth, Lloyd grabbed the chance to speak to Chadrick first.

"Oh? What kind of talisman has your disciple managed to produce?" Chadrick asked again.

To get the rank of a Talisman Scribe, one must get recognition from the Talisman Great Master first.

"Great Master, my disciple, Nolan Jacobs, is able to produce high-grade middle-quality secret technique talisman!" Lloyd replied immediately, his face full of unconcealable pride.

“Hmm. High-grade middle-quality talisman. Not bad. He is indeed talented. Alright, I agree to grant your disciple the title of a One-rank Talisman Scribe. You can go to the hall now and proceed with the registration.”

Upon hearing that, Chadrick nodded in satisfaction and said.

Frankly speaking, a One-rank Talisman Scribe was only able to produce a high-grade middle-quality talisman at most.

“Thank you, Great Master!”

Lloyd and his disciple, Nolan, immediately thanked the Talisman Great Master.

“Chace, what about you? Are you here to get a title for your disciple as well?”

Chadrick then looked at Chace and asked.

“Yes, Great Master. My disciple is called Gerald Crawford. He is already able to produce a high-quality secret technique talisman!”

Chace told Chadrick right away.

Chapter 1635

Hearing this, Lloyd and his disciple, who was leaving, stopped in their tracks.

Lloyd turned around quickly and stared at Chace in great disbelief.

“What are you saying? Your disciple can produce a high quality talisman?!” Lloyd asked suspiciously. He did not believe in Chace’s words.

From what he knew, Chace’s disciple had only studied for a few days. How could it be possible that he was able to produce a high quality secret technique talisman? In fact, his disciple was only able to produce a middle-quality talisman after studying for almost two months.

Nevertheless, just because his disciple couldn’t do it, it didn’t mean that Gerald couldn’t do it either.

“Chace, how long has your disciple been following you?” Chadrick asked.

“Five days, Great Master.”

Chace answered honestly.

“Impossible!”

“Great Master, this is absolutely impossible. Chace must be lying to you. How is it possible that his disciple can produce a high quality talisman after learning for just five days?!”

Before Chadrick could say anything, Lloyd was already shouting angrily at Chadrick. He did not believe it at all.

Chace couldn’t help but frown. His face darkened, and he turned to Lloyd.

“Master Griffin, just because your disciple cannot do it, it doesn’t mean that my disciple cannot do it too. I told you before that my disciple is very talented!”

Lloyd’s doubt of Gerald was similar to doubting his own ability, so Chace would not just let Lloyd criticize Gerald.

Besides, Gerald indeed had the ability to do so. He had witnessed it himself. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have come to see the Talisman Great Master. Was he that free?

“Lloyd, be quiet!”

Chadrick’s face darkened, and he ordered Lloyd sternly.

Lloyd did not dare to make a sound anymore, and he quieted down immediately, shutting his mouth tightly.

“Chace, are you aware of the consequences that you will have to face if you are lying?”

Chadrick then reminded Chace. This was no laughing matter, so he hoped that Chace would think about it before making a decision. It was still not too late for him to take back his words.

“Great Master, I, Chace Hunt, would never lie. My disciple certainly has the talent!”

Chace replied firmly to Chadrick.

“Well, since that’s the case, I shall test him myself. If he truly is what you claim him to be, I shall grant him the title of a One-rank Talisman Master!”

Chadrick proposed to Chace after hearing what he had said.

Chace turned around and looked at Gerald, who was standing behind him.

Gerald was calm, not nervous at all.

“Gerald, are you ready?” asked Chace.

Gerald nodded, indicating his agreement to the test.

Seeing Gerald agree to the test, Chace was reassured. He knew Gerald would be able to do it.

Then, Chace, Lloyd, and Nolan stood aside, and Chadrick prepared a brush and talisman paper for Gerald. He put them in front of Gerald.

“My test is very simple. If you can produce a high quality talisman on the spot, you will pass the test! If you fail, it will mean that your tutor is bluffing, and he will be expelled from the Talisman Union. You will both lose your memberships of the Talisman Union!”

Chadrick explained the rules of the test briefly and reminded him about the consequences.

“I understand, Great Master. I shall prove it to you!”

Gerald agreed to it without a second thought.

Chapter 1636

“Alright, let’s begin!”

Chadrick nodded and signaled for him to start.

Once he had said that, Gerald quickly took the brush and started drawing on the talisman paper.

Gerald drew the patterns from his memory. He had decided to give a hard slap to the faces of Lloyd and Nolan so that he could make his tutor proud.

Therefore, Gerald did not plan to produce a high quality secret technique talisman. In fact, he planned to produce a higher quality one, that was, a rare quality secret technique talisman, which was none other than the golden dragon talisman that he had succeeded in doing today.

However, there was one concern he had. He had only succeeded in drawing the golden dragon talisman after practicing a few times. He wasn’t sure if he would be successful this time.

So, Gerald knew that he had to take a chance.

Honestly speaking, producing a high-quality secret technique talisman was not a problem at all to Gerald. He could draw the patterns easily. However, he knew he could not prove his ability too easily. Since he wanted to prove his ability, he had to amaze them.

A few minutes later, Gerald finished drawing the talisman and threw it into the sky.

The talisman turned into a golden ray and disappeared.

It was a failure!

Seeing this, Chace was dumbfounded.

Chadrick cocked his eyebrows, his face darkening, and Lloyd didn't waste the chance to worsen the situation.

"Just as I have told you earlier, Great Master. Chace and his disciple were bluffing!" Lloyd shouted at Chadrick.

Gerald looked very grave. He knew what consequences he would bring to Chace if he failed.

"Great Master, I was too nervous and accidentally made a mistake. Please give me one more chance!"

Gerald begged.

"If you can't do it, you just can't, even if you are given a second chance. Great Master, you must punish Chace and his disciple severely!"

When Lloyd heard it, he barked at Gerald angrily and suggested this to Chadrick.

Chadrick fell into deep thought. In truth, he had somehow guessed what Gerald was drawing on the talisman paper based on his strokes and the pattern, and he had thought that the golden ray was unusual.

"Okay, I will give you one more chance!"

After quite some time, Chadrick agreed to give Gerald another chance.

Gerald and Chace were delighted when they heard that. On the other hand, Lloyd was very irritated and wondered why Chadrick would make such a decision.

Gerald started drawing a talisman for the second time.

This time, he knew he had to succeed, or he would be done for.

Gerald closed his eyes tightly. He was not in a rush to start drawing, but he was searching in his mind on how he had drawn the pattern this morning.

“Just forget it if you can’t do it. Don’t waste time anymore!”

Seeing Gerald hesitate to move his brush, Lloyd sneered at him again.

Gerald opened his eyes wide suddenly and started drawing on the talisman paper like the wind.

Every stroke Gerald drew on the talisman paper looked very strange.

Meanwhile, Chadrick, who was watching the way Gerald did his strokes from above, was shocked at what he was seeing.

“This is...”

Chadrick couldn’t help but feel that the strokes and patterns Gerald was drawing seemed very familiar.

The next second, Gerald finished drawing the talisman. The moment he put down his brush, he threw the talisman into the air.

A brilliant golden ray emanated from the talisman, instantly illuminating the whole Great Master Hall, and a golden dragon surged out from the golden light and surrounded Gerald.

Chapter 1637

“A talisman of perfect quality!”

Chace exclaimed in great surprise when he saw this.

The golden light was shining brightly with the purple qi drifting from the east, and the white mist surrounded them. It was a magnificent scene.

That’s right. Gerald had actually produced a perfect quality secret technique talisman!

“This. How could this be possible?!”

Lloyd, who was standing on the side, could not believe what he was seeing. He shouted with his eyes wide open.

Although he did not believe it, it did not change the fact that it was right before his eyes.

At the same time, Chadrick was equally flabbergasted. He didn’t expect that Gerald would actually produce a perfect quality secret technique talisman as he knew perfectly well that even he himself was unable to do so.

“You. How did you do it?”

Chadrick asked Gerald immediately.

“Great Master, I just kept practicing and exploring. Before I came here, I had already produced a rare-quality talisman successfully!” Gerald answered right away.

Hearing his answer, Chadrick nodded in satisfaction.

“Chace, your disciple is indeed extremely talented. From now on, he will be a One-rank Talisman Master in the Talisman Hall!”

Then, he praised Chace and granted Gerald the title.

A One-rank Talisman Master. This meant that Gerald was now enjoying the same status as a tutor, and this honorable status was very precious. When he received the title as a One-rank Talisman Master from the Talisman Hall, it would also mean that his status would be very high in the whole of Jaellatra.

“Great Master, you...”

Lloyd was naturally the first person who was unwilling to accept this. He approached Chadrick immediately as if wanting to say something.

Chadrick knew what was going through Lloyd’s mind. Without waiting for him to say anything, he stopped him first. “Lloyd, I know what you want to say, but this matter is settled. Alright, off you go now. I still have things to do!”

Lloyd felt helpless, but he could only swallow his anger and leave with his disciple.

As for Chace and Gerald, the tutor and the disciple were overjoyed, thinking that Lloyd was shooting himself in the foot.

After leaving the Talisman Hall, Chace smiled at Gerald and praised him. "Gerald, you are now a tutor in the Talisman Hall! Your future depends on yourself now."

"Master, even though I have become a tutor, you are still my teacher!"

Gerald looked at Chace with an unwavering gaze as he spoke.

As the saying went, once a teacher, always a teacher.

If it wasn't for Chace being willing to accept him as his disciple, how could he have achieved such an accomplishment?

Hearing Gerald's words, Chace felt warm in his heart. He had indeed chosen the right disciple.

Very soon, Chace brought Gerald to report to the Talisman Hall to retrieve the badge of a One-rank Talisman Master. Gerald had indeed become a tutor in the Talisman Hall!

Once everything had been settled, Gerald went to the residence of the Zahn family.

Gerald hadn't seen Nori since the last time she had come, so he wondered what she had been doing over these few days.

Now, Gerald was already a familiar guest of the Zahn family, so no one would stop him from entering and leaving anymore.

When he reached the hall, he saw Yoshua talking to his butler.

“Master Zahn!”

Gerald entered the lobby and greeted Yoshua politely.

“Gerald, you are here. Quick, come and have a seat. How’re your studies at Master Hunt’s place?”

When Yoshua saw Gerald, his face lit up, and he asked Gerald with concern immediately.

Chapter 1638

“Wow, this is the badge of a One-rank Talisman Master. So, you have become a tutor?”

Before Gerald could even reply, Yoshua had already noticed the One-rank Talisman Master on his chest and cheered in surprise.

Yoshua could easily recognize the badge because Chace Hunt had a Two-rank Talisman Master badge.

“Yes, Master Zahn. However, I must thank you a lot for this. It was you who gave me such a good opportunity to become the disciple of Master Hunt and get to where I am today!”

Gerald was an appreciative person. It was only natural that he would be grateful to Yoshua.

“Ha! Ha!”

“It’s not a big deal at all. It’s the result of your hard work!”

Yoshua waved his hand at Gerald as he laughed.

Seeing Gerald successful made Yoshua happy. At least it made him feel that he had not helped the wrong person.

“Oh right, Master Zahn. Why don’t I see Nori anywhere?”

Gerald then asked Yoshua in confusion.

Nori had always stayed by Yoshua’s side. However, she was not with him today, which made Gerald feel very strange.

“Now that you’ve mentioned Nori, she’s been out these few days, saying that she was going to join an expedition to the holy mountain to search for a thousand-year-old panax ginseng.

Yoshua answered Gerald’s query.

“A thousand-year-old panax ginseng? What is that?”

Gerald was confused.

“It’s an ancient herb that only grows once every one thousand years. It’s more precious than ginseng!”
Yoshua explained.

This triggered Gerald’s curiosity. But why hadn’t Nori told him about this? Moreover, why was she interested in this ancient herb? There had to be some unknown secrets in this matter.

“Master! Master!”

Right at that moment, a servant came running from the door hurriedly as he shouted for Yoshua anxiously.

“What happened? Why are you so anxious?”

Yoshua frowned and asked.

“The young lady... It’s about Young Lady and the rest! They met with an accident in the holy mountain! I just heard that there was an avalanche in the holy mountain recently, and a lot of snow fell down the mountainside. The situation is very worrying!”

The servant quickly told Yoshua the news he had just received.

Yoshua was stunned after hearing the news.

“You... You can’t possibly be joking around with this matter?!”

Yoshua questioned him in disbelief. His daughter had left just two days ago, and now, he was already receiving such horrible news. It was truly hard for him to accept it.

Just as he said that, a group of armored men entered through the door.

These men crowded into the house quickly. Among them, there was a leader, and he was wearing a black military uniform.

“Hello, Master Zahn. I’m the captain of the army of Jaellatra, Patrick Wang. I’m here today regarding the matter of the young lady of your family and her expedition team in the holy mountain!”

Patrick stood before Yoshua and told him with a serious face.

Now, Yoshua knew that it was not fake news, but something had truly happened to them.

Yoshua’s legs gave out. Luckily, his butler and servant, who were standing behind him, quickly supported him and prevented him from falling.

On the other hand, Gerald was also very worried. He turned around and left the house immediately. He knew he had to go to the holy mountain and save Nori himself.

Once he had left the residence of the Zahn family, Gerald headed to the main city of Earth Capital. He had to buy some supplies and equipment before heading to the holy mountain. Otherwise, going there alone unprepared was no different than asking for his own death.

After preparing for almost two hours, Gerald was fully equipped.

He returned to the residence of the Zahn family once again, and he saw Yoshua and Patrick, who were just about to leave for the army camp nearest to the holy mountain.

Seeing Gerald come back made Yoshua very surprised.

He had previously thought that Gerald did not want to bother about this matter. But now, seeing that he was fully equipped, he knew that the latter had gone to make preparations just now.

“Master Zahn, I hope I can go save Nori as well!”

Gerald looked at Yoshua and said righteously.

Although Gerald and Nori were not romantically involved with each other, he saw Nori as his best friend.

Now that Nori was in a very dangerous situation, Gerald could not just sit still. He had to go and save her.

“Gerald.”

“Master Zahn, Nori is my best friend. I cannot just leave her alone!”

Yoshua wanted to say something, but Gerald interrupted immediately.

Hearing Gerald’s words, Yoshua felt warmth in his heart, thinking that his daughter had made a good friend.

Since Gerald had the intention to do so, he would naturally choose to say yes.

“Captain Wang, can he join the rescue mission?”

Yoshua then looked at Patrick, who was standing beside him, and requested.

Patrick glanced at Gerald. After hesitating for a few seconds, he nodded. “Yes, he can!”

“Thank you very much, Captain Wang!”

Gerald thanked Patrick as well. He had initially thought that Patrick would not agree to it, but now, it looked like it wasn't the case.

Soon, they arrived at the temporary camp a few miles away from the holy mountain.

Since the weather and condition of the holy mountain were very harsh right now, the rescue team was not able to get close to it. For the sake of safety, they could only build a temporary camp a few miles away from the mountain.

When they arrived at the camp, a group of men was already gathering around a table, discussing the rescue plan.

“Come, let me introduce you. He is a polar expedition expert, Quest Leane. This is a medical expert, Kaleb Wallor. And this is a geologist, Malcolm Laige.”

Once Patrick walked into the camp, he introduced the three who were already there to Gerald.

“This is Gerald Crawford. He will be one of the members of the rescue team this time!”

Gerald greeted them briefly.

“What’s your expertise, Brother Crawford? The trip to the holy mountain this time is not a simple one!”

Quest asked Gerald right away.

“I don’t know anything!”

Gerald replied calmly.

Hearing this, the three immediately cocked their eyebrows and put on a displeased look on their faces.

“Brother Crawford, if you know nothing, I think you should not join the rescue mission this time. We don’t have the extra energy to take care of you!”

Quest proposed to Gerald with a disapproving tone.

The members of the rescue team were mostly experts in some areas, so they certainly did not want someone who knew nothing to join them.

Hearing this, Gerald couldn’t help but frown. He didn’t expect that these people would look down upon him.

“Don’t worry. I don’t need your care nor your help. You should better take care of yourselves!”

Not wanting to be outdone, Gerald refuted.

After that, Gerald turned around and walked out of the tent. He walked to an open space and sat down, packing and checking his equipment.

Quest and the rest did not want to bother about Gerald. It was for the best that Gerald had said that, so they did not need to care about Gerald's life or death.

Chapter 1640

The holy mountain was a few thousand meters above sea level. The higher up the mountain, the lower the temperature and atmospheric pressure would be. Moreover, the condition on the mountain was very harsh now. The wind was fierce, and the snow was heavy. It was very dangerous.

Hence, it could be said that the rescue mission to the holy mountain this time was very risky.

"Everyone, since there will be a Force 6 wind as well as a snowstorm tonight, we have decided to set the departure time at seven o'clock tomorrow morning. I hope that everyone can rest well tonight to conserve your energy!"

Soon, Patrick came and informed Gerald and the rest.

Tonight was going to be a sleepless night.

As the night was getting old, Gerald leaned on his backpack alone and closed his eyes for a short rest.

Just then, he heard something.

Gerald opened his eyes immediately and looked in the direction of the camp Quest and the other two were staying. He saw two figures sneaking out of the tent, and they were acting very cautiously.

Through the darkness, Gerald could see the faces of these two men.

They were none other than Kaleb Wallor and Malcolm Laige.

Seeing this, Gerald couldn't help but chuckle in silence. He didn't expect the two people who had been mocking him this afternoon to be attempting to escape. This was indeed too shameful.

After thinking for a while, Gerald got up and quietly approached the two of them.

"Where are you two going?"

At the next moment, Gerald asked as he appeared behind Kaleb and Malcolm.

Gerald's appearance almost scared them to death. They were so shocked that they fell to the ground.

"You... Why aren't you asleep seeing as it's the middle of the night but instead, you're scaring people here?!"

Kaleb glared at Gerald and shouted with a trembling voice.

"Hah! If I were asleep, how would I be able to see you two escaping?"

Gerald smirked and sneered.

“You... Don’t slander people here. We were just checking the weather!”

At Gerald’s words, Malcolm and Kaleb exchanged glances and refuted, pointing their fingers at Gerald.

“You still don’t want to admit it. How shameless.”

Click!

Right at that moment, the lights came on.

Patrick, Quest, and the rest came out of the tents immediately. They had been awakened by the noise outside.

“What’s wrong?”

Patrick approached them and asked.

“Captain Wang, it looks like you didn’t arrange your men to keep watch at night. These two were in the middle of escaping, and I happened to catch them red-handed!”

Gerald would not hide it for them, and he told Patrick this playfully.

Once Patrick heard him, his face darkened.

Swish!

A figure rushed forward, grabbing the collars of Kaleb and Malcolm's shirts.

It was Quest Leane. He glared at them angrily.

"You cowards! How dare you escape?! I shall teach you a good lesson!"

Quest roared angrily and wanted to beat them up.

Luckily, Patrick and the other men stopped him in time. Otherwise, Kaleb and Malcolm would have been torn apart by Quest. Nobody would have expected this to happen.

"You two, tell me honestly. What is really going on?"

Patrick stopped Quest and asked as he looked at them coldly.

Chapter 1641

"Captain Wang, we... Both of us are just ordinary people! W-we're afraid of dying too, you know...?!" stammered Kaleb as he lowered his head, not even daring to look into Patrick's eyes.

“You...!” growled Quest, growing more infuriated by the second.

“So... Let me get this straight. Both of you are trying to secretly escape just because you’re afraid of dying?” said Gerald as he added more fuel to the fire. After all, he didn’t really have much of a good impression on the duo.

Regardless, upon hearing Gerald’s words, Kaleb and Malcolm were so embarrassed that they could only further lower their heads.

Boiling mad, Quest then suggested, “People like these two... They should be captured, Captain Wang!”

Upon hearing that, Patrick paused for a moment. Turning back to look at Quest, he then casually said, “...Just... forget it... It’s not a crime to fear death!”

Capturing them was a bit unnecessary. After all, the duo hadn’t really done anything illegal to warrant Quest’s suggestion.

Either way, Patrick didn’t really want to force the duo to come along with them so he simply turned back to look at them before saying in a frigid tone, “Whatever the case is, if you’re that afraid of dying, then just leave!”

With that said, Patrick then began leading the others way, leaving Kaleb and Malcolm—who were now free to leave—behind.

To Patrick, having them leave early was way better than allowing the timid and terrified men to stay in the long run. By getting the burdens out of the way early, future unnecessary trouble could definitely be avoided.

Regardless, upon realizing that Patrick was granting them permission to leave, both the delighted men then kowtowed—while facing him—before shouting, “Thank you, Captain Wang...! Thank you!”

Hearing that, Quest made a brief glare at them before sneering and returning to the tent.

Gerald himself couldn't be bothered with the two, so he simply carried his backpack before entering the same tent that Quest had.

Noticing Gerald's presence, Quest—who was still angry with the turn of events—then scowled, “How absolutely infuriating...! I truly hadn't expected them to be this afraid of dying!”

Chuckling in response, Gerald then replied, “Well, it's not like I don't get where they're coming from. After all, the duo has little to no experience in adventuring! With that in mind, it's no mystery why they'd be so terrified of undergoing such dangerous affairs!”

“...Hmm? You say that, but aren't you the same as them? Why didn't you run with them?” asked Quest rather curiously. After all, Quest had initially thought that Gerald was similar to people like Kaleb and Malcolm. As it turned out, however, he had been wrong.

“I'm nothing like them! After all, I'm someone who's training to attain spiritual enlightenment!” replied Gerald in a confident tone.

Upon hearing that, Quest instantly got to his feet before staring at Gerald in surprise. After a few seconds, he then said, “...No wonder you didn't leave! To think that you're actually training to attain spiritual enlightenment!”

“Indeed. Regardless, know that since I have a good friend in the adventure team, I'm heading there to save her no matter the costs! Even if I have to risk my life!” explained Gerald as he looked at Quest determinedly.

Hearing that, Quest nodded in satisfaction before stretching out his hand toward Gerald.

Chapter 1642

“I apologize for my earlier bad attitude. With that said, I hope we can cooperate throughout this rescue mission!” said Quest.

Not one to fuss over such small matters, Gerald was starting to feel that Quest was actually a rather nice person. What more, Quest was a professional adventurer with great courage and an adventurous spirit.

With that in mind, Gerald found himself smiling as he returned Quest’s handshake while saying, “Likewise. Regardless, allow me to formally introduce myself. Gerald Crawford!”

“Quest Leane!” replied Quest with his own smile.

Following that, both of them then began chatting rather cheerfully till they eventually drifted off to sleep at around three in the morning...

By seven the next morning, all fifteen of the rescue team members had already assembled and were ready to set off for the holy mountain.

Being the pioneer of the group, Quest was the first in line, followed by Gerald, Patrick, then the other members of the team.

Fortunately, the weather was rather good, so the rescue team’s journey up the mountain proceeded rather smoothly. Even so, the higher they went, the colder it got. Aside from that, the air pressure was also gradually intensifying.

Sensing that, Patrick and the others quickly made sure to put on oxygen masks. Naturally, Patrick offered one to Gerald as well.

In response, however, Gerald simply said, "It's fine, Captain Wang. I don't need one!"

Such air pressure was nothing to Gerald, and it was evidently nothing to Quest as well since he refused to wear an oxygen mask too. Quest, for one, was a seasoned adventurer, and he was already used to dealing with pressures like these.

Still, he couldn't help but feel slightly concerned over Gerald's safety, so he turned around to ask, "Are you sure you don't want to put one on, Gerald? The pressure's only going to get lower the higher we get, and air will become much scarcer then..."

Hearing that, Gerald simply shook his head before replying, "Don't worry about me. I don't need to wear one!"

Gerald meant every word that he had said. After all, the essential qi in his body actively cushioned the negative effects of the pressure. Due to that, not only was Gerald unaffected by the freezing temperatures, but Gerald was also able to continually maintain his breathing.

With how sure Gerald sounded, Quest didn't say anything else. Even so, he now had a new outlook on Gerald, thinking that the youth was rather different from the others.

Regardless, the rescue team finally arrived at a resting spot after hiking for a little over three hours.

While taking their temporary rest, Patrick double-checked their location before saying, "Alright, we're currently at an altitude of three thousand feet up the holy mountain. From what we've previously gathered, the other adventure team disappeared at around nine thousand and eight hundred feet. With that said, we're only at a third of our journey to where we need to get to!"

"I suggest we try to reach our target location before the weather gets too bad, Captain Wang. After all, the weather conditions up here appear to be much worse than what we had initially anticipated! With

that said, even the slightest change in weather will hinder our progress up the mountain!” said Quest as he looked at Patrick.

While—the remaining—six thousand and eight hundred feet may not sound too bad a hike on paper, it was, in fact, extremely far from where they currently were.

What more, while it had taken the group about only three hours to get to three thousand feet high, the terrain they had to walk through earlier wasn't as bad as what was to come. After all, the higher they went, the more uneven the holy mountain's terrain was going to get. Steep cliffs, for one, would certainly become more frequent, and if they weren't careful, slipping off one wasn't completely out of the question...

With that in mind, the rescue team then set off again after completing their brief rest.

It wasn't long after before the rescue team met with a predicament.

There was no further road to speak of where they currently were! Essentially, that meant that the only way to head forward was to climb a steep cliff before them...

Looking down into the three-hundred-foot deep abyss below him, Gerald could tell that many would definitely feel terror-stricken just from seeing how deep the fall was.

Even so, it wasn't as if the others had any other choice. After all, it would definitely take way too much time and energy for them to head back and attempt to find another road. With that in mind, the steep cliff truly seemed like their only way of progressing.

Thankfully, this wasn't Quest's first rodeo. Quest had scaled cliffs like this before, so it honestly wasn't anything too difficult for him.

With that in mind, everyone then watched as Quest took a rope—with a hook attached to it—before flinging it toward a rock atop the cliff.

After testing how firm the hook had lodged itself into the rock, Quest then easily climbed up the rope...

Chapter 1643

Naturally, scaling the cliff wasn't an issue for Gerald either.

After taking a few steps back, Gerald dashed forward before making a giant leap! Seconds later, the youth then landed right beside Quest!

Upon seeing that, Quest and the others all felt their jaws drop. What immense jumping capabilities! He truly was a person who was training to attain spiritual enlightenment!

Eventually shaking their shock off, the others then quickly began climbing up the rope as well...

It was when most of them had already made their way up the cliff when a sudden roar of thunder could be heard!

Following that, the weather began changing rather rapidly, and soon enough, dark clouds had covered every inch of the sky...

Understanding that the weather was only going to get nastier, Patrick—who was adamant about getting up the cliff last—anxiously instructed, "Everyone, hurry!"

Once everyone had made it to the top, Patrick quickly began climbing the rope as well...

Of course, trouble always came unannounced. The others had considerably worn the rope down, so halfway up, it ended up snapping!

Watching in utter horror as Patrick began falling into the abyss, the other team members instantly began shouting, "Captain Wang!"

Gerald himself quickly untied the rope around his waist before tossing it toward Patrick! Upon coming into contact with the falling man, the rope instantly wrapped itself around him!

Realizing what Gerald had just done, Quest then rushed over to him while shouting to the rest, "Hurry and help him!"

Hearing that, the rest of the team members quickly snapped out of it and began grabbing the rope as well. After a bit of effort, all of them were successfully able to pull Patrick back up...

Thanks to Gerald's quick thinking and actions, Patrick was able to avoid a truly horrible fate...

Though he was now safe, Patrick—who was drenched in cold sweat—still found himself shivering slightly. After all, he had thought that it was all over for him just seconds ago. Panting as he walked over to a rock, Patrick then sat on it to slowly recover his cool.

Seeing that, Gerald then walked over to him before squatting by Patrick's side and asking in a concerned tone, "Are you alright, Captain Wang?"

Still quivering slightly in fear, Patrick then shook his head as he replied, "I... I'm fine... Regardless, thank you, Gerald...! If it wasn't for you, I'd be dead by now!"

In response, Gerald simply smiled subtly before humbly replying, "There's no need to thank me. It's my duty to help a teammate out!"

Despite the touching moment, it was then when snow began falling heavily.

With how frigid the winds were getting, Quest then yelled, "...Things are looking bad. We need to find someplace to settle down first!"

Attempting to scale the mountain in such weather was practically suicide and everyone understood that. While it was true that they were undergoing a rescue mission, it wasn't big enough an emergency for all of them to risk their lives for. With that in mind, the best they could do at the moment was to seek shelter and wait the snowstorm out.

After looking around for a bit, Quest managed to locate a spacious area underneath a steep cliff.

As all of them quickly—and gladly—entered the area to take refuge, everyone heard as Quest suddenly shouted, "...Hey, look there! There are signs that others have stayed here before!"

Upon hearing that, Gerald and Patrick quickly ran over to Quest's side.

True to his words, a pile of burned charcoal could be seen there... It was evident that others had made a fire here before.

"The adventure team could have stayed here before in order to avoid a snowstorm!"

Chapter 1644

After squatting to inspect the pile of burnt charcoal for a brief moment, Patrick then said, "...This is still relatively new. The ones who lit the fire should have stayed here around two days ago!"

Hearing that, Gerald and Quest turned to look at each other. This was good news! After all, it at least proved that the adventure team was still alive two days ago!

"...Alright, let's just take refuge here for the moment. We'll continue our journey once the snowstorm is over!" said Quest as he laid down his backpack before sitting to conserve energy.

While the rest did the same, Gerald chose to continue inspecting the surrounding cliff area instead. After a while, Gerald called Quest and Patrick over.

"Mr. Leane and Captain Wang, I've scouted the surrounding area for a bit and I've found that there aren't any other paths to proceed to. The only way to ascend the mountain from this point on is by climbing. To support that statement, just have a look there. If you squint a little, you can see friction marks! I'm assuming that's where the people from that adventure team hung their rope!" explained Gerald as he pointed at the traces.

After hearing all that, both Quest and Patrick agreed with Gerald's analysis.

"Hmm... Tell me, Gerald, how do you say we should proceed with this?" asked Patrick as he turned to look at Gerald.

"Well, from how I see it, our best option right now would be for me and Mr. Leane to head up to scout ahead. You and the others can wait here for us. Once we've located the adventure team, we'll then reunite with all of you! How's that sound?" replied Gerald.

It was a very steep climb, about thirty feet high. With that in mind, Gerald was afraid that a precarious situation—similar to what Patrick had earlier faced—would repeat itself if too many people went scouting.

Regardless, after hearing that, Patrick then turned to look at Quest before asking, “What do you say to that, Mr. Leane?”

“I’ll have to agree with Gerald. We’ll be scouting ahead then!” replied Quest in agreement.

“Very well, then! Since there aren’t any objections, let’s just go with that!” said Patrick.

Following that, both Quest and Gerald immediately began getting themselves ready. After packing all the necessary equipment into their backpacks, they returned to the thirty feet high cliff...

Looking up, Quest found himself frowning slightly as he asked, “A bit too high for my tastes... How do you reckon we get up there?”

Quest’s concern was warranted since not only was the cliff extremely high, but there also seemed to be very little that looked sturdy enough to be used as leverage. Of course, while Quest found it to be a rather hopeless situation, it wasn’t a problem for Gerald.

“Just leave it to me, Mr. Leane!” replied Gerald with a confident smile as he took out a piece of talisman paper as well as a pen.

“...Hmm? Could... it be that you know how to craft secret technique talismans?” asked Patrick—who had followed them there together with the rest of the team to see them off—in a surprised tone.

As a person from Jaellatra, Patrick definitely knew about talismans, and though Gerald didn't reply, Patrick got his answer when the youth began drawing on the talisman paper!

A few seconds later, Gerald tossed his complete talisman into the air... and just like that, the talisman materialized a golden ladder out of thin air!

"After you, Mr. Leane!" said Gerald as he turned to look at the shocked Quest.

Upon hearing his name, Quest quickly snapped out of his shock and began climbing the golden ladder.

Patrick, on the other hand, still had his jaw gaping wide. He hadn't expected Gerald to actually be a Talisman Master who knew how to make his own secret technique talismans! It made Patrick admire Gerald greatly. What more, it explained why Gerald had been so confident in rescuing those people.

Thinking about it, Gerald's presence was definitely an honor to the rescue team. If he hadn't decided to come along, they would've surely faced much more trouble and possibly even fatalities...

Chapter 1645

After bidding farewell to Patrick and the others, Gerald and Quest then began scaling the rest of the holy mountain.

Though it was still snowing rather heavily—with occasional freezing gusts of wind—Gerald and Quest managed to find a cliffside to proceed under. In other words, they had minimal contact with the actual snowstorm.

As they walked on, Quest found himself asking, "What would you say are the survival odds of the adventure team, Gerald?"

"I can't say for sure, but I think they should still be alive. I'm assuming they're currently trapped someplace on this mountain!" replied Gerald with a hopeful tone.

Gerald, for one, certainly hoped that they were still alive. He couldn't bear the thought of Nori dying in this snowstorm.

Shaking the thoughts off, Gerald then asked, "Regardless, how much progress have we made, Mr. Leane?"

"From what I can gather, we should now be at an altitude of seven thousand and five hundred feet. If that's the case, then we should be two thousand feet from where the adventure team disappeared! Judging from our current progression speed, we'll need about two more hours to reach that place!" replied Quest as he read out the information that his smartwatch was showing.

While they were certainly much closer to the area now, the journey there was still far from over...

At that moment, an ear-piercing roar of thunder could be heard! The sound was so loud that the entire mountain instantly began shaking slightly!

Realizing what was happening, Quest quickly said, "This... This could be the sign of an avalanche!"

Hearing that, Gerald instantly began looking around to survey the area... But to his dismay, there was nothing to shield them against an incoming avalanche! Sandwiched between two stone walls, both of them knew that if they didn't think quickly, they were going to be hit by the avalanche and subsequently thrown into the abyss at the end of the valley! By that point, they'd surely be in pieces!

“There doesn’t seem like there’s anywhere to hide, Gerald...! What should we do...?!” asked Quest rather anxiously.

Despite being a person with abundant adventuring experience, Quest was now feeling slightly terrified in this seemingly hopeless situation.

After a few seconds, Gerald then quickly retrieved his talisman-making kit before saying, “Don’t worry, I have an idea!”

With that said, Gerald rapidly began drawing on the talisman! The second he was done, Gerald then threw it forward, prompting a golden ray of light to envelop both of them!

A shield of light formed just in time as the avalanche came crashing down on them! Thankfully, the golden shield was sufficient in guiding the avalanche away from them, keeping Gerald and Quest safe!

After what seemed to be an eternity, no further sounds could be heard. Still safe underneath a layer of snow, Gerald then cleared out the snow above them... They were safe!

Once Quest climbed out with a huff, Gerald then followed after.

Sighing in relief, Quest—who was honestly still quivering a little—then said, “Thank god you’re here with me, Gerald... Otherwise, I’d surely be doomed!”

Smiling back at him, Gerald simply shook his head in silence before resuming the journey up the mountain together with Quest. It was about an hour and a half later when they finally reached the spot...

Arriving half an hour earlier than anticipated, the area they were in was at an altitude of nine thousand and eight hundred feet. Now much nearer to the mountain’s peak, Gerald and Quest began scanning the area below them. Unfortunately, thick, misty clouds—that were everywhere below them—covered

most of their view. Due to that, neither of them was able to find any hints of what could have happened to the adventure team...

After a while, Quest walked over to Gerald before asking with a deep frown on his face, "...There doesn't seem to be any traces of them being here at all... Could it be that nothing really happened to them here...?"

Chapter 1646

Hearing that, Gerald simply closed his eyes in silence, spreading his divine sense out to scan through the rest of the mountain top...

Sadly, the range of his divine sense was rather limited, so he was only able to scan up to a few hundred feet. Though that wasn't a small range by any means, Gerald still wasn't able to find any traces of the adventure team after quite some time.

Eventually, Quest found himself asking, "...Say... Do you think that the adventure team isn't here because... they've headed further up the mountain...?"

Upon hearing that, Gerald turned to look at Quest. Though the suggestion sounded rather preposterous, it wasn't completely out of the question either. After all, since there were zero traces of the adventure team here, the only other way they could've headed to—without bumping into the rescue team on their way up—was further up the mountain...

"...That could be the case. Since we're already here anyway, let's proceed further up the mountain to check!" replied Gerald in agreement.

With that, both of them then continued scaling the mountain...

Since he could've very well died earlier without Gerald's intervention, Quest now had total trust in Gerald. He felt that as long as he remained close to Gerald, he would surely make it out safely...

Regardless, after walking for a while—with gentle breezes and snowflakes caressing their cheeks the entire time—the duo eventually arrived eleven thousand feet above sea level...

Upon arrival, they were immediately greeted by the sight of a cave. With how pitch dark it was inside, Gerald and Quest found themselves instantly wary of it.

Standing at the mouth of the cave, Quest found himself saying, "How odd... A cave in the middle of nowhere!"

"Indeed... Well, let's go in and have a look around!" replied Gerald as he began walking into the cave.

After a few steps in, both of them took out their glow sticks before activating them. Now having a light source each, the duo then proceeded further into the cave...

Though the cave was quiet, it was also quite damp. With that said, occasional drops of water could be heard every once in a while as they walked on.

Eventually, both of them came to a sudden halt when they saw a faint orange glow from within the cave... It appeared to be the light of a campfire, and the duo could see flickering shadows from time to time.

Looking at each other, Gerald and Quest felt that they must have finally located the adventure team.

After swiftly making their way toward the light source, the duo was greeted by the sight of several sleeping people lying against the cave's stone walls.

Just as they had thought, they had finally located the adventure team! Gerald was made extra sure of this when—after scanning through the people—he saw that Nori was among them!

“Nori!” shouted Gerald.

Hearing that sudden shout, everyone jolted awake, and this included Nori.

Upon realizing who had called out to her, Nori instantly teared up as she cried out, “G-Gerald...!”

Quickly getting to her feet, the girl then ran over before embracing Gerald tightly...

It took her a while to calm down, but once she did, Nori looked at him in surprise as she asked, “But... what are you even doing here, Gerald...?”

Realizing that she hadn’t anticipated him to come over, Gerald then explained, “Well, after finding out that something had happened to you and your adventure team, I came over with a rescue team that was tasked with locating your group!”

“...Does... that mean that you came over just to save me...?” asked Nori as she stared straight into Gerald’s eyes expectantly.

In response, Gerald simply revealed a gentle smile and nodded, not seeing any reason to deny it.

Chapter 1647

Upon hearing that, Nori was instantly overjoyed. After all, the fact that Gerald had come all the way here just to save her meant that he still cared about her.

Still, she truly hadn't expected him to come here in the first place since Nori was sure that she had never even mentioned her trip to the holy mountain to him.

With that in mind, Nori then curiously asked, "...Speaking of which, how did you even know I was here?"

"Well, I found out when I headed to your manor and your father told me about it," replied Gerald.

"I see... But hold on, doesn't the fact that you came here mean that your talisman crafting training with Master Hunt got disrupted?" asked Nori in a slightly worried tone.

After all, it wasn't easy for Gerald to get accepted to be his disciple in the first place. With that in mind, Nori truly hoped that she wouldn't be the reason Gerald lost his chance to continue being Master Hunt's disciple.

To her surprise, however, Gerald simply chuckled before gently patting Nori on the head.

Revealing his First-rank Talisman Master badge—which had been tucked in the inside of his jacket—Gerald then said, "Worry not, I've already become a master! This here is proof!"

"A First-rank Talisman Master Badge?! It's barely been half a month! You really are something else, Gerald!" exclaimed Nori in her disbelief as her eyes lit up.

To think that he was able to attain that rank so quickly... That just showed how capable and powerful he truly was! How admirable!

"Speaking of which, I heard from your father that you came over to look for some ancient herb. The thousand-year-old panax ginseng, if I remember correctly," asked Gerald as he looked at Nori with a curious gaze.

Nodding in response, Nori then said, "That's the one! It's an ancient herb that only grows every few thousand years. Aside from that, it can only be found on this mountain! With that in mind, I followed the others here after hearing that it was about time it grew again! Unfortunately, we met with an avalanche before we were even able to locate it! It's almost as if we were destined to never be able to find it!"

Watching as Nori sighed in resignation, Gerald then thought for a while before replying, "Your lives are much more important! Still, do you have any idea what the ginseng herb looks like?"

"But of course I do!" replied Nori as she fished out a photograph from her backpack before showing it to Gerald.

Looking at it, Gerald was greeted by the sight of a white and pristine flower that had petals that resembled ice crystals. The sight of it alone was enough to make anyone feel that it was something extremely precious. No wonder Nori and the others had been so keen on looking for it...

"What does the herb do?" asked Gerald, feeling that such a rare and valuable-looking herb must have had great practical use.

"Well, it's said that the thousand-year-old panax ginseng can be used to make a kind of pellet known as the rejuvenating pellet! The pellet itself is said to be capable of bringing the dead back to life!" whispered Nori.

"Really?" asked Gerald in slight disbelief.

Though he was a person who was still training to attain spiritual enlightenment, Gerald understood there was still a lot he didn't know about this mysterious world... Even so, a pellet that was capable of bringing back the dead? That was a little too farfetched, even for him. After all, even people as strong as he was weren't able to bring the dead back to life.

Shrugging, Nori then said that it was strictly just a rumor. Even she wasn't sure how authentic that claim was.

At that moment, Quest walked over to the duo before reporting, "After some checking around, I've found that only a few of the team members have suffered minor injuries. The rest are thankfully fine. With that said, we can pretty much pack up and begin leaving this place!"

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"That's great to hear! And I agree, the sooner we leave, the better!" replied Gerald.

Now that they had found the adventure team in one piece, they needed to begin hiking down the same way they had come up with in order to reunite with the rest of the rescue team. Once that was done, they'd begin descending the mountain...

While Gerald was still rather curious about the thousand-year-old panax ginseng, he didn't want to risk everyone's lives just to look for it. Besides, it wasn't even a proven fact that it was really able to revive the dead. With that in mind, the adventure team then began making their way down the mountain.

As the saying went, descending a mountain was always easier than ascending one. Adding that to the fact that Gerald and Quest were providing their aid, the journey downward became much easier to bear. With that in mind, it took the group only half an hour to descend halfway down the mountain.

Ten minutes before they could reunite with Patrick's group, however, a few white mountain wolves suddenly made an appearance!

“W-wolves?!” shouted several of the people from the adventure team as they immediately began bolting down the mountain in fear!

Gerald himself turned to face Quest before instructing, “Quest! Lead the others away first! I’ll deal with these wolves!”

Hearing that, Quest then replied, “Alright, but be careful! Make sure you return in one piece!”

With that, Quest instantly began overseeing that the rest made it down safely. Once most of them were at a safe distance, Quest turned back to look at how Gerald was doing... Only to see all the wolves charging toward the youth!

At that moment, Quest—and Nori who had turned back to check on Gerald—could only stare wide-eyed as Gerald and the wolves plunged down the valley together!

“G-Gerald...!” cried out Nori, her heart filled with excruciating pain as she watched him disappear from sight.

Though Quest was just as shocked by the turn of events, he quickly began dragging Nori by her arm to regroup with the others from the adventure team.

“L-let go...! I need to go look for Gerald...!” yelled Nori as Quest quickly began leading the others back to where Patrick was.

Though Nori tried her hardest to pry free from Quest’s grip, Quest was definitely not about to allow her to put herself in danger. With that in mind, he momentarily tied her wrists with a rope to ease leading her down with the rest.

Despite that, the now teary-eyed Nori still attempted to struggle free of her constraints as she wailed, “Please...! He’s definitely still alive...! Please, let me go look for him...!”

Ignoring her wails, everyone eventually made it back to where the rescue team was...

Upon seeing how depressed Nori looked and realizing that Gerald wasn't present, Patrick found himself asking, "...What's wrong? Where's Gerald?"

Lowering his head, Quest took a moment before replying, "...While descending the mountain, we bumped into a few white wolves... Gerald fought against them to give us room to escape... However, at the very last seconds, all the wolves simultaneously charged at him, and all of them fell into the valley...!"

"...W-what...?" muttered Patrick who was so shocked that he wasn't even able to say anything else for a moment. After all, who could've anticipated for such an accident to happen...?

Even so, the adventure team was successfully rescued. In other words, the mission was a success.

With that in mind, Patrick quickly shook his shock off before declaring, "...Let's descend the mountain first. Once we get everyone to safety, we'll form another rescue team to start looking for Gerald!"

Hearing that, everyone was forced to agree. After all, they were all well aware that they weren't out of danger just yet. What more, there just wasn't enough human resources to launch an immediate search party. With that in mind, the best move at the moment was for them to return to the bottom of the mountain before deciding their next step.

Nobody even knew whether Gerald was still among the living...

As the group began descending the mountain, Gerald himself could be seen lying silently atop some thickets in the deepest parts of the holy mountain...