

The Herb King

The Herb King #Chapter 181 – 190

**The Extraction Process that Scared the Alchemists of the Alchemy Tower - Read The Herb King Chapter 181 - 181
The Extraction Process that Scared the Alchemists of the Alchemy Tower**

Karman Leone raised his head to take a look at what Aethelwolf was doing, but he was stunned when he saw the man nonchalantly smoking. 'What the hell is that guy doing? He is not even taking me seriously! Dammit!'

The old man snorted and looked away immediately. He was afraid that he might lose his cool if he stare much longer at Aethelwolf.

Karman Leone was still in the process of extracting the medicinal liquid of the herbs. He was momentarily distracted by Aethelwolf's lack of concern, but he quickly picked himself up.

Meanwhile, Aethelwolf who was puffing on his cigar finally adjusted his posture. He looked at the herbs in front of him. Normally, Alchemists would only refine one set of ingredients every refining session, but he planned to do ten simultaneously!

With a cigar between his lips, Aethelwolf grabbed the herbs and threw them into the cauldron. His movements didn't stop until all the ingredients were inside the cauldron.

"What the hell is Sir Aethelwolf doing?!"

"He threw all the ingredients inside his cauldron! Some of those herbs require careful extraction since their energy is volatile. It would cause an explosion if something goes wrong in the extraction process!"

The Alchemists were horrified by Aethelwolf's reckless refinement. Everyone took several steps backward and some people even took out their defensive treasures for safety purposes.

Jade Kristine and Johann were also dumbfounded by their teacher's unique method of extracting medicinal properties. If they didn't know who he was, they would have thought that he was a madman.

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“Sir Aethelwolf...” Jade Kristine muttered as she clenched her fists tightly.

With one hand on his cigar and another hand on the Moonlight Frost Cauldron, he summoned his world essence and manipulated it to control the extraction process of the herbs inside the cauldron.

“He is extracting ten sets of herbs simultaneously! This is the first time I have seen someone do it...”

“No Alchemist has ever done this before! Even the most skilled Alchemists have to extract the medicinal properties of the herbs one by one. To be able to extract the medicinal properties of three or more herbs simultaneously, one needs to be proficient in controlling their world essence and Pill Fire to a high degree.”

“Then what about Sir Aethelwolf? The herbs he threw inside the cauldron are almost a hundred!”

After about ten minutes, Aethelwolf has already extracted the medicinal properties of the herbs inside his cauldron. He separated the liquid into ten portions and mixed them evenly. “Eh? That was a lot faster than I thought...” He muttered to himself.

No one knew what was going on since they couldn't see what was happening inside the cauldron. They all thought that Aethelwolf was still in the extraction process.

Another ten minutes later, everyone noticed that Aethelwolf's cauldron was shaking intensely. They also felt that the temperature inside the examination area has increased.

“I think it's going to explode!”

“Everyone, take out your defensive treasures!”

“Turn on the Defensive Rune of the building! Hold those fragile jade vases and don't let them break!”

Everyone was thrown into panic when they saw that Aethelwolf's cauldron was still shaking vigorously.

“What are those guys doing? Why are they running around?” Aethelwolf stared at the Alchemists in amusement.

Karman Leone furrowed his eyebrows because of the commotion. He raised his head and saw that Aethelwolf's cauldron was shaking. He also sensed the intense fluctuation of energy inside the man's cauldron. It felt as if a volcano was about to erupt and this almost made him jump in fright. ‘Damn bastard! Did he plan this to distract me?! This guy is a lunatic!’

The old man calmed his heart, but he still couldn't remove the uneasiness he was feeling. If Aethelwolf's cauldron exploded, he would be injured as well.

Thinking about this, Karman Leone took out a defensive treasure and activated it, but he suddenly noticed that the lid of Aethelwolf's cauldron was emitting a rattling sound and shook fiercely as if a prelude to a disaster.

The old man could no longer control his anxiousness and shouted. "Damn you, Aethelwolf! Stop your refining at once! Your cauldron is about to explode!"

Aethelwolf picked his cigar between his two fingers and calmly blew smoke into the air. He then glanced at the old man and smiled. "Relax. Everything is under my control." He said.

'Under control my ass!' There was steam coming out of old the man's ears as he glared at Aethelwolf.

"Sir Aethelwolf, please stop your cauldron!"

"Sir Aethelwolf, our Defensive Rune might not be able to handle the explosion caused by Level 4 ingredients! Please stop!"

Aethelwolf merely chuckled when he heard their pleas.

Under everyone's horrified gazes, Aethelwolf raised one hand and slapped the Moonlight Frost Cauldron.

Pah!

The shaking stopped after that slap and the cauldron soon became calm once again. The intense fluctuation of energy also turned gentle. It almost seemed like nothing dangerous happened.

"It stopped!"

"We're saved!"

Everyone heaved a collective sigh of relief.

Aethelwolf used a perception skill to see through the cauldron and he saw that there were fifty pills sitting inside.

Seeing this, he put out his Golden Pill Fire. He then took out a bottle of wine and a wine glass.

Karman Leone saw what he was doing and frowned. 'Did he give up? Why did he put out his Pill Fire?'

"Aethelwolf, why did you put out your Pill Fire?" He asked in confusion.

Aethelwolf raised his wine glass and took a small sip before he replied. "Oh, don't mind me. Just continue what you are doing. I'll wait until you finish your first refining session."

"What do you mean? If you want to surrender, just do it already! We all know that you failed to control the energy inside your cauldron! Remove the lid and show us your failed products!" The old man snorted.

Hearing this, Aethelwolf laughed in amusement. "Failed? Are you sure about that? Do you really want me to remove the lid?" He asked while looking at Karman.

The old man felt his heart skip a beat when he saw the unusual look in the man's eyes. "Stop beating around the bush and do it already!" He said in exasperation.

Aethelwolf shrugged as he muttered. "Alright."

He then put his hand on the lid and lifted it.

Everyone narrowed their eyes as they stared at the open cauldron and when they saw what was inside, they all gasped in shock.

"What?!"

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Fifty pills were lying inside the cauldron. It was a sight that has never been seen before!

"He managed to form fifty pills in just one refining session?! I'm dreaming, right? No way!"

"How the hell is that even possible?! How did he do it?"

Everyone was in utter disbelief as they looked at Aethelwolf. The man was sitting on a chair with one leg on top of the other as he held a wine glass in his hand. He was staring at Karman Leone with an amused smile on his face.

Aethelwolf blew smoke into the air before he said in a nonchalant tone. "I didn't want to lift the lid, but you forced me, Sir Karman."

Karman Leone staggered when he saw the pills inside the Moonlight Frost Cauldron. He walked towards Aethelwolf with unsteady footsteps as he muttered. "Impossible..."

The old man grabbed the pills inside the cauldron and felt their warmth. It was a sign that they were just freshly made.

Karman Leone turned his head at Aethelwolf and asked in a low voice. "How did you do it?"

Aethelwolf put his wine glass on the table as he looked at the old man. "I created my own recipe of the Extreme Spirit Gathering Pill. As for the method I used during the extraction process, it is a refining technique that I learned recently." He said with a smile.

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"You changed the recipe of the Extreme Spirit Gathering Pill and improved it all by yourself?" Karman Leone stared at him in shock. He thought that Prince Christopher was a genius, but this man in front of him was on a different level!

To change the recipe of an existing pill requires a team of Alchemists and they would need a long amount of time.

Aethelwolf nodded his head calmly. "You could say so. It wasn't even that difficult. If you want, I can even teach you my recipe." He grinned while crossing his fingers.

Not difficult? Only Aethelwolf could say something like this. The Alchemists could only smile bitterly when they heard his words.

Karman Leone kept his eyes on Aethelwolf. "You're willing to teach us your improved recipe?" He asked.

Aethelwolf leaned on his chair and chuckled. "How about you do what we have agreed upon first? I might consider it."

Karman Leone hesitated for a moment and after thinking for about five seconds, he sighed and nodded his head. "Alright. I will step down from my position and I will assign Administrator Jade Kristine as the new Supreme Director. However, this will take some time and there are a lot of things to do before she could start her job as the new Supreme Director. It would probably-"

Aethelwolf raised his hand which made Karman Leone shut his mouth. "Just do it. You can visit me in my mansion once everything is done. We can talk by then." He said as he stood up from his chair.

Aethelwolf kept the fifty completed Extreme Spirit Gathering Pill and the Moonlight Frost Cauldron inside his storage space.

After cleaning his table, Aethelwolf walked towards Jade Kristine and patted her shoulder. "You can take your Alchemy exam now." He then turned his gaze towards Johann and said to him. "Johann, stay here with Miss Jade. I'll return to the mansion first. You two can go there once the exam is over."

Johann and Jade Kristine nodded their heads absentmindedly. They were still shocked by the events that happened earlier.

"Goodbye, everyone." Aethelwolf left the Alchemy Tower.

Everyone stared at his retreating figure in awe and worship. Even Karman Leone who wanted to tear him apart half an hour ago couldn't help but admire the man. "It seems like I've become too old for this position. New blood might not be bad. No wonder His Majesty thinks so highly of him..." He sighed while shaking his head.

Soon, news about Aethelwolf's overwhelming victory over Karman Leone spread like wildfire. He was now regarded as the best Alchemist in the Leone Empire!

When Aethelwolf arrived at the mansion, he saw a little girl standing at the entrance. She was holding a small bottle filled with a healthy homemade shake. "Papa!" She shouted excitedly while waving her hands.

Aethelwolf got down from the carriage and walked towards the little girl. "Did you miss me?" He asked as he lifted the girl.

Olivia nodded her head. "Mn."

Aethelwolf gently rubbed her head upon hearing this. "How about your learning materials? Have you read the entire thing?" He asked.

Olivia looked away from him and muttered in a whispering voice. "Not yet, but I'm almost done."

"Good girl." Aethelwolf embraced her tightly.

"Sir Aethelwolf!" Hyacinth's voice echoed from behind them.

Aethelwolf turned his head and looked at Hyacinth who was walking towards him.

"Sir Aethelwolf, I received an invitation from Sir Brian Linaza. It is about the Golden Dragon Auction House. There would be an auction tomorrow. Here is the invitation card." Hyacinth handed a golden invitation card to him.

"Oh? I have been waiting for it." Aethelwolf opened the invitation card and read its contents. It was just a normal invitation letter telling him that he was invited to the

Golden Dragon Auction House. There was also a list of items written at the bottom and he believed that they were the auction items.

After reading the listed items, the corner of Aethelwolf's lips rose upwards. "Olivia, do you want to go with me tomorrow? Some of the materials needed to make the necklaces of Kerrin and Alba will be auctioned tomorrow."

Olivia's eyes lit up when she heard this. "Really?"

Aethelwolf nodded his head. "Yes. I will bring a lot of money so we can bid for them." He said.

"I want to go! I want to go with you, Papa!"

"Hyacinth, tell Rendell to prepare all our movable cash. Everything must be handed to me tonight. Go."

"Yes, Sir Aethelwolf!" Hyacinth acknowledged the command and left right away.

After she left, Aethelwolf held Olivia's hand and said with a smile. "Let's go eat some snacks."

When nighttime arrived, Julie Irish came to visit the mansion together with her younger sister, Grace.

"Sir Aethelwolf, Miss Julie, and Miss Grace are waiting for you downstairs."

"Alright. Tell them that I'll be there shortly." Aethelwolf answered.

"Papa, that elder sister is here again. She always comes here to eat our food." Olivia giggled as she looked at herself in the mirror.

Aethelwolf chuckled when he heard her words. He then combed Olivia's hair as he looked at their reflection. "I think she likes to come here just to see you. After all, my Olivia is very cute and adorable." He said.

"Tee-hee!" Olivia giggled happily.

After combing her hair, Aethelwolf brought Olivia with him to meet their visitors.

"Greetings, Sir Aethelwolf!" Grace stood up from her seat and greeted him as soon as she saw Aethelwolf.

Julie didn't even bother to greet him and just nodded her head at him.

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“Papa, that elder sister is not acting like a proper lady...” Olivia whispered. Her voice was not loud, but Julie Irish heard her clearly.

Julie Irish glared at the little girl, but her expression melted when she saw her silly smile. She then moved her gaze to Aethelwolf and said. “I heard that you won against Sir Karman Leone in an Alchemy duel. They even said that you won in an overwhelming manner.”

She was stunned when she first heard this news, but she was able to quickly recover since she already knew that Aethelwolf was an extraordinary individual.

Aethelwolf smiled upon hearing this. “It’s just a friendly duel. I wasn’t even serious during the refinement process.” He shrugged.

“What did you say?” Julie Irish felt that there was something wrong with her ears. Did he just say that he won against Karman Leone when he was still not serious?

Aethelwolf chuckled as he said. “Aya! I mean, Sir Karman Leone was probably holding himself back.”

Julie Irish stared at him and stopped asking about the matter. It seems like he wasn’t even taking the Alchemy Tower seriously. “The Golden Dragon Auction House will be open tomorrow. Have you prepared your money?” She shifted the topic.

Aethelwolf nodded his head. “I have already sent a subordinate to prepare our money. There are a lot of interesting items so I might bid for some of them.”

Hearing this, Julie Irish furrowed her eyebrows. “Interesting items? Do you have some information about the items that they will auction tomorrow?”

Aethelwolf was confused by this question, but he still answered. “Yes. There are some items listed in the invitation letter they sent me.”

Julie Irish was surprised by this. She also got an invitation letter, but there was no information about the items.

The Golden Dragon Auction House never told their guests about the items that they would auction so what does this mean? This means that the owner of the auction house, Brian Linaza, was favoring Aethelwolf!

Julie Irish snorted as she thought about this. ‘That sly fox wants to gain Aethelwolf’s favor...’

Suddenly, Albert entered the guest hall and said. “Sir Aethelwolf, Miss Jade Kristine, and Sir Johann have arrived.”

Jade Kristine and Johann soon entered the room. They just came back from the Alchemy Tower and they were mentally exhausted from the journey.

“Sir Aethelwolf!” The two greeted him respectfully.

“How was your Level 4 Alchemy exam, Miss Jade?” Aethelwolf asked right away.

A beautiful smile blossomed on Jade Kristine’s face as she replied. “I passed the exam, Sir Aethelwolf. I’m now a licensed Level 4 Alchemist.”

“That’s great! Congratulations!” Aethelwolf smiled at her.

“Congratulations, elder sister.” Olivia clapped her hands while smiling widely.

Grace and Julie Irish were surprised by this news, but they also congratulated her.

“Our Leone Empire now has three Level 4 Alchemists. I believe that His Majesty would be happy once he hears this news.” Julie Irish muttered.

“Take your seats first. You two must be tired from the journey.” Aethelwolf said to them.

“Thank you, Sir Aethelwolf.” Johann and Jade Kristine said.

“Miss Julie, I wonder why you are here?” Jade Kristine asked as she curiously looked at Julie.

“I just came here to visit our business partner. You might not know this, but Sir Aethelwolf owns 30% of our wine shops and restaurants. We are also collaborating in the clothing industry.” Julie Irish answered calmly. She noticed that Jade Kristine was strangely hostile toward her. ‘Does she like him?’

“Is that so?”

The two women were staring daggers at each other.

Aethelwolf didn’t know what was happening to them so he just remained silent.

Meanwhile, inside the imperial palace.

Emperor Ragnar was seated on his throne. He curiously looked at the old man in front of him.

“Uncle, what happened in the Alchemy Tower earlier? I heard that Sir Aethelwolf challenged you to an Alchemy duel.” The emperor asked.

Karman Leone sighed and shook his head. "The young man wants me to step down from my position because of Jade Kristine. Apparently, that girl is his student. She has already become a Level 4 Alchemist so I had no choice but to give her the Supreme Director position after I lost the duel against Aethelwolf. I have let down our ancestors. The Alchemy Tower has always been helmed by our Leone Imperial Family, but it seems like we can no longer take control of it."

Emperor Ragnar revealed a look of interest when he heard this. It didn't matter to him if they lost the Alchemy Tower. He believed that Aethelwolf was someone he could trust.

The news about Jade Kristine becoming a Level 4 Alchemist also made him ecstatic. The number of 4th-Grade Pills in the market would soon increase if she starts refining pills.

"No wonder I've received some reports about their unusual relationship. Who would have thought that Miss Jade Kristine is actually Sir Aethelwolf's student? In any case, this isn't a bad thing. We might have lost the Alchemy Tower, but our Leone Empire is steadily getting stronger!" Emperor Ragnar said with a smile.

"Your Majesty, there is something that has been bothering me. I think Aethelwolf isn't just a Level 4 Alchemist." Karman Leone's face suddenly turned serious.

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The emperor furrowed his eyebrows upon hearing this. "What do you mean?"

"That guy managed to form fifty pills in just one refining session! The most number of pills I refined in one session was only four pills and it was a 2nd-Grade Pill, but that guy managed to refine fifty 4th-Grade Pills! Even the famous Level 4 Alchemists in the neighboring empires couldn't do that." The old man said.

"He managed to do that?!" Emperor Ragnar was shocked by this. He wasn't an Alchemist, but he knew how difficult it was to refine pills.

Karman Leone nodded his head seriously. "Didn't you say that Duke Baron spotted someone flying in Lion City? Only Level 5 Espers could do that. I don't think this is merely a coincidence."

Emperor Ragnar stared at Karman Leone in disbelief as he muttered. "You mean Aethelwolf might be a Level 5 Esper and a Level 5 Alchemist? How is that possible? He looks so young..."

Karman Leone shook his head. "Nothing is impossible. Besides, are you sure that he is young?" He paused and said. "I heard about the story of a Holy Spring in the secret territory of the elves. It was said that if you drink a handful of this spring, your physical body will never age and your lifespan will increase by multiple times."

Emperor Ragnar leaned on his throne. "Does the Holy Spring even exist?"

Karman Leone shook his head and sighed. "No one has proven its existence and my speculations might be wrong as well." He then looked at the emperor and said in a stern tone. "Your Majesty, we should be careful around Aethelwolf. This man is full of mystery..."

Emperor Ragnar remained silent. He wanted to say that it was impossible, but Aethelwolf's feats appeared in his mind. 'This is crazy...' He muttered in his heart.

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In the Lassiter Household.

After dinner was over, Aethelwolf brought his guests to his study. He also asked his servants to bring a large barrel of beer to his room.

"Sir Aethelwolf, what is inside this barrel? It smells nice." Jade Kristine asked as she looked at the large wooden barrel.

Johann and Julie Irish nodded their heads in agreement. They were also curious about what he brought for them.

Aethelwolf smiled and walked towards the barrel. He removed the cloth that covered the top portion of the barrel. After removing the cloth, he lifted the lid. "This is a new creation of mine." He said as he dipped a wooden ladle into the barrel. He then filled the empty glasses that he had prepared for his guests.

"I call this beer. A drink that would make you forget your problems. Try it." He added while handing them the glasses filled with beer.

"Papa, can I also have that?" Olivia asked with sparkling eyes.

Aethelwolf rubbed her head gently as he said. "This drink is not healthy for kids and it is highly addictive."

Olivia pouted in disappointment, but she still nodded her head. "Okay."

Grace pointed at herself and asked with an expectant look. "What about me, Sir Aethelwolf?"

Aethelwolf shook his head. "No. Just drink the same homemade shake that Olivia is drinking. It is healthy and it will help you grow faster." He answered calmly.

Grace glanced at the bottle in her hands. It was the homemade shake that was given by Hyacinth earlier. "Fine." She muttered.

"Beer?" Julie Irish was intrigued by this new drink. There was a layer of frothy foam on top and bubbles that rose from the bottom of the glass.

She took a sip. "It tastes good." Her eyes lit up.

"It is wonderful!" Johann exclaimed in surprise.

"How did you make this, Sir Aethelwolf?" Jade Kristine asked.

Julie Irish perked up her ears and moved closer. She was also curious how he had made this drink.

"It's actually quite simple to make, but I'm not gonna tell you." Aethelwolf laughed teasingly. "Don't ask. I plan to introduce this drink to the public." He said.

Julie Irish stared at him with narrowed eyes. 'This guy is intentionally telling this! He knows that I will be interested in this drink so let us have a taste. Dammit! He has so many tricks up his sleeve!'

Aethelwolf gave Julie Irish an innocent smile.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

"Sir Aethelwolf, I have collected all our movable money." Rendell's voice could be heard outside the room.

"Oh? Come inside." Aethelwolf said.

Rendell entered the room and he was surprised when he spotted the people who were together with Aethelwolf. He then walked towards Aethelwolf and bowed lightly. "Sir Aethelwolf, this is the money." He said as he handed a storage ring to Aethelwolf.

"You came at the right time, Rendell. Sit down and drink with us." Aethelwolf said as he kept the storage ring.

Rendell scratched the back of his head in embarrassment. If it was before, he wouldn't dare drink with these people because of the difference in their status. However, things are different now. He is Aethelwolf's attendant! "Thank you, Sir Aethelwolf." He said as he took a seat.

Aethelwolf filled an empty glass for Rendell and gave it to him.

They ended up drinking a lot of beer that night...

The next morning, Olivia squeezed Aethelwolf's cheeks and shouted. "Papa, wake up! It's almost time for the auction house to open!"

Aethelwolf felt a splitting headache the moment he woke up. He rubbed his temples as he slowly opened his eyes. "I should have lowered the alcohol content." He muttered to himself.

Olivia tugged his sleeve and pointed at the people on the floor who were still sound asleep. "Papa, do you want me to wake them up?" She smiled naughtily.

Aethelwolf patted her head as he nodded his head. "Alright. We can go with them to the auction house."

Olivia giggled evilly as she tiptoed towards Johann. She then pulled the old man's beard as she shouted. "Good morning, grandpa!"

Johann was startled awake and he abruptly sat up straight. "Ugh!" He groaned as he held his head. It felt as if someone has bashed his head with a club.

When he opened his eyes, he noticed a little girl who was smiling at him harmlessly.

Jade Kristine and the Urgel sisters also woke up from Olivia's shout.

They all groaned in pain as they rubbed their heads and only Grace looked fine after she woke up.

"Good morning, everyone!" Olivia cheerfully greeted them.

Aethelwolf chuckled as he looked at them. "Drink a glass of water downstairs. You guys drank a lot of beer last night so it is normal to feel a headache. I'll wait for you guys downstairs. You better hurry up since the Golden Dragon Auction House is about to open." He then held Olivia's hand and went out of the room with her.

Johann and Rendell quickly got up and followed them. "Wait for me, Sir Aethelwolf!" He didn't want to be left behind with the ladies.

"Sister, I'll go out first." Grace also stood up and left the room.

Jade Kristine and Julie Irish stared at each other.

"What are you looking at Madam Jade Kristine?" Julie Irish snorted.

"Did you just call me Madam?" Jade Kristine glared at Julie Irish.

Julie Irish ignored her and stormed out of the room.

“Dammit! Do I look that old to you?! I bet you look hideous behind that veil!” Jade Kristine shouted at the top of her lungs.

Meanwhile, Aethelwolf and Olivia were taking an early snack.

“Papa, I think the two elder sisters are fighting.” Olivia said before taking a big bite of her sandwich.

Nom. Nom. Nom. Nom.

Aethelwolf also heard the shout coming from his room, but he pretended as if he heard nothing. “Just let them be. Last night, those two drank the most beer so their head must be hurting so much at this moment.” He chuckled.

“I heard one of them calling out your name earlier.” Olivia muttered.

Aethelwolf revealed a look of interest. “Oh? Who is it?” He asked.

Olivia stared at him, her cheeks were bulging because of the sandwich in her mouth.

After swallowing everything down, Olivia replied. “The elder sister who always wears a veil. She sounded angry when she called your name. I wonder what she was dreaming about last night...”

Aethelwolf’s mouth twitched upon hearing this. He then glanced to his left and right. He heaved a sigh of relief when he saw that no one was there. “Don’t tell this to anyone. If that elder sister learns about this, she might scold you and me.” He whispered.

Olivia nodded her head. “Okay.” She then grabbed a few more sandwiches and devoured them.

Aethelwolf gently rubbed her back. “Eat slowly. No one will steal your sandwiches.”

Nom. Nom. Nom. Nom.

Gulp.

Olivia shook her head as she pouted. “I saw Rendell stealing some of my food yesterday. He might take my sandwiches if I don’t eat them fast.”

Aethelwolf laughed heartily when he heard this.

Aethelwolf's group arrived at the Golden Dragon Auction House. There were already many people seated, waiting for the auction to start. Most of these people were rich merchants and nobles. Only a few of them were solitary experts.

Aethelwolf headed to the front row and took a seat. "Olivia, you can sit here." He said as he patted his lap.

"Okay." Olivia nodded her head and sat on his lap. She then gave him an adorable smile.

Julie Irish sat on the seat to his left, while Jade Kristine sat on the right seat next to him. The others also took their seats around Aethelwolf.

Olivia raised her head and looked at Aethelwolf as she asked. "Papa, when will the auction start?"

Aethelwolf stared at the time on his watch and replied. "Just a few more minutes. The seats are almost fully occupied so it should begin soon."

Olivia crossed her arms as she looked at the stage.

Suddenly, a familiar figure walked to the stage. It was Brian Linaza who dressed formally. After walking to the center of the stage, he smiled at the crowd and said. "Good morning, everyone! Thank you for visiting our Golden Dragon Auction House! Today, we have gathered some of the most valuable items from various places. I hope that you will find something interesting for yourselves. Please take your seats and enjoy the auction!"

Clap! Clap! Clap!

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Everyone clapped their hands to show him some respect.

"There will be fifty items that would be auctioned today. All of the items have already been appraised by the most skilled Appraisers in our empire so you have nothing to worry about their authenticity."

"The first item is a full set of Refined-Rated armor. It is made from..."

"The starting bid is 5,000 gold coins. Every increment must be above 100 gold coins."

A flashy bronze armor was displayed on the stage. Although it was only a Refined-Rated armor, the fact that it was a full set made it even more valuable.

Many solitary experts started bidding for the armor.

This armor might not be appealing to the nobles and merchants, but to people like them who were always exposed to danger, it was something that they needed to have.

“10,000 gold coins!”

“10,500 gold coins!”

“14,000 gold coins!”

Aethelwolf and his group calmly watched the bidding for the armor.

“Albert, invite those solitary experts to our mansion after the auction is over.” Aethelwolf.

Albert who was seated behind him nodded his head. “Yes, Sir Aethelwolf.” He was curious about Aethelwolf’s plan for those solitary experts, but he dared not ask anything.

“Some of them might be dangerous so you have to be careful.” Aethelwolf warned him.

“Don’t worry, Sir Aethelwolf. I’ll take care of it.” Albert confidently replied.

While they were conversing, the bronze armor was already taken by an early stage Level 4 solitary expert who goes by the nickname Fast Sword. This man was quite famous in the Leone Empire because of his sword techniques. Many even tried to invite this man to join their households, but all of them were rejected. He said that he would only serve the person who can cure his wife who was afflicted by a strange illness. Unfortunately, everyone who tried to cure his wife has failed.

Aethelwolf has also heard about the story of this person. He was surprised that he would see such a famous character here. “Other than Fast Sword, there are also some unique individuals present in today’s auction.” He muttered to himself.

Julie Irish moved closer to him and whispered. “Are you interested in that person?”

Aethelwolf turned his head at her. “You mean Fast Sword?”

Julie Irish nodded her head.

“Who wouldn’t be interested in an expert like him?” Aethelwolf smiled.

Julie Irish shook her head. “Do you think it would be easy to invite him? That man’s wife is also an expert like him, but she has been bedridden for many years. Fast Sword even brought his wife to the nearby empires to look for a cure, but it always ended in failure. You might be a great Doctor and Alchemist, but even you might not be able to save his wife. Just forget about it.”

Hearing this, Aethelwolf laughed lightly. He looked at her and said. "People said that Sir Johann couldn't be saved from his illness. They also said that no one can save Sir Julius. However, look at them now."

Julie Irish was speechless when she heard his words. She couldn't even utter a rebuttal since what he said was the truth. They all thought that Johann and Julius were going to die, but they were eventually saved by Aethelwolf.

"Fine. Just pretend that I didn't say anything." Julie Irish said.

"Papa, that man is pitiful. Can you save his wife?" Olivia stared at him with big puppy eyes.

Aethelwolf rubbed her head as he smiled. "Papa will try his best to save that man's wife."

Olivia smiled happily when she heard this.

"The second item is rather special. It is the..."

More items were auctioned, but Aethelwolf didn't bid for anything. He was only there for the materials of the transformation necklace.

Julie Irish and the others raised their bids for the items that they found interesting. Even Albert joined the bidding for the auctioned items.

Suddenly, Aethelwolf adjusted his posture. He looked at the gemstone that was displayed on the stage. It looked beautiful and it even attracted the attention of the ladies in the auction house.

"This gem is excavated in the mines of Vale City. Our Appraisers said that this is a piece of Imperial Jade. It can be used to add more power to your weapons. The starting bid for this item is 40,000 gold coins and every increment must be at least 1,000 gold coins!"

"41,000 gold coins!"

"42,000 gold coins!"

Aethelwolf didn't immediately bid for the item. It was a rare piece of gem so it was very tempting to the noble ladies and gem collectors.

He watched the people bid for the gem and waited for his chance.

"50,000 gold coins!"

“51,000 gold coins!”

The fierce bidding for the gem continued, but Aethelwolf was yet to offer his own bid. He just silently watch the scene with a calm look on his face. Most of the people who were fighting over the gem were rich madams and young ladies. Even the merchants took a step back from the bidding since it was no longer rewarding for them.

Suddenly, Aethelwolf raised his hand and said. “100,000 gold coins.”

His bid silenced the other bidders. He directly added fifty thousand gold coins to the bid as if that amount of money was nothing to him!

“Isn’t that Sir Aethelwolf? I heard that he won against Sir Karman in an Alchemy duel.”

“Why did he bid for that gem? Does he want to put it on his weapon?”

“100,000 gold coins going once!”

“100,000 gold coins going twice!”

.....

“100,000 gold coins for this gem! Congratulations to Sir Aethelwolf!” Brian Linaza smiled as he looked into where Aethelwolf was seated.

Aethelwolf nodded his head calmly at the man. Truthfully, the gem was very valuable, but only high-level Engravers knew of its real value. Unfortunately, there were no Level 4 Engravers in the empire so this rare piece of gem would only end up as a decoration for jewelry or an augmentation gem for a weapon. In the entire Leone Empire, only Aethelwolf could make use of its full potential.

More items were displayed, but Aethelwolf only raised a bid for the materials of the transformation necklace. He showed no interest in the others items until...

“Papa, I want that sword!” Olivia stood up and pointed at the sword that was displayed on the stage. Her eyes sparkled with interest and excitement as she looked at the sword.

It was a Unique-Rated heavy sword crafted by a Level 4 Blacksmith from a distant empire. The sword was as tall as an adult male and its handle has the same thickness as Olivia’s arm. Aethelwolf didn’t know why she showed such interest in a human weapon.

“Why do you want to have it?” Aethelwolf asked her curiously.

“It’s calling me. I can sense it.” Olivia answered mysteriously.

Hearing this, Aethelwolf used his skill [Appraise] on the heavy sword.

Unique-Rated Heavy Sword [Savagery of the Forgotten]

– Crafted by a dying Level 4 Blacksmith. The Blacksmith used his remaining world essence to craft this heavy sword and he also baptized its blade with the flames of...

Aethelwolf was shocked when he read the description of the heavy sword.

“Everyone, this heavy sword was taken from an ancient underground tomb in the territory of the distant Rysandal Empire. Our Appraisers couldn’t accurately identify the runes inscribed on the heavy sword’s blade, but they said that this is a Unique-Rated weapon! If you are lucky enough, you might be able to unleash the power of the runes inscribed on the blade! The starting price for this sword is 10,000,000 gold coins and each increment must be at least 100,000 gold coins!” The moment the sword was introduced, everyone’s eyes lit up with desire.

Aethelwolf glanced at Olivia and then at the heavy sword. She was a Level 3 magical beast so she should be able to wield it with just her physical strength alone. However, if she wants to use the dormant power of the heavy sword, she would have to wait until she becomes a Level 4 magical beast.

“Alright, but you can’t use it to hurt others, okay?” Aethelwolf patted her head.

Olivia nodded her head as she smiled. “Mn.”

“Sir Aethelwolf, are you really going to bid for that weapon for your daughter?” Julie Irish stared at him in surprise. The heavy sword was very expensive and its price was equivalent to more than thirty shops!

Aethelwolf glanced at her and smiled. “Why not?”

Julie Irish didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry. “How could she even wield a Unique-Rated weapon? She is just a child...” She whispered to him.

Olivia raised her head and glared at Julie Irish. “I’m strong! I can carry that sword with one hand!” The little girl said while flexing her tiny arms.

Julie Irish chuckled at the adorable little girl. “Yes! Yes! Yes! Olivia is strong. I’m wrong, okay? Please forgive me.” She said while pinching Olivia’s cheeks.

Ow! Ow! Ow!

Olivia swatted her hands.

While the two were busy, Aethelwolf raised his hand. “20,000,000 gold coins.”

“21,000,000 gold coins!”

“21,500,000 gold coins!”

There were a lot of people interested in the heavy sword so there was a heated bidding for it.

In the end, Aethelwolf still got the sword for a hefty sum.

“Congratulations to Sir Aethelwolf for getting the heavy sword!” Brian Linaza smiled from ear to ear as he looked at Aethelwolf. The man became even more likable in his eyes.

“Thank you, papa!” Olivia hugged his neck and kissed his cheeks.

“Just continue being a good girl and don’t bully other kids when school starts.” Aethelwolf smiled at her.

“Mn.” Olivia nodded her head eagerly.

Meanwhile, a cage was suddenly pushed into the center of the stage. It was covered by a piece of cloth so no one knew what was inside the cage.

“This is the finale of our auction and I’m sure that many of you will resent me for this. However, I do hope that you will understand that we bear no ill intentions for taking out this last auction item. It is a magical creature that is very secretive and remained hidden for centuries. We found it heavily injured deep in the forest so we took it back with us and helped it recuperate. Unfortunately, it immediately attacked our Doctors the moment it woke up and we couldn’t understand what it was speaking since we don’t know its language. We are hoping that someone from this crowd will buy this creature and you can decide what you want to do with it.” After saying this, Brian Linaza gave a signal to the servants to remove the cloth.

When the cloth was removed, everyone was dumbfounded when they saw the humanoid figure inside the cage.

187 Shocking Identity

As soon as the cloth was removed, a devastatingly beautiful woman could be seen inside the cage. She had a long white hair that extended to her feet and her golden eyes were staring blankly into space. She was wearing a white dress and there was a scarf made from the fur of a magical beast called ‘White Wolf’ wrapped around her neck.

This ethereal beauty was sitting listlessly inside the cage like a soulless fairy.

“As everyone can see, this woman is an elf.” Brian Linaza stared at everyone with a smile on his face.

“An elf?!”

“Long pointed ears and a charming beautiful face. She is indeed an elf!”

The crowd gasped in shock as they looked at the woman.

Elves were secretive beings who live deep in the forest and they have never shown themselves for a very long time. How could everyone remain calm when one such being was in front of their eyes?

“Let me give you guys a warning if you are interested in bidding for this elf.” Brian Linaza paused and put on a serious look on his face as he continued. “She might look harmless and fragile, but don’t be fooled. This elf is a Level 4 Esper. I’m telling you this so that no one will blame me if things go wrong.”

“Sir Brian, you brought a dangerous being into our Leone Empire. Have you asked His Majesty’s permission to auction that elven woman?” Duke Baron’s loud voice echoed inside the auction house.

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Brian Linaza glanced at the Duke and replied calmly. “You don’t have to worry about that, Sir Baron. I have already asked His Majesty’s permission to auction this woman. I also invited His Highness Prince Calvin to vouch for me.” Brian Linaza turned his head in a certain direction.

Everyone followed his gaze and they saw the second prince who was seated in the middle seats. He stood up and nodded at the crowd. “Everyone can relax. Sir Brian came to the imperial palace for this matter and His Majesty allowed sir Brian to do as he wishes to the elf. I just didn’t expect that Sir Brian would actually auction her.” The prince said.

Sir Brian nodded at the second prince. “Thank you so much for coming here, Your Highness.”

Prince Calvin smiled as he sat down in his seat.

Duke Baron furrowed his eyebrows. “Then how can you guarantee that she won’t wreak havoc in our Leone Empire? You said that she is a Level 4 Esper. She might cause some chaos if suddenly escapes.” He was responsible for the safety of Lion City so he had to make sure that this elf wouldn’t harm the citizens.

Sir Brian remained calm as he answered. "I know that everyone will be worried about this so I have prepared a special item to ensure that this elf would follow the commands of her master." He pointed at the elf and continued. "There is a metal choker tied to her neck and it is inscribed with a Level 4 Slave Rune. She wouldn't be able to escape the binding power of the rune no matter how powerful she is."

"Level 4 Slave Rune? Man, that is quite expensive! Sir Brian is really going all out this time! I wonder how much the final bid for this elf is going to be."

"Only the top noble households and the upper echelons of the Merchant Association could afford to purchase her. Who do you guys think will get her?"

"Now that I have explained everything, let's proceed with the bidding. The starting price for this elf is 50,000,000 gold coins and each increment must be at least 1,000,000 gold coins!"

"51,000,000 gold coins!"

"52,000,000 gold coins!"

Aethelwolf frowned as he watched the people bid. He came from a peaceful world with no war and slavery. He knew that the Regalis Continent wasn't peaceful, but he was still bothered every time he sees things like this.

Soon, his heart turned calm as a soothing energy enveloped his body.

"She is beautiful so she might end up having a horrible life if she ends up in the hands of someone with a nasty character." Jade Kristine sighed as she looked at the elf. She found her pitiful, but she couldn't do anything to stop the auction since the emperor has already given Brian the permission.

Julie Irish frowned as she looked at the excited crowd. She then snorted in disdain when she saw the looks of greed and lust in the eyes of some nobles.

"This matter is quite suspicious. There shouldn't be an elf in the human territories so how did Sir Brian capture her?" Johann muttered with knitted eyebrows.

Aethelwolf used a perception skill on the elf and he was shocked after reading the description.

Elf Princess [Aenwyn Aracan] Late stage Level 4 Esper

– The crown princess of the Aracan Kingdom. She was innately born with the ability to control nature and her strength will increase when she is in the forest. Born with great providence and...

Aethelwolf was almost blinded by the description he saw. It was like he was reading the character design of a main protagonist.

'Should I bid for her or should I pretend that I didn't see anything?' Aethelwolf was weighing the pros and cons while the bidding continued.

If he bids for the elf, he could try to befriend her and send her back to her homeland. However, the elf might come back to the empire with her elven troops.

Aethelwolf was in a serious dilemma. 'The Aracan Kingdom might be looking for their princess so it wouldn't be good if she is taken by a pervert. The elves might wage war on our empire once they find out about this. I can't let that happen.'

"Papa, that elder sister is saying something in the Language of Beasts." Olivia whispered to him while pointing at the cage.

Aethelwolf immediately looked at the elf when he heard Olivia's words. The elven princess seems to be muttering something, but no one could understand her words.

"Help. Help me. Please help me."

Aethelwolf narrowed his eyes slits. 'Brian Linaza, just what idiotic thing did you do?'

Aethelwolf gritted his teeth and raised his hand. "I bid 100,000,000 gold coins!" His voice was calm, but the people around him sensed that he was furious.

"Sir Aethelwolf, the money we have might not be enough to purchase that elf." Albert whispered to him.

Aethelwolf nodded his head. "I know." He then turned his head to Jade Kristine and the others. "Please lend me your remaining gold coins. I have to get that elf."

Julie Irish frowned as she looked at Aethelwolf. "Why do you want to bid for that elf?" She asked.

Aethelwolf glanced coldly at her and said. "I'll explain everything later. Trust me."

Julie Irish heaved a deep sigh. "Fine, but you have to explain everything to us after the auction." She said.

Aethelwolf nodded his head.

Julie Irish took out a storage ring and handed it to Aethelwolf. The others also handed their remaining gold coins to Aethelwolf. Although they were curious, they decided to remain silent. Since Aethelwolf has already given his words, they could only wait until the auction ends.

After getting their gold coins, Aethelwolf raised another bid.

“110,000,000 gold coins!”

The bidding was still heated and many people were interested in the elf. After all, she was a rare beauty and even her strength wasn't to be underestimated. She could be used as a bed warmer and as a bodyguard. That was what everyone thought.

“140,000,000 gold coins!”

“143,000,000 gold coins!”

Aethelwolf counted all the money he has. He had about two hundred and ten million gold coins including the money he got from the others. He was a bit worried that it might not be enough to purchase the elf princess.

“I bid 175,000,000 gold coins!” Aethelwolf increased the bid by thirty million, shocking the crowd into silence.

It was a lot of money and even the people who were bidding for the elf hesitated. They already could hire more than three Level 4 Espers and they could also buy hundreds of beautiful ladies with that amount of gold coins.

Many people gave up after careful consideration, but there were still a few individuals who raised their bids.

“178,000,000 gold coins!”

“179,000,000 gold coins!”

“181,000,000 gold coins!”

Aethelwolf calmed his heart as he raised his bid. “200,000,000 gold coins!”

This time, no one raised the bid again.

The price was already too high that it had exceeded their limits. They no longer want to be involved in the bidding.

Brian Linaza gave Aethelwolf a bright smile as he said. “200,000,000 gold coins going once!”

“200,000,000 gold coins going twice!”

“Sold! Congratulations to Sir Aethelwolf!”

188 Princess Aenwyn

Aethelwolf remained calm even after winning the bid. He was thinking of several countermeasures in case the elven kingdom would attack them. 'I thought you are smart, Brian! Dammit!' He cursed in his heart.

Brian Linaza was giving a short closing speech and he left after saying the closing remarks. Soon, the guests started leaving as well.

"Wait for me outside." Aethelwolf said to the others before heading to Brian Linaza's office.

Upon entering, he saw Brian Linaza seated on a sofa and the elven princess was standing behind him with a blank look on her beautiful face.

When Aethelwolf entered the office, Brian immediately stood up and shook hands with him. "Congratulations, Sir Aethelwolf. You can take her with you any time. Just let me know if you need anything." He said with a big smile.

Aethelwolf nodded his head. "Thank you, Sir Brian. The payment has already been sent to your treasurer. I still have some matters to take care of at home so I won't stay for long. I'll take her with me now." Aethelwolf grabbed the elf's hand and pulled her next to him. He then turned his gaze to Brian and said. "Goodbye, Sir Brian."

"Just drip your blood into the Slave Rune if you want her to remain loyal to you. She is still under my control at the moment, but you should be able to undo it after dripping your blood into the rune. Farewell, Sir Aethelwolf."

Brian Linaza watched them leave his office and when the door was closed, his eyes narrowed.

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Meanwhile, Aethelwolf went out of the Golden Dragon Auction House.

Julie Irish and the others stared curiously at the elf.

She looked even more beautiful up close and the nearby men were mesmerized by her otherworldly beauty.

"Did you get the other items?" Aethelwolf asked.

Olivia showed him the storage ring on her finger and said. "Papa, everything is in here. Grandpa Johann has already checked them."

“Good! Let’s talk in the mansion.” Aethelwolf turned his head to Albert and said to him. “You know what to do. Bring them to me before nightfall.” He then grabbed the elf’s hand and entered the carriage with her.

Albert bowed his head and left.

Johann and the others also boarded their carriage.

Aethelwolf stared at the listless elven princess and said. “Hello! My name is Aethelwolf.”

The elven princess raised her head in surprise. She looked at Aethelwolf in disbelief as she muttered. “How do you know the Language of Beasts? You are a human so it shouldn’t be possible for you to learn it. Only someone with the bloodline of beasts could understand this language, much more speak it.”

“It is a long story, but before that, I should remove that first.” Aethelwolf pointed at the choker on her neck.

Princess Aenwyn shook her head and replied. “Don’t bother. This is a Level 4 Slave Rune and ordinary Level 4 Espers wouldn’t be able to break it. Besides, that man will know if you try to destroy it.”

“You mean Brian?” Aethelwolf furrowed his eyebrows. “It looks like he has some ulterior motives when he decided to auction you off.”

Princess Aenwyn remained silent at his words.

“Don’t worry. Others might not be able to remove the binding of the Slave Rune, but I’m not an ordinary Level 4 Esper.” Aethelwolf reassured her.

The elven princess turned her head and looked at him deeply. “You won’t gain anything if you free me and I might try to escape once you unbind the seal so why are you helping me? It would be better for you if you just drip your blood into the Slave Rune. That way, you will gain a loyal servant.” Her voice was emotionless but it still sounded pleasant to the ears.

Aethelwolf smiled at her as he replied. “Because I heard you asking for help.”

Princess Aenwyn looked away from him when she heard his words. “Only Level 4 Engravers can take this off from me. Even if you are a powerful Level 4 Esper, you wouldn’t be able to remove it.”

Olivia who was silent the whole time suddenly spoke while holding the Soul Jade on her necklace. “Papa is a Level 4 Engraver. He even made this necklace for me.”

Princess Aenwyn furrowed her eyebrows as she stared at the little girl's necklace. She became even more confused about what was happening. 'This little girl also knows how to speak the Language of Beasts? How is that possible?'

Aethelwolf patted the little girl's head and gently said. "Olivia, it is not good to interrupt when adults are speaking."

"Sorry." Olivia lowered her head. She then took out a cookie from her storage ring and ate in silence.

Nom. Nom. Nom.

"She is my daughter. Please don't mind her." Aethelwolf smiled at the elven princess as he patted Olivia's back.

"Are you really a Level 4 Engraver?" The princess asked while staring at Aethelwolf.

"That's right. Let me remove that and you'll know whether I'm speaking the truth or not." Aethelwolf said calmly.

Princess Aenwyn looked at him silently for a few seconds before she nodded her head. "Alright."

"Please move your head close to me." Aethelwolf said to her. The elven princess obliged and she leaned closer to him.

Aethelwolf touched the runes inscribed on the choker and studied it carefully. He noticed that there was another rune inscribed on the choker other than the Slave Rune. It wasn't a high-level rune, but it was hidden behind the Slave Rune and only high-ranking Engravers would be able to see it. "Level 2 Signal Rune. How did you know that there is another rune in this choker?" Aethelwolf asked softly.

"I'm also an Engraver, but I'm only a Level 3 Engraver. He hid a Signal Rune behind the Slave Rune. I noticed it when they locked the choker on me." Princess Aenwyn replied calmly.

Aethelwolf poured his world essence into the runes and inspected its structure closely. He needed to understand its magical formula so that he would be able to remove it without alerting Brian.

"The Engraver that Brian hired is not that bad. He is quite creative in designing this magic formula, but it is still lacking." Aethelwolf's nonchalant voice entered the elven princess' ears.

Aethelwolf unwrapped the white wolf scarf that was on Princess Aenwyn's neck. "I'll start removing the Slave Rune. Don't move." He said.

Princess Aenwyn nodded her head lightly.

Aethelwolf was able to analyze the magical formula inscribed on the choker.

He then started removing the magic formula while adding his own world essence to the rune. This was to prevent the Signal Rune from activating.

Oliva watched the scene while eating her cookies. She then took out a small bottle filled with homemade shake and drank a huge mouthful.

“More and more elder sisters are around papa now. I wonder who will end up becoming my mother.” She muttered before grabbing more cookies from her storage ring.

Nom. Nom. Nom. Nom.

Soon, Aethelwolf finally managed to unlock the magical formula. He then removed the choker from the elven princess’ neck and kept it inside his storage space.

“It’s done.” He said as he handed the white wolf scarf back to her.

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Princess Aenwyn touched her neck as she looked at Aethelwolf with surprise. She couldn’t believe that he actually unlocked the Slave Rune in just a few minutes. Even the best Level 4 Engravers in their Aracan Kingdom weren’t as fast as him when decoding runes.

“What do you want from me?” She asked as she adjusted her posture.

“Tell me who you are first.” Aethelwolf replied calmly.

Princess Aenwyn glanced at him as she said. “My name is Aenwyn, a High Elf of the Aracan Kingdom. Thank you for your help, Aethelwolf.”

“A High Elf?” Aethelwolf looked at her with narrowed eyes. ‘Why is she hiding her identity?’

Princess Aenwyn nodded her head.

“If I remember correctly, elves have blonde hair and green eyes, while the members of the royal family have white hair and golden eyes.” Aethelwolf glanced at her with a smile.

Princess Aenwyn’s eyes widened as she looked at Aethelwolf. ‘How does he know about this? Our Aracan Family has never come out of the kingdom in the last few centuries. It shouldn’t be possible for a human to know anything about us.’

“Now tell me, how did a member of the elven royal family end up being captured here in our Leone Empire?” Aethelwolf asked calmly.

Princess Aenwyn sighed and looked away from him. “You know a lot about us for a human. You are right. I am a member of the Aracan Royal Family and also the crown princess. Everything was fine at first, however...” The princess recounted her story and Aethelwolf listened silently.

To make it short, the Aracan Kingdom was attacked by a large group of creatures they call ‘Underworlders’. They were beings who lived beneath the surface of the planet, but they suddenly dug their way up for unknown reasons. There were hundreds of Underworlders who came up to the surface and attacked the Aracan Kingdom.

The elves managed to kill every last bit of Underworlder, but the kingdom was still restless even after their victory. They were afraid that the Underworlders might send another army to attack them. Some elves suggested conscripting more soldiers, while some elves proposed an alliance with the human empires.

Conflict sparked because of their differing opinions and it led to the rebellion of an elven prince who was also Princess Aenwyn’s elder brother.

Princess Aenwyn was then forced to escape in the middle of the rebellion, but she was soon captured by Brian Linaza’s soldiers when she came out of the forest.

Olivia walked up to Aenwyn. She was about to hold Aenwyn’s hands when she noticed that there were some cookie crumbs on her fingers. She quickly dusted them off before grabbing the elven princess’ hands. “Elder sister, you can live with us. Papa is a very strong Esper and he has a lot of soldiers. Your elder brother won’t be able to harm you.”

Princess Aenwyn stared at the little girl who was trying to console her and she couldn’t help but smile. “What’s your name?” She asked.

“Olivia.” The little girl answered with a beaming smile.

“Olivia, our Aracan Kingdom might be small but we have four Level 5 Espers overseeing the safety of the kingdom and three of them are supporting my elder brother.” Princess Aenwyn muttered as she caressed Olivia’s face.

“Yikes!” Olivia retracted her hands and immediately hid behind Aethelwolf.

“Don’t worry, Aethelwolf. My brother doesn’t know that I’m here. The whole Aracan Kingdom might be even thinking that their crown princess is already dead. As long as I stay in the empire, they shouldn’t be able to know that I’m here.” Princess Aenwyn said.

“Then what about Brian? Do you think that he has no idea that you are a member of the elven royal family? I believe that guy is up to something. Starting now, you should

pretend that you are still under the binding power of the Slave Rune. Don't speak to other humans and just follow me wherever I go."

Aethelwolf's words made the princess think deeply. She then raised her head and looked at him. "I don't know how to speak the human language so you can rest assured. I'll also follow your arrangements, but you have to remember that I am a late stage Level 4 Esper so you better not do anything strange to me, Aethelwolf." She warned him. She still couldn't fully trust Aethelwolf despite being saved by him. According to their ancestors, humans are good at deception so it was better for her to be careful.

Aethelwolf shrugged his shoulders.

Olivia moved her lips to his ears and giggled as she whispered. "Papa, that elder sister thinks that you are a pervert. Tee-hee!"

Aethelwolf ruffled her hair. "Stop speaking nonsense or I'll cut off your cookie supply."

Olivia quickly covered her mouth when she heard this.

Soon, the group arrived at the Lassiter Household's mansion. It took him a long time before he managed to convince Julie Irish and the others about why he bid for the elf. He didn't tell them about her true identity since it might only make them anxious.

Chapter 190 Nervous Teachers

A few days later, the entrance examination of the Mystic Arcana Institute of Magic officially started...

Aethelwolf was combing Olivia's hair in front of a mirror. "Do you want me to braid your hair?" He asked while looking at her reflection in the mirror.

Olivia shook her head. "No. I don't want to tie my hair." She replied.

Aethelwolf smiled and patted her head. "Alright. Have you studied the notes I prepared for you?"

Olivia nodded eagerly. "Yes! Aenwyn also taught me how to control my strength and I even learned noble etiquette from her."

"Oh? You two seem to have grown close. You even call her by her name now. Aenwyn is older than you and she is also the princess of an elven kingdom so you have to treat her with respect, okay?"

Olivia raised her head and said. "Papa, Aenwyn told me that I can call her by her name. She said that other people might be suspicious if we talk to her politely."

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Aethelwolf pondered for a moment and nodded his head in agreement. "Is that so?"

Suddenly, a voice interrupted them. "Sir Aethelwolf, I believe that you should treat me like a servant in public. After all, everyone knows that I have a Slave Rune on me so they would be suspicious if you treat me differently. Besides, that person called Brian might sense that something is wrong so we should be careful in public."

"Good morning, Aenwyn!" Olivia waved her hand and excitedly jogged towards Aenwyn.

Aethelwolf turned his head and saw the white-haired elven princess. She was wearing a black custom-made guard's uniform with the Lassiter Household's symbol embroidered on the left chest area. It has some golden trims in some parts that accentuated the black fabric.

Aenwyn looked like a dignified warrior and coupled with her expressionless face, she looked like an unapproachable icy beauty.

Aethelwolf walked up to her and smiled. "Good morning. Did you have trouble adjusting well to our empire?"

Aenwyn shook her head and replied in a calm voice. "Everything has been great so far and I learned a lot from your advice so there's no trouble at all."

"That's good. Let's go. We might be late for the exams if we don't leave now."
Aethelwolf said.

"Papa, I'll go to Janrose's room and check if she is ready." Olivia didn't even wait for his reply and went out of the room in a hurry.

Aethelwolf chuckled as he went out of the room while Aenwyn trailed behind him.

"Sir Aethelwolf, are you sure that it would be fine for me to go together with you guys?"
Aenwyn suddenly asked.

Aethelwolf looked at her.

She still had an expressionless face, but Aethelwolf could somehow feel that she was nervous.

He patted her shoulders gently as he said. "Don't worry. You'll be fine."

Aenwyn looked at him and nodded her head lightly.

"Let's go."

Soon, Aethelwolf and the others rode a carriage to the academy.

When they arrived, there was already a long line of people going in and out of the premises.

“Sir Aethelwolf, it seems like there are a lot of applicants, but how come there are only a few people from ordinary families? Look! Most of the people who are here are dressed like nobles and there are only some dressed in plain clothes.” Janrose looked through the windows of the carriage.

Aethelwolf furrowed his eyebrows and looked at the crowd. He noticed that Janrose was right. “Hyacinth, Albert, go with the kids and bring them to their respective examination rooms. I’ll go somewhere else.” He said before going out of the carriage. Aenwyn silently followed him.

“Papa seems to be angry.” Olivia muttered.

“Sir Aethelwolf wants the academy to be fair in taking students so he must be confused why there are only a few applicants who come from ordinary households.” Albert said.

Hyacinth snorted as she said. “It looks like some members of the faculty are causing trouble. They might have pulled some strings to prevent more ordinary families from applying to the academy. How could Sir Aethelwolf not be angry?”

“They must be tired of living. I’m sure that Sir Aethelwolf would kick them out of the academy soon.” Janrose chuckled.

Meanwhile, Aethelwolf entered the faculty room. His arrival made the teachers jump up in surprise.

“Greetings, headmaster!” They bowed lightly as they greeted in unison.

Aethelwolf coldly glanced at them and muttered. “Who is responsible for distributing the enrollment notice?”

The teachers glanced at each other in silence. They could sense that the headmaster was displeased.

A moment later, Madilyn Urgel who was dressed in formal attire stepped forward and said. “Headmaster, the team responsible for distributing the enrollment notice is Sir Joseph Maynard’s group. Is there anything wrong?”

“Joseph Maynard?” Aethelwolf furrowed his eyebrows when he heard this name. He then looked at Madilyn and asked her. “Where is he?”

Madilyn stared at the group of teachers before turning her gaze back to Aethelwolf. "Sir Joseph is not here yet, headmaster."

Aethelwolf checked the time on his watch and frowned. "It's almost time for the examination to start. Why is he not here yet?"

"Headmaster, Sir Dave Maynard might know where Sir Joseph is. They are from the same group." Madilyn said as she looked at a middle-aged man who was standing nervously behind the other teachers.

Aethelwolf followed her gaze. "Dave Maynard step forward." He uttered coldly.

Dave Maynard glared at Madilyn before walking nervously towards Aethelwolf. "Headmaster." He bowed his head lightly. He might be from the Maynard Household and a Level 3 Blacksmith, but he still felt small in front of Aethelwolf.

"Tell me, why are there only a few applicants from ordinary families?" Aethelwolf asked while looking at the middle-aged man.

Dave Maynard didn't even dare raise his head. He hesitated for a moment, but he still answered stutteringly. "That... Sir Joseph said that there is no need for us to place the enrollment notice in the poor districts or towns so our group decided not to go to those places. Headmaster, I'm only following his commands. I-"

"Enough!" Aethelwolf shouted.

"Who else is part of their group?" Aethelwolf glanced at the teachers who were cowering in fear.

A few seconds later, two people stepped forward nervously.

"Sir Aethelwolf, we are part of Sir Joseph's group, but we didn't dare oppose his commands. We are afraid of his retaliation so we could only follow him."

Aethelwolf grabbed a cigar and lit it up while listening to their excuses. He took a puff and blow smoke into the face of Dave. "You are afraid of his retaliation, so you chose to ignore my commands instead. Have you forgotten the rules we talked about last time? You people are not even treating me seriously. And please remember to call me Headmaster when we are inside the academy. Am I clear?" His voice was calm but Dave and the other two teachers felt their legs becoming weaker as time went by.

"Yes, Headmaster!" The three answered right away.

Suddenly, a brown-skinned middle-aged man with a buff physique entered the faculty room. "Sorry I'm late, everyone. There are a lot of people outside so I had a hard time going here."

Aethelwolf glanced at the man. "You must be Joseph Maynard, the heir of the Maynard Household."

Joseph Maynard's eyes narrowed when he heard this. "How could that be? I'm not as talented as my brother, Enrique so I could only be a second option at best." He said while forcing out a smile.

Aethelwolf revealed a strange smile. He then walked up to Joseph and moved his lips close to the man's ears. "Not if he is dead..." He whispered before he moved away.

Joseph Maynard's expression changed, but he quickly forced himself to remain calm. He then looked at Aethelwolf and for some reason, he was bothered by his smile.

"Sir Joseph, tell me. Why did you not follow what I told you? Could it be that you are dissatisfied that I am the headmaster?" Aethelwolf's tone turned sharp all of a sudden and everyone dared not speak.

The teachers felt as if they were on pins and needles.

Joseph unconsciously took a step back under Aethelwolf's cold gaze. "H-Headmaster, I... I was only thinking about the welfare of the academy. I don't think that there is a need to invite those with ordinary backgrounds since they would only be a waste of resources. We should focus our attention on nurturing the elites sent by the noble households. Most of their young offspring are talented so they don't need a lot of resources. Fur-"

Aethelwolf grabbed him by the neck and lifted him. "I told you guys that we should be impartial to our students and applicants regardless of gender, background, or status!" This time, everyone could clearly hear the anger in his voice.

Ack! Ek!

Joseph grabbed Aethelwolf's arm and tried to escape from his grasp, but the man was holding him tightly so he could only flail his legs.