

The Herb King

The Herb King #Chapter 31 – 40

Read The Herb King Chapter 31

Chapter 31: Leric the Actor

The group stopped by Vale City, a city that was made like a fortress. Tall stone walls about a hundred meters in height surrounded the entire city. There were even large ballistas sitting on top of the walls.

Vale City was a large fortified city South of the capital. Its main task was to act as a natural barrier in the Southern part of the capital.

Looking at the tall walls, Leric was inwardly surprised. He came from a modern world so the sight of the medieval structure made him feel a bit excited. His face still looked normal on the surface, but a plan was already being formulated in his mind. 'Now that I have the identity of Aethelwolf, I have to make use of this to my advantage. The imperial family should know about me by now. They might even send a messenger to the Reynolds Household and offer an olive branch. How should I deal with them? Hmm.'

"By the way, Miss Samira. Can you tell me the condition of your grandfather? I don't have any herbs on me right now so it would be great if we can stop by this city to buy some herbs. I'm an Alchemist, but I'm more confident about my skills in handling herbs and herbal medicine." Leric explained in a clear voice. In truth, he didn't have anything on him right now. Going inside the Reynolds Household without even an herb on him would make him feel unpleasant. As a man who was revered as the 'Herb King' in his past life, only the smell of herbs can make him feel more confident and at ease.

Samira immediately nodded her head when she heard this. "Whatever herb you need, I will purchase it for you, Sir Aethelwolf. About my grandfather... He would be eighty-three years old next month, but it seems like we would skip the celebration again this year. His condition has become terrible. His skin has turned darker with red and purple spots all over his body. He could barely open his eyes now, but some time ago, I saw that his pupils were murky yellow. Grandpa could barely lift his arms and legs so we have maids tending to his needs twenty-four hours a day."

Leric's expression became serious as he listened closely. "Darker skins with red spots and murky yellow pupils... Does the area where purple spots are located swollen?" He asked as he looked at Samira's face.

A look of surprise flashed in Samira's eyes as she nodded her head. "That's right. Grandpa's right leg where most of the purple spots are located started swelling. How did you..."

.....

Leric shook his head and cut off her words as he pondered. "I can't be sure without seeing the patient myself, but based on your description, it should be symptoms of Necrotizing fasciitis. If I'm not wrong, your grandfather has a wound on his right leg, most likely caused by a sword cut or an arrow."

Samira immediately nodded her head while feeling stunned in her heart. How did Sir Aethelwolf guess it? "Your guess is spot on, Sir Aethelwolf. My grandfather received a sword wound in his right leg about a year ago. At first, there were no issues, but his condition worsened as time passed. We asked Lord Karman to check his condition, but even he was stumped.

Leric nodded his head and frowned.

Necrotizing fasciitis is a type of bacterial infection that slowly eats up the tissues in one's body. It can be treated with advanced medical equipment through surgery and antibiotics. However, the infection in Samira's grandfather might be in a worse state by now.

If not for being a Level 4 Esper, Julius Reynolds' right leg would have to be amputated to remove the bacteria in his system. However, Leric had a specific herb in mind that can kill this type of bacterial infection. This herb didn't exist in his past life and he had only read about it in his mother's Book of Medicine and Herbs.

"Miss Samira, I won't explain the medical jargon since they are quite complicated to discuss. We will skip this part and jump straight into the herbs we need for your grandfather's recovery. First, we need a stalk of Blue Mountain Ivy, one piece of Manyana Tree's flower, one stalk of..."

Leric named twelve herbs without even blinking. Among the twelve herbs he mentioned, he only need five of them to treat Julius Reynolds' disease. As for the remaining seven, he would use them for something else.

Samira asked Kathlyn to list down the herbs on a piece of paper.

Samira checked the list of herbs and read it carefully twice. "Sir Aethelwolf, do you want me to send someone to buy these herbs?"

Leric shook his head right away. "There is no need for that, Miss Samira. I have to do it myself since some of the herbs I need have to be of top quality."

He was telling the truth. For instance, the Blue Mountain Ivy has to be one hundred years old and there should be dark blue coloration on the edges of the leaves. The dark blue coloration was the sign of a century-old Blue Mountain Ivy. The two maids and the guards might not know of this so it was better to purchase the herbs personally.

“In that case, please use this card to purchase the herbs. I would be embarrassed if Sir Aethelwolf uses his own money to buy the herbs.” Samira handed a gold-plated card to Leric.

Leric glanced at the golden card with a calm look on his face. He stared at Samira as if he wanted to decline the offer, but the young lady immediately panic when she noticed his hesitation. She grabbed his right hand and placed the golden card on his palm. She did not even give him the chance to reject the card.

Leric laughed in his heart, but he continued his act with a faint sigh. “Since you’ve already given this to me, I will accept it.” He said while forcing out a smile. He looked like someone who had received a gift reluctantly.

This golden card was worth ten thousand gold coins when exchanged to a bank or a trading firm.

The currency used by this world was bronze, silver, and gold coins. Their value goes like this.

1 gold coin = 100 silver coins

1 silver coin = 100 bronze coins

One meal for a commoner family with four members only costs around ten to twenty bronze coins.

The value of one gold-plated card was enormous and most commoners haven’t even seen such luxury in their entire lives.

‘Is this a bribe? Even If I use the perspective of a Level 4 Alchemist, this amount of money is still huge. I didn’t think that the Reynolds Family’s young miss is actually this rich...’ Leric thought in his heart.

Chapter 32: Anna

“Sir Aethelwolf, we will look for an inn inside the city. You can just go to this spot after you gather all the herbs you need. I will have two guards wait here for your arrival and then they will take you to the inn.” Samira smiled and bowed at Leric.

“Alright. I’ll be off then...” Leric waved his hand at her before turning around.

Vale City was a prosperous place of trade and commerce despite it being a fortress city. Many rich merchants can be seen riding their luxurious carriages within the city. Mercenaries and skilled hunters were also among the crowd.

“We sell top grade weapons! Come check our weapons out!”

“Come! We offer the tastiest food in the entire city!”

Leric ignored the shouting shopkeepers and walked forward. As he toured around the city, he kept using the Virtual Map to see any potential threat that might prove to be harmful. After about thirty minutes of walking, Leric stopped in his tracks and sniffed the air. His nose twitched and his eyes twinkled in anticipation. “Finally found an herb shop! Hopefully, they have everything I need.”

Leric followed the smell of herbs and found himself standing in front of a three-story building. The shop looked a lot fancier than all the other shops he saw in the city! From the looks of it, the owner of this herb shop has a powerful background!

.....

“A shop of this scale should have everything I need.” He smiled as he stepped inside the shop.

The two Level 1 Espers guarding the shop made way for him when they noticed his extraordinary presence. They could tell right away that this man had some status based on the way he carries himself.

When Leric stepped inside the shop, he saw an array of herbs neatly placed on the shelves. They were sorted according to their value and importance. There were also some rare spiritual plants and seeds among the merchandise. It seems that he had found the right place to look for herbs!

Suddenly, Leric heard a series of footsteps moving in his direction. He stopped and turned to look at the person walking toward him and saw a young woman who was probably in her late teens. She had long black hair that was neatly tied in a bun. She was wearing a pair of glasses which made her look like a nerdy type of lady.

Leric thought that she was also a customer, but when he saw that she was wearing a navy blue pencil skirt and a matching white top, he realized that she was a staff of this herb shop.

“Good morning, dear customer! My name is Anna, a staff of this herb shop. I can help you look for the items you need if you don’t mind.” Anna smiled as she looked at Leric’s handsome face. She was stunned when she first saw him enter the shop. She hasn’t seen someone as handsome as him during all her time as a staff in this shop.

“Oh? That would be great!” Leric smiled candidly. Getting the help of a staff would shorten his time in looking for the herbs inside the shop.

After hearing getting his approval, Anna’s smile deepened. She was happy that the handsome customer accepted her offer. Her life as a staff in this shop was quite boring and Leric’s presence was like a beam of brilliant light in this dreary place.

“Can you tell me what items you are looking for?” Anna took out a small piece of paper and a quill pen from her storage ring.

Seeing this, Leric was quite surprised. In this world, only the richest and those with powerful backgrounds were capable of owning a storage device. A storage ring is the most sought after since it was very convenient to bring around and its value would increase according to its internal space. From how it looks, Anna doesn’t seem like a normal staff of this herb shop.

Leric proceeded to tell her all the herbs he needed and Anna slowly listed them down. “Do you have all of them in your shop?” He asked carefully. It would be a bit troublesome if some herbs were not available.

Anna pondered for a moment before she smiled at him. “Of the herbs you mentioned, six of them are rare and difficult to come by, but you’re very lucky that we just replenished our stocks so everything should be here.”

Leric’s eyes lit up upon hearing her words. He also heaved a sigh of relief. There was no need for him to look for other shops. “That’s great! I’d like to check the herbs before you wrap them for me.” He said with a crafty smile on his face. Although Anna made him feel a good impression, he wanted to be careful about the herbs since he needed them to save a life. Furthermore, a portion of those herbs was meant for his own use.

Anna squinted her eyes for a brief moment when she heard that. This customer was too careful, but she didn’t mind this. The outside world was dangerous and it was good to develop a certain level of cautiousness.

“Of course! Please wait for me at the counter, dear guest.” Anna smiled with an understanding look.

“Sure.” Leric nodded his head, but he didn’t directly go to the counter. Anna would take some time before she could gather all the herbs. He had given her specific requirements for the herbs so it would take a bit of her time.

Leric went to the second floor of the shop and browsed through the herbs. He saw all sorts of rare and uncommon spiritual plants and fruits. The background of this shop was truly not simple. He even saw an herb that was tagged with a 1000 gold coin price! Absolutely expensive! It was most likely the most expensive herb in the shop!

“To think that they actually possess an herb of this level...” Leric clicked his tongue upon seeing this.

Chapter 33: I Messed Up

Leric walked in front of the herb. It was just a piece of leaf that was bluish-gray in color. The leaf gave off an aura of decay that looked extremely dangerous. The shop even have to seal the leaf inside a glass container that contained sealing talismans, probably to prevent its destructive properties from leaking out.

“The leaf of a Soulscream ...” Leric muttered as he touched the glass container with a fascinated look on his face. He had read about this herb in his mother’s book.

This herb could only be found in the Death Basin Valley, a land of pure death and chaos. The place was filled with death energy, forcing the birth of many mutated creatures and spiritual herbs. The Soulscream was one of them. It is a rare type of spiritual plant that was poisonous in nature. Whoever touches its leaves would show signs of insanity and prolonged exposure would make one’s body decay and will eventually lead to death! Even high-level Espers and Alchemists have to be careful in handling this spiritual plant.

Suddenly, a voice interrupted Leric’s train of thoughts.

“I suggest you not touch that glass container, young man.”

Leric turned around and saw an elder with a hunched figure. His eyes were droopy and he looked sickly pale. With his thin frame and sparse hair, this old man was almost reaching the limits of his lifespan.

Leric recalled his previous self and sighed with a complicated look on his face. If not for the Book of Rebirth that he had chanced upon in his past life, what would have happened to him?

.....

The old man was stunned when he saw the drastic changes in Leric’s expression. He seemed to have shown the vicissitudes of life for a brief moment and if not for his acute senses, he would have failed to notice it. What kind of life did this young man have for him to show such an expression? The old man thought to himself as he slowly walked towards Leric with a cane in his right hand.

Leric immediately walked near the old man when he noticed his intentions. “Elder, you must be the owner of this herb shop. My name is Le- ahem. Aethelwolf, a simple wanderer.” Leric sweated bullets after almost exposing his real identity.

The old man smiled kindly at him. This young man was respectful and humble. He had an extraordinary aura, but he called himself a simple wanderer. What a humble young man!

“Why do you think that I’m the owner of this store? What if I’m just a customer like you?” The old man stared at Leric with a teasing look, wondering how the young man would answer him.

Leric simply smiled and answered confidently. “Elder, you have the smell of high-level herbs on you. Only those who study Alchemy would have this kind of smell. If I’m not wrong, you are a Level 3 Alchemist...”

His words were like thunder in the old man’s ears. How did the young man know about it just by the lingering smell of herbs in his body? Incredible!

The old man was shocked. He glanced at the smiling Leric and shook his head in defeat. “What an observant young man! Indeed, I’m a Level 3 Alchemist and also the owner of this herb shop. My old buddies call me Johann.”

“Oh, so it’s Sir Johann? It’s a pleasure to meet you! I was wondering how you managed to get your hands on that leaf of Soulscream. It’s very difficult to get this herb even for an Alchemist at your level.” Leric wanted to know what kind of expert the one who got the leaf of Soulscream was. With the dangers in the Death Basin Valley, only Level 4 Espers could survive in the central area of that place.

Johann revealed a pained look upon hearing this. In the end, he sighed and shook his head. “It’s quite a long story, but since you want to hear it... I brought an old friend of mine to go with me to the Death Basin Valley to collect some life-extending herbs. On our way to the central part of the valley, we chanced upon this herb by accident. I was able to recognize it with just one look so we decided to take it, but who knew that there was actually a high-ranking Skeleton General near the area? We were forced to fight with this terrifying creature and eventually defeated it with great difficulty. I received some minor wounds back then, but my old friend was struck with a wound that has never recovered until now. I tried all sorts of herbs and pills to help him, but everything failed. We even sought the help of Lord Karman, but he was also mystified. Sigh...”

Leric’s face twitched upon hearing this story. He actually managed to find the friend of Samira’s grandfather! And from the looks of it, this old man named Johann wasn’t just simply an Alchemist. Leric decided to use his observation skill on the old man and was shocked to find out that this guy was actually a Level 4 Esper!

“I’m so sorry for making you narrate such a terrible event, Sir Johann. That was so insensitive of me. This...Uhm... Is the old friend you’re talking about Lord Julius Reynolds?”

Johann was a bit surprised. “Eh? How did you know about it, young man?”

Leric didn't know how he should tell the old man. He had already told him that he was just a simple wanderer. Who knew that this old man was a friend of Julius Reynolds? Now, he had to reintroduce himself.

Leric cleared his throat before he started speaking. "To tell you the truth, I came here with Miss Samira Reynolds for she had invited me to come to the Reynolds Household to check the condition of her grandfather. As for my real occupation, I'm an Alchemist just like Sir Johann."

Johann almost lost his footing when he heard that this random customer was actually an Alchemist and he was even someone formally invited by the young miss of the Reynolds Household! "Aethelwolf, could you show me your pill fire?" He wanted to verify the authenticity of his words and the only way to know about this was by looking at his pill fire. Only Alchemists could summon pill fires!

Leric already expected him to ask for this so he immediately opened his palm.

A bright golden flame slowly condensed on his palm.

Johann staggered in shock and Leric immediately held him to prevent the old man from falling.

"Golden Pill Fire! You- You're a Level 4 Alchemist?!" Johann stared at Leric with a look of disbelief. With his ability as a Level 4 Esper, he could tell that Aethelwolf was a very young man based on the vigorousness of his vitality. Now, such a young person was actually a Level 4 Alchemist! If anyone hears about this, they would certainly find it hard to believe!

Suddenly, he felt that all his hundreds of years of life were wasted in vain. He thought that other than Lord Karman, no one in the entire empire was as talented as him in Alchemy. However, reality slapped him in the face and it was a hard fucking slap!

"T-Tell me... H-How old are you?" Johann grabbed Leric's shoulder and looked at him deeply.

Leric didn't know what to answer. He was still three years old in this life and he only used a skill to change his figure. Should he tell him that? Absolutely not! The old man might die from shock if he knew that he was just a three-year-old child!

"Ah- That... This... I'm twenty-nine this year..." This was the answer he could give based on his current appearance.

"W-What?! Twenty-nine?!" Johann immediately fainted in Leric's arms.

'Oh shit! I messed up!'

CREATORS' THOUGHTS

Malignant Malignant

Hello readers! I just completed my first book, so you can expect more frequent updates for this book. Also, I'll try to write longer chaps this time.

Chapter 34: Blacksmith

Anna read the list of herbs in her hands and checked if she missed something. After seeing that she had gathered everything, she smiled and immediately went to the counter. "I wonder what that guy would use these herbs for. Some of these herbs have strong medicinal properties and they are mostly used to treat severe internal wounds, but the remaining herbs are totally different in nature..."

Anna soon arrived at the counter as she mumbled to herself. She then separated the herbs and placed them individually in small containers before putting them inside a huge box. After doing this, she finally noticed that the handsome customer wasn't present. She furrowed her eyebrows as she checked every corner of the first floor. However, after inspecting the entire floor twice, she didn't even see his shadow. "Did he leave?" She muttered to herself with a dark look.

Anna went outside the store and asked the two guards if they saw the customer leaving the shop, but they told her that they didn't see him going out of the shop.

Anna frowned and walked to the second floor with heavy footsteps. "I clearly told him to wait for me at the counter. Did he become bored of waiting and decided to go to the upper floors?" Her voice contained a hint of annoyance.

When she arrived on the second floor, she checked every nook and cranny but she still didn't see Leric.

"He must be on the third floor. Oh no! He might break the container of the Soulscream!" Anna jogged to the third floor and suddenly paused with a stunned look on her face.

She saw the handsome customer with his right palm facing the sky and her grandfather who was looking at him with an indescribable expression. What made her dumbfounded was the golden flame flickering on top of the guy's palm. It was beautiful!

.....

"Golden Pill Fire!" She yelped and immediately covered her mouth. When she calmed down, she noticed that her grandfather had fainted out of shock and he was now in the handsome customer's arms.

'Waah! Why is it not me in his arms?' Anna cried out in her heart as she sprinted to them.

"What happened?" She feigned ignorance as she looked at Leric's handsome face. This man was a Level 4 Esper! How amazing!

Leric didn't notice her earlier since he was nervous about the old man suddenly fainting after seeing his golden flame. "Miss Anna, don't worry. Just stand back for now." He said as he smiled at her.

Anna nodded her head lightly and took a few steps back. She wanted to see what Leric would do in this situation.

Leric didn't mind this. He gently placed Johann on the floor. He then grabbed the old man's right arm and checked his pulse with his eyes shut tight. He focused his senses on observing the condition of Johann's body.

With his expertise in medicine, he could even cure terminal illnesses that most modern doctors were stumped with. A small fainting case was too easy for him.

'Weak pulse and shallow breathing. No other abnormalities in the body. Wait... I see. Now I know why he is looking for life-extending herbs... What type of parasite is this? It can actually absorb the blood vitality of a Level 4 Esper without dying... The parasite has already attached deeply to his heart and it is almost impossible to take it out by normal means. Hmm... Someone actually forced the parasite to sleep, but this isn't enough to stop the issue. The parasite is still absorbing small amounts of blood vitality in its sleeping state. If it is awake, just how much blood vitality would it absorb? Terrifying...' Leric opened his eyes and stared at the peaceful face of Johann with a look of pity. This old man must have suffered a lot because of the parasite.

He then looked at Anna and asked with a serious look. "Miss Anna, do you know about the shop owner's condition?"

Anna revealed a sad look and nodded her head. "Grandfather once mentioned that there is something wrong with his heart. We invited Lord Karman to check his condition, but he only managed to alleviate his grandfather's pain. His condition is slowly worsening..."

Leric was quite surprised to learn that Anna was actually Johann's granddaughter. It was a good thing that she knew about her grandfather's condition so she wouldn't feel suspicious if he begins his healing procedure later on. "Alright. When I checked his pulse earlier, I noticed that there is a parasite inside his heart. This parasite is absorbing your grandfather's blood vitality, causing his body to slowly turn weak. I'll be doing a healing procedure, but I need to be extremely focused on doing it since the heart is a very fragile organ. I suggest that you close the store for the time being while I do the operation."

In truth, it was not difficult for him to remove the parasite from Johann's body, but he had to be careful since it was his first time doing this operation on a cultivator. A normal person's body does not contain world essence. A cultivator's body contains world essence and they also have a sturdier physique, making it very difficult for a normal scalpel to cut through their skin.

Anna nodded her head gravely upon hearing this. Her grandfather was actually suffering from a parasite living inside his heart! "Please save my grandfather, sir!" She kneeled with a pleading look.

Leric smiled at her reassuringly. "Of course. Don't worry. I'll take care of this."

Anna nodded with tears in her eyes. She then walked away when she saw Leric taking out a bunch of equipment from who knew where.

"Luckily I have a storage skill. Now, I just have to make a scalpel from this knife. And a few other tools." Leric dismantled the knife he got from the army camp.

You have learned the skill [Dismantle]

You have learned the skill [Crafting]

You have gained the talent [Blacksmith]

Three new prompts appeared in his Status Screen, but Leric ignored them for now. He carefully smelted the metal portion of the knife using his Flame Manipulation. He then removed the impurities in them. He had to make sure that the smelted metal was clean and free of any contamination.

After smelting the blade of the knife, Leric got a ball of metal. Now, next was moulding the metal ball into the shape of a scalpel.

He didn't notice that Anna had already returned after she closed the store.

Leric was extremely absorbed in the smithing process and it didn't take long for him to produce a bunch of operating tools. Although the tools didn't look that great, it was enough as long as he could begin the operation.

After making all the tools he needed, Leric cooled them down with his Ice Manipulation skill since they still had the residual heat from the smithing process.

While Leric was smithing, Johann woke up and the first thing he noticed was Leric who was making a bunch of tools. His granddaughter Anna was also there. He signaled for his granddaughter to remain quiet.

'Aside from being an Alchemist, he is also a Blacksmith?! What a prodigy! An absolute genius!' Johann almost fainted again, but luckily, he was prepared this time.

Leric wiped off the sweat on his face and smiled lightly as he looked at the tools in front of him. "Not bad." He muttered and turned to face Johann only to see that he had already woken up.

"Sir Johann, I didn't know that you were already awake." Leric told himself to never craft in an unfamiliar place and to always be careful at all times. It was a good thing that Johann and Anna were righteous people.

Chapter 35: Mixing Poisonous Herbs

Johann smiled kindly at Leric. He knew at this moment that he had to befriend this young genius! At the age of twenty-nine, he was already a Level 4 Alchemist and on top of that, he also showed a refined talent in smithing. Just that he was quite stunned at Leric's smithing technique. It was way different than what he had seen from other Blacksmiths. His skill looks brilliant and he seemed to be at ease while crafting.

"You have truly opened my eyes, young friend. Aside from being an Alchemist, you're also a Blacksmith. Respect!" Johann praised wholeheartedly. This guy was the most monstrous genius he had ever met. Even the crown prince who was known as the brightest genius in the last hundred years might not grow as talented as Aethelwolf.

The crown prince of the Leone Empire, Prince Christopher Leone is now eight years old. He showed a terrifying potential that stunned the whole Leone Empire and some of its neighboring powers. He was now a peak Level 1 Esper and also a newly promoted Level 1 Alchemist!

Johann sighed in his heart while looking at Leric's face. Where did this young man come from? He wondered.

Leric chuckled and shook his head humbly. "It's just a skill I learned when I was in the wilderness. Anyway, Sir Johann, I made these tools just for you."

Johann revealed a bewildered look and then a moment later, he seemed to have understood something. "You saw it, didn't you?" He asked in a calm voice.

Leric nodded his head. "When you fainted earlier, I checked your pulse and noticed that there is something amiss with your breathing. There is a parasite sleeping inside your heart. I have a way to remove it."

.....

His words was like a bomb suddenly exploding, making Johann extremely agitated. "Are you telling the truth? Can you really remove it?"

The old man's body trembled as he grabbed Leric's shoulders. The parasite has plagued his body for many years, but no one has any idea how to take it out. How could he remain calm after hearing his words?

'What a poor old man.' Leric thought when he saw how agitated Johann was.

"Of course. To tell you the truth, I'm a hundred percent certain that I can remove it!" Leric flashed a beaming smile at the old man.

What did he say? A hundred percent? Crazy!

Anna and Johann looked at Leric deeply. If not for this guy being a Level 4 Alchemist, they would have thought that he was a lunatic. It was a parasite that even Lord Karman was helpless about, but now this guy told them that he could take it out with a hundred percent certainty!

Looking at their dubious expression, Leric wasn't offended. He knew that this world was way behind in terms of technological advancement compared to the world in his previous life. They might have many magical spiritual plants and magical fruits here, but most of them didn't know how to properly maximize the medicinal properties of these fine materials.

He dared to say that he was a hundred percent certain because he was confident in his technical skills and also because of the Status Screen!

"I know this might sound crazy, but if you give me a chance, I will prove it to you."

Johann looked at Leric's sincere face before he replied. "In that case, this old man's life is in your hands, young friend."

Even if Aethelwolf failed, Johann knew that he no longer have much time. He might as well place his fate in the hands of this absolute genius. Maybe, just maybe he would be able to remove the parasite!

Anna wanted to say something, but she chose to remain silent when she saw her grandfather's resolute expression.

Seeing that the old man has agreed, Leric smiled at him. He then moved his gaze at Anna and said. "Miss Anna, I will need four herbs for this operation. A tooth of ten-year-old Carnivorous Aster, the leaf of a Venomous Marigold, one flower of Purple Camellia, and the seed of a Flaming Nightshade."

Anna attentively listened to his words and nodded her head after repeating the four herbs in her mind, but she was stunned because all of those herbs were poisonous in nature. She could not help but stare at her grandfather only to see him nod his head. Seeing this, she could only bite the bullet.

While Anna was getting the herbs, Leric grabbed his tools and help Johann stand up. He then handed the old man's cane back to him. "Sir Johann, do you have a room that we could use for the operation?"

"Oh, silly me! I actually forgot about this. Come! Follow me, young friend!" Johann dragged him to a room that was filled with the smell of herbs. There were all sorts of books about medicine and herbs inside the room. From the looks of it, Johann never gave up on finding a way to remove the parasite in his heart.

Soon, Anna came to the room with four jade boxes. Inside those boxes were the herbs that Leric has mentioned earlier. She also brought the herbs that Leric ordered when he came to the shop. "Sir Aethelwolf, inside these jade boxes are the herbs you need for the operation. And this big box is your recent order."

Leric grabbed the big box and placed it inside his storage space. "Thank you, Miss Anna." He then stared at Johann and said. "Let's begin."

Johann nervously lay on top of the bed. He was filled with anticipation and anxiety about the operation.

"Just stay there for now, Sir Johann. I'll prepare the herbs first. You might be curious why I told Miss Anna to gather these four poisonous herbs. Let me tell you the reason." Leric opened the jade boxes one by one as he stated his reason for asking for the herbs.

Johann and Anna didn't blink their eyes as they both listened to him.

"The parasite in your body has a very strong absorbing power. I can't take it out if it is still alive because there is a high chance that it would wake up. If it wakes up, the parasite will immediately start to absorb Sir Johann's blood vitality which is fatal in his present condition. To prevent this from happening, the parasite must be killed in one go!"

"But wouldn't the poison harm grandfather's heart as well?" Anna asked while looking at Leric who was grinding the four poisonous herbs inside a beaker.

Leric smiled as he answered her. "A magical thing will happen if we mix these four herbs and an ample amount of liquified world essence."

Anna and even Johann who was a Level 3 Alchemist were confused.

The four herbs were somehow similar to the four flowers in his past life. He knew everything about them! Although he wasn't sure if the herbs in this world has similar properties to the ones in his past life, the moment he touched the herbs, his gut feeling told him that it was possible.

He wasn't worried that this would fail since he still had some countermeasures in case something unexpected happens.

"A poisonous solution will be created, but with the addition of my liquified world essence, the lethality of the poison towards the human body would be removed!" Leric started pouring his world essence inside the beaker and turned it into liquid form using his newly learned skill.

You have learned the skill [World Essence Manipulation]

Johann and Anna watched as Leric casually turn the world essence into liquid in just a few seconds! They couldn't believe what they were seeing.

Johann could also do the same thing, but he wouldn't be able to manipulate the world essence as skillfully as Leric did!

After liquifying his world essence. Leric took out a small metal rod that looked like a swizzle stick used when mixing drinks. He then stirred the mixture with the metal rod and stopped when it was at the perfect consistency.

The resulting mixture was an eerie dark purple liquid, looking incredibly spine-chilling.

"Alright. It is done. Sir Johann, let's begin the operation." Leric smiled at the old man, but Johann was scared witless as he stared at Leric and the dark purple liquid inside the beaker.

'Good lord almighty, please help me survive this catastrophe.' The old man prayed in his heart.

Chapter 36: Surgery

Johann worriedly stared at Leric who was now holding a giant syringe. It was an item that he has not seen in his life. He wondered what the young man would do with it.

Looking at the nervous old man, Leric chuckled in amusement. This syringe was something that he had prepared when he was still in the camp. Initially, he planned to use it if something unexpected happened to his father during the war. Luckily, his father was unharmed and the syringe was left unused in his storage space.

Inside this syringe was a shot of anesthesia. It was difficult to collect the modern ingredients of anesthesia in this world without the help of advanced tools, so he could only use herbs with similar properties as a substitute.

"Don't be nervous, Sir Johann. This one here is a medicine. We need this for the operation since I need to cut the sternum, ays nevermind. It will be a long story if I tell

you the procedure... This will be a bit painful, but it should be nothing to an Esper like you.”

Johann nodded his head and closed his eyes when he saw that the syringe was about to reach his chest. ‘Good lord!’

Johann felt a light tingling pain in his chest area and soon, the muscles on his body begin to relax starting from his head down to his feet. It was a unique feeling that he had never felt before. What kind of medicine was this? It can actually make him feel calm and less anxious. Even the residual pain from all his ailments suddenly vanished! What a magical medicine!

Normally, a patient has to be unconscious when doing an operation like this, but since Johann was an Esper and an Alchemist, it should be fine. People like him were more accustomed to pain.

.....

Leric took a pair of scissors and started cutting the shirt of the old man. He then cleaned the center portion of his chest using a homemade disinfectant.

After that, he grabbed a scalpel and started the procedure.

He held the scalpel with perfect precision and cut an eight-inch long incision in the midsection of the chest.

Anna who was standing behind Leric covered her mouth as she held her breath.

Leric’s movements looked well-practiced and steady. There were no superficial actions and everything seemed to be calculated.

Johann’s sternum was now visible to Leric’s eyes. Now, he needs to cut his sternum so that he can spread the ribs and get a clearer look at Johann’s heart.

‘Too bad, I don’t have time to make a sternal saw. I can only make do with a dagger.’ He thought to himself as he took out a dagger and sliced Johann’s sternum.

This time, Anna could no longer dare to watch the scene. It was too gruesome for someone who had not seen so much in life.

She looked away and focused her attention on Leric’s face. He looked so confident and calm during the entire time. ‘How handsome...’

After spreading the rib cage, Johann’s beating heart was finally in Leric’s sight. He saw a small worm-like creature wriggling in the old man’s heart. Half of the parasite’s body was already inside the heart.

“Good! At least, it has yet to fully merge with the heart.” Leric mumbled before taking out the beaker where he mixed the four poisonous herbs.

The dark purple liquid rippled as Leric dipped the tip of a small needle within the mixture.

Leric carefully held the needle and pointed it straight to the parasite’s exposed body. This poisonous mixture was enough to kill it in just one breath!

When the small needle laced with poison pierced the parasite’s body, it didn’t even manage to struggle before it died right away.

Johann suddenly felt relaxed after the parasite was killed. It felt as if a heavy boulder was lifted off his chest. How refreshing!

Not long after, Leric removed the dead parasite from Johann’s heart. He then placed it inside a glass container before putting it away.

The dead parasite looked extremely appalling.

While Anna was looking at the parasite inside the glass container, Leric was connecting the two halves of the sternum using a strong wire.

He thought that the operation would be difficult, but it seemed like he had underestimated himself.

After stitching back the chest, Leric removed the surgical gloves in his hands and wiped off his sweat using a clean towel. “Done!” He muttered with a smile.

Although the process looked easy, it still took him over two hours since he needed to be accurate with his actions.

Johann opened his eyes and the first thing he saw was the glass container with the dead parasite in it. He could not help but feel emotional as he stared at the creature. “It’s finally over...” He muttered with a trembling voice.

“Sir Johann, please don’t get up for now. You just had a major operation so it’s best if you take a rest for a day. You can also consume healing pills to hasten the regeneration of your body.” A calm voice drifted to his ears.

Oh, right! This guy saved my life...

“Thank you, Sir Aethelwolf! Thank you very much!” Johann’s eyes watered as he looked at the face of his benefactor.

He no longer dared to call him 'young friend'. This man was way above him in terms of Alchemy and even his medical abilities were beyond the realms of humans! Perhaps, even Lord Karman could only choose to bow down to this young genius! The two of them were simply incomparable!

"I'm happy to be of help to you, Sir Johann." Leric smiled at the old man before turning his gaze at Anna.

"Miss Anna, your grandfather is still weak right now so you have to help him recuperate his wounds. Normally, it would take months to recover from this, but since Sir Johann is a Level 4 Esper, he will be fine after a week of rest."

Anna nodded her head repeatedly. "Of course! Thank you so much, Sir Aethelwolf!"

Leric waved his hand and said. "Since everything has been taken care of, it's time for me to leave."

Just as Leric was about to walk away, he felt a strong grip on his right arm. He turned his head and saw Johann holding him tightly.

Seeing this, he immediately helped the old man adjust his position. The exertion of force would make the wound on his chest open up.

"Sir Aethelwolf, we can't let you leave just yet. Please tell us how we can help you." Johann glanced at Leric with genuine gratefulness.

It has finally come. Leric thought to himself but remained calm outwardly.

"There is no need for that, Sir Johann, but if you truly insist, you can visit me in the Reynolds Household after you've recuperated from your wounds. I will probably stay there while I observe the condition of Sir Julius Reynolds." Leric replied. He planned to befriend the Reynolds Household to establish a firm footing in the capital. With their support, he would be set for life!

Johann's face eased up after hearing this. "In that case, I'll make sure to visit the Reynolds Household the moment I recover. Please offer my greetings to Young Miss Samira. Anna, go and escort Sir Aethelwolf out of the shop."

"Alright." Anna nodded her head immediately.

"Goodbye, Sir Johann." Leric smiled and left the room with Anna.

Johann stared at his figure with admiration. "The young will surpass the old..."

CREATORS' THOUGHTS

Malignant Malignant

You can support this book by sending Power Stones ?? I'll post more chapters if we reach 300 Power Stones this week.

Chapter 37: Chris Maynard

"Miss Anna, how much for the herbs I ordered?" Leric asked while looking at Anna.

She shook her head with a smile on her face. "I won't feel good if I take your money after you helped my grandfather, Sir Aethelwolf. Just take those herbs and think of it as a gift."

Leric frowned. "That would be inappropriate."

"Sir Aethelwolf, please just take it." Anna answered back with a pleading look.

"Alright." Leric sighed as if he was reluctant to do so.

'It seems like I'm a natural actor...' Leric laughed in his heart.

"Sir Aethelwolf, the poisonous mixture..." Anna was embarrassed, but she truly want to get her hands on the poisonous concoction of Leric. It can kill a high-level creature with just a single poke! How scary was that?

.....

Although the parasite was small, it was still a very terrifying creature that almost killed a Level 4 Esper! That means its power was around Level 3 or Level 4. However, it died after being pierced by a needle laced with Leric's concoction!

Anna could use it during crucial times and even her grandfather might have some uses for it.

Leric waved his hand generously. "The materials are yours to begin with. You can have it, but you guys have to be extremely careful when handling that poison. It might be non-fatal to humans at the moment, but sudden changes in the temperature would make it recover its lethality." He warned her with a serious look.

Anna nodded her head gravely when she saw how serious he was. "I'll remember your words, Sir Aethelwolf. Do you want me to tour you around Vale City?"

Leric shook his head. He knew that she was only being polite. "There is no need for that, Miss Anna. Please take care of Sir Johann. I'll take my leave now. Farewell."

Anna stared at his back with gratitude and longing. This man was destined to be extraordinary!

“Goodbye, Sir Aethelwolf...” She muttered silently.

In the end, Leric got all the herbs for free and the golden card that was given to him was still unused. He decided to check the shopping area to see if he could find something useful.

With the [Virtual Map] at his disposal, Leric didn't get lost in the big city. He moved around the streets with great ease as if he had been here for many years.

Soon, he arrived at the shopping district. There were a lot of people buying and selling goods. He ignored the small stalls and went straight into a weapon shop that looked to be famous based on the number of customers going in and out of their building.

When he entered the shop, he saw all sorts of weapons arranged in glass cases. He was amazed by the sight of the weapons and most of them were crafted by skilled Blacksmiths.

Leric could tell it right away after seeing the refined edges and unique style of the weapons. Only Level 2 and higher ranked Blacksmiths could create weapons at that level.

“Hello, sir! Are you interested in buying our weapons?” A pot-bellied middle-aged man with sleek short hair greeted Leric with a smile. He immediately noticed his peerless image among the bunch of lousy customers. This young man had an extraordinary bearing. He was probably someone of high status!

This was what he thought the moment he saw Leric.

This pot-bellied man was Chris Maynard, the manager of this weapon shop. He was an astute businessman with many years of experience in the industry. He had seen all sorts of characters and even talked with many top nobles. However, none of the people he'd ever spoken to could compare to the man in front of him.

Leric glanced at the fatty with a smile. “I'm just looking around.” He answered politely.

“Oh? So Sir is also interested in weapons. If you don't mind, I can bring you to the second floor of the building. All our top weapons are in there.” Chris said with a crafty smile. He was thinking about how he could make this outstanding person stay longer in his shop and know more about him.

Leric revealed a look of interest. “In that case, please take me there.”

“Of course! Of course! Follow me, Sir! By the way, my name is Chris Maynard. I am the manager of this shop. May I know Sir’s name?” Chris stared humbly at Leric.

“Aethelwolf, a wanderer.” Leric replied as he looked around the shop.

“Sir Aethelwolf, you seem to be new in Vale City. I wonder where you came from?” Chris tried to get more details from him.

Leric turned his gaze at the fat manager, making the latter unconsciously shrink his neck. He nervously waited for Leric to answer.

“I came from Barden City. Have you heard of it?”

Chris nodded his head immediately. “Of course! I even heard that there was a battle in Barden City and it was against the Northern Viper Group! That event is a hot topic in the city even until now!”

Chris and Leric conversed as they walked to the second floor.

“We’re here.”

Leric was stunned when he saw the weapons, but he kept a straight face outwardly. The Flame Tiger Army’s weapons were nothing in comparison to the ones in here.

Weapons are classified into five levels according to their rarity and power.

Common

Rare

Refined

Unique

Divine

Common type weapons are normally made by Blacksmith apprentices. These weapons were commonly used by normal people who couldn’t control world essence. The materials used in making them were also easily accessible.

The weapons he got from General Gavin were Rare type weapons. These weapons could handle world essence making them more powerful and they can also increase the strength of their wielder.

Meanwhile, Refined type weapons are very difficult to come by. They were made by high-ranking Blacksmiths and the materials used to make them were beyond ordinary.

The power of these weapons was also astounding making them incredibly valuable. And there were a bunch of these weapons in this weapon shop!

“You even have Refined type weapons in here. I’m impressed.” Leric praised.

Chris smiled from ear to ear upon hearing this. “To tell you the truth, the owner of this weapon shop is a cousin of mine. His name is Enrique Maynard, a Level 3 Blacksmith. You might have heard of him.” He felt quite proud as he said this. The Maynard Household was a family of Blacksmiths and their current patriarch was the only Level 4 Blacksmith in the entire Leone Empire, Count Lucas Maynard! Even the imperial family had to be respectful to him!

Leric was surprised upon hearing this. He knew something about the Maynard Household. He heard his father talking some time ago that he had bought a weapon from a shop owned by them.

Leric stared at the fat manager with a renewed look. You truly can’t judge a book by its cover. Who knew that this big guy actually came from a prestigious noble family?

“Now everything makes sense. Only the Maynard Household can create weapons like these.” Leric stopped in front of a sword. It was placed at the centermost part of the second floor and was displayed on its own. From the looks of it, this weapon was the most valuable in this shop! Leric could also tell that it has almost reached the Unique type, but it still fell short by a small margin. Even so, this weapon was still very valuable!

“That sword is the most prized possession of this shop and also the best creation of my cousin. Although it hasn’t reached the Unique type, its potential is almost there. If you are interested in this weapon, I can sell it to you, Sir Aethelwolf.” Chris gritted his teeth as he offered. He was willing to sell the best treasure of the shop just to befriend Leric!

Leric was silent for a moment, but he still shook his head. “This sword is indeed valuable, but my path isn’t with the sword.” He declined the offer. No way! This sword looks very expensive. He might have a gold card with him, but it would hurt him if he used it for just one sword. Furthermore, he already had the [Blacksmith] talent so he could just make his own weapons. Although it might take him a long time to make weapons at the level of this sword, he was willing to go through with the process.

Chris heaved a sigh of relief internally. In truth, he also didn’t want to sell this sword. He only did it to get closer to Leric.

Suddenly.

“M-Manager Chris! Lord Enrique is injured!”

Chapter 38: Embroiled in a Scheme

A young servant came running toward Chris with an anxious look on his face.

“What did you say?” Chris stared at the young servant nervously.

“Lord Enrique was just crafting a weapon in his smithing room when he suddenly spat a mouthful of blood. I was worried about him so I told him to rest first, but he didn’t listen to me and continued his crafting. Later on, his face became increasingly pale and he spat a huge mouthful of blood. This time, he fainted on the spot. I brought him to his bed, but I’m still worried about his situation.” The young servant replied with a face full of sweat.

“You did a good job in informing me about this right away. Quick! Bring me to see him!” He then stared at Leric and bowed in apology. “Sir Aethelwolf, I’m sorry, but I have to check my cousin’s condition.”

Leric nodded his head gently while waving his hand. “Important matters first. I don’t mind.”

After hearing his reply, Chris immediately left with the young servant.

When they left, Leric sniffed the air and frowned. “This smell... it’s poison!” He mumbled in surprise.

.....

“It seems like I’ve become a witness of a major scheme. If I leave the shop, it will leave a bad taste in my mouth. Tsk!” Leric clicked his tongue as he hesitated whether to involve himself in this plot or not. However, he found himself trailing behind Chris and the young servant.

The duo went inside the room and Leric decided to enter as well.

Chris was surprised when he saw Leric standing behind them, but he chose to let him be and put his focus on his cousin instead.

Lying on the bed was a buff middle-aged man who was probably in his mid-fifties. He had a long wavy black hair and a thick mustache. His face was pale which destroyed his strong image. This man was the owner of this weapon shop, the Level 3 Blacksmith, Enrique Maynard.

Chris furrowed his eyebrows when he saw his cousin’s condition. He reached out to the other party’s arm to check his pulse, but he was pulled midway by someone.

“I suggest you don’t touch him for now, Sir Chris.” Leric muttered with a serious look.

The young servant clenched his fists upon seeing this.

Of course, this small reaction didn't escape Leric's detection. This also made him certain that this young servant was related to the poisoning of Enrique Maynard.

Chris frowned with an agitated look after hearing Leric's words. "What do you mean, Sir Aethelwolf?"

Leric didn't answer him. He squatted near the unconscious Enrique and sniffed his arm. He then stood up and answered in a grave tone. "I'm an Alchemist and I can smell poison in Sir Enrique's body. It is quite potent, but it couldn't kill Sir Enrique since he is a Level 3 Esper. However, his potential will downgrade and his Hegel might also be affected. There is a high chance that he would regress into a Level 2 Esper which will in turn make him a Level 2 Blacksmith as well."

The more Leric spoke, the darker Chris' face has become. This wasn't good news. He always treated his cousin as his brother and he respected him a lot. Knowing that his cousin was poisoned, he was incredibly furious and anxious.

The face of the young servant became pale when he heard Leric's words. This man was actually an Alchemist! What rotten luck!

"Manager Chris, I'll find the best doctors in the city and see if they have any solutions for this." The young servant muttered with his head slightly lowered. He didn't want them to see his nervous look.

Chris didn't suspect him either so he just nodded his head. "Alright. Bring them here quickly and tell them that our Maynard Household will not mistreat them."

"Yes, Manager Chris." The young servant nodded his head and immediately went for the door. However, a hand was preventing him from opening it.

"You also have the smell of poison in you. How strange..." Leric smiled strangely at the young servant.

Chris wasn't an idiot and he immediately understood the situation. He angrily pointed his fingers at the servant and roared. "You filthy creature! What have you done to your Lord!?" He then leaped towards the servant and gave him a good beating.

The room was filled with the servant's screams and Chris' rage-filled shouts.

Leric ignored them and continued observing the unconscious Blacksmith.

Not long later, a sweaty Chris stood beside him and asked. "Sir Aethelwolf, do you know about this poison?" This man was able to identify that his cousin was poisoned by merely sniffing for a short moment. He seems to be a skilled Alchemist who tackled in the study of poisons. Perhaps he knows what's up.

Leric glanced at him and then towards the young servant who had lost consciousness from the beating. "We could have asked that guy if he had an antidote with him, but I think it's too late for that."

Chris scratched his face with embarrassment. He couldn't control his anger earlier and poured everything into the servant. "Is there anything else we can do, Sir Aethelwolf?" He asked with a hopeful look.

Leric nodded his head. "There is. In fact, this poison isn't that difficult to cure. I only need three herbs to remove the toxins in his body, but if you want me to save his Hegel from being affected by the poison, we would need two more herbs. These are the five herbs. One... and ..."

Chris listed the herbs on a piece of paper and after writing them down, he immediately asked another servant to buy the herbs on the list.

"Sir Aethelwolf, it's our good fortune that you are coincidentally here. I don't know what would have happened if you weren't here." Chris was scared when he thought about it.

After becoming a manager of this weapon shop, he made many enemies. Those people might cause trouble for him if something happened to his cousin. After all, Enrique Maynard was his only support. Losing him would surely end his career and even his life might be at stake.

"Manager Chris, it appears that Sir Enrique is a victim of a vicious plot. If I'm not wrong, there should be something going on in the Maynard Household. Sir Enrique is the most likely person to inherit the position of patriarch if the Count, Sir Lucas Maynard, steps down from his position." Leric's words stunned Chris. His eyes widened and his fat cheeks jiggled up and down. He then frowned and pondered about it deeply.

Leric's words might be possible. There was indeed a conflict of interest between the patriarch candidates of the Maynard Household. Initially, they thought that no one would use any underhanded tricks since they were just one family. Who knew that someone would actually poison his cousin?

"I will report this to the patriarch. I will also bring that filthy creature to the family and make him spit out the name of the culprit. What a bunch of bastards!" Chris cursed angrily.

CREATORS' THOUGHTS

Malignant Malignant

300 Power Stones is very unrealistic at this moment so I will lower it down to 150 Power Stones. Thanks for your support!

Chapter 39: Change in Temperament

The Maynard Household has four patriarch candidates. The strongest contender for the position was Enrique Maynard because of his accomplishments. The other three candidates were Dave Maynard, Karl Maynard, and Joseph Maynard. Among the three of them, Joseph Maynard was the closest to Enrique in terms of achievement. They were closely followed by the other two who were also competent Level 3 Blacksmiths.

Manager Chris sat on a chair with a grim look on his face. He had no clue who among the three candidates was responsible for poisoning his cousin. It was a good thing that they were able to capture the young servant since he might give them some clues when he wakes up.

Soon a servant came inside the room with a box filled with herbs. These were the herbs needed to remove the poison in Enrique's body.

"Sir Aethelwolf, please start refining the antidote. I will offer you our shop's best sword as a token of appreciation and you will also gain the Maynard Household's friendship. I assure you of that!" Chris promised with a heavy look. This man was his only hope at this moment. If this Alchemist fails to make the antidote, all the efforts he put into the weapon shop as its Manager for many years would be in vain.

Leric grabbed the herbs from the box and sorted them on a table. He then took out a cauldron. This was something he got from his mother's clinic. It was an old cauldron that looked to be unused for many years. Manager Chris almost lost his footing when he saw the shabby cauldron. Is that even something a top Alchemist would use? Did he perhaps meet a fraud?

Manager Chris became worried as he thought of this. However, when Leric lit up his golden pill fire, his fat face trembled vigorously. "Golden pill fire! Level 4 Alchemist!" He was speechless as he looked at the sheer ease with how Leric was refining the herbs.

His control and methods were beyond his grasp. The techniques of all the Alchemists he knew were nothing compared to this guy's technique!

.....

"I was actually talking with such a figure earlier!" Manager Chris gasped with a dumbfounded look on his face.

The antidote for the poison wasn't that difficult to make. It only took around ten minutes for Leric to refine it. When he opened the cauldron, there were five blue pills sitting inside.

Leric grabbed them and handed one to Chris. "Manager Chris, let Sir Enrique eat this pill."

Leric pocketed the remaining four. He might have some uses for them so he didn't give them to Chris.

Manager Chris took the pill from Leric's hand with a thrilled look. This was a pill made by a Level 4 Alchemist! "Thank you so much, Sir Aethelwolf!"

Leric waved his hand with a carefree smile. It wasn't hard for him to make the pill and he even profited from it. The four pills he took were enough payment for the refinement. Although the pills were only Level 2 Detoxification Pellets, Leric knew that the value of the pills was comparable to some Level 3 pills!

At the moment, Leric was only a Level 2 Esper. People only thought that he was a Level 4 Esper because of his [Flame Manipulation] skill.

At the thought of this, Leric checked his Status Screen.

Talent [Esper] Level 2

Talent [Doctor] Level 2

Talent [Botanist] Level 3

Talent [Alchemist] Level 2

Talent [Blacksmith] Level 1

Talent [Arts] Level 3

Leric's eyes fell into the talent [Arts]. He hasn't checked his Status Screen in detail so he was surprised when he saw this new talent.

Talent [Arts] Level 3

– Your artistic level has reached the realm of grandmasters. Your artwork will make people feel a certain emotion depending on the nature of the art.

"Don't tell me I subconsciously learned this talent while I was in the carriage with Miss Samira and her three maids." He muttered to himself as he recalled telling the ladies about some famous poems and quotes from his past life.

"So that works too?"

Cough! Cough!

The unconscious Enrique suddenly sat up straight and coughed violently. His face turned red as he held his chest. After coughing for over ten seconds, his face turned

rosier. He then slowly raised his head and saw Manager Chris looking at him with worry. There was also a handsome man with short black hair and an unconscious servant inside the room.

Enrique stared at Manager Chris and frowned as he asked. "Cousin, w-what happened?"

Manager Chris sighed and shook his head before he started telling him about the events.

When Manager Chris completed his story, Enrique's face turned grave. "I didn't think that someone from the family would actually poison me! Did they really think that I, Enrique Maynard, am easy to bully?!" Enrique shouted angrily. He then turned his gaze at Leric with a gentler expression. "You must be the Alchemist invited by my cousin to create an antidote for me. Thank you so much for saving my life. May I know my benefactor's name?"

Leric smiled at him as he answered. "Aethelwolf, a wandering Alchemist."

"Cousin, to tell you the truth, I didn't invite Sir Aethelwolf here. He just happened to be here in our shop when you suddenly become unconscious. Besides, he is a Level 4 Alchemist!" Manager Chris immediately said to prevent Enrique from saying something wrong.

Enrique's eyes widened upon hearing this and his expression changed into that of respect. This man's status was equivalent to their patriarch, Lucas Maynard! "Sir Aethelwolf, my apologies for being rude!"

"Cousin, I also promised Sir Aethelwolf that we would give him our shop's best sword for the antidote." Manager Chris nervously said.

"That's great! Only in Sir Aethelwolf's capable hands would the sword show its glory!" Enrique said with a smile. He then sent Manager Chris a stealthy thumbs up. They might have given him a sword, but they earned the friendship of this Level 4 Alchemist!

"Well then, I won't decline your generosity." Leric chose to accept their sincerity. Enrique Maynard was the most likely person to inherit the patriarch position in the Maynard Household. Becoming friends with him would be beneficial to him. Of course, this was only true if he ends up inheriting the position.

Manager Chris and Enrique smiled widely upon hearing this.

"Cousin, wrap up the sword nicely and give it to Sir Aethelwolf!" Enrique said to Chris.

"Of course!" Manager Chris immediately left the room and swiftly headed back to the display area of the shop.

When he left, Enrique turned his gaze to the young servant with eyes that seemed to spurt flames.

“Sir Enrique, the pill you consumed earlier should have healed your Hegel, but you still have to refrain from crafting weapons for one week.” Leric suddenly said.

Enrique nodded his head gratefully. “I’ll keep your words in mind, Sir Aethelwolf.”

Not long later, Manager Chris came back with the sword in his arms. The sword was now sheathed in a fancy scabbard. “Sir Aethelwolf, here’s your sword.” He said as he handed the sword to Leric.

Leric took the sword and wrapped it behind his back. He thought that the sword was awesome, so he decided to use it from now on.

Leric’s aura changed the moment he placed the sword on his back. Earlier, he had the bearing of a wise scholar, and now with the sword on his back, he seemed to have become the manifestation of a peerless warrior!

Both Enrique and Chris were astounded when they sensed the abrupt changes in his temperament.

“I am pleased with your gift, Manager Chris and Sir Enrique.” Leric smiled at the two.

“As long as you like it, Sir Aethelwolf.” Enrique laughed joyfully when he saw how satisfied Leric was.

“If you ever need my help, you can find me in the Reynolds Household. I will be staying there for a short while to do something important.”

Hearing this, the eyes of Enrique and Chris shone with excitement.

Chapter 40: Another Trouble?

“Do you want to check our other weapons, Sir Aethelwolf? We still have a few top-ranked Refined type weapons in our shop.” Enrique said with a proud look. He was the one responsible for crafting the best Refined type weapons in their shop!

Leric shook his head and declined tactfully. “I’d love to. Unfortunately, I have to meet up with Miss Samira Reynolds. I can’t let her wait for me.”

“Oh? The young miss of the Reynolds Household is actually here in Vale City?” Enrique and Chris exclaimed in surprise.

Samira Reynolds was one of the top talents of the empire. Many young nobles tried to ask her hand in marriage, but none of them managed to enter her sights! However, there are still many young scions who never stopped in their attempts.

Leric nodded his head. It seems like Samira was quite popular in the empire. Even the patriarch candidate of the Maynard Household knows about her. Well, it wasn't surprising especially after knowing that Samira is a great beauty and a top talent.

"Gentlemen, I have to take my leave now. I hope to see you in good shape soon, Sir Enrique." Leric smiled as he bid them farewell.

"I'll make sure of it, Sir Aethelwolf! Cousin, take Sir Aethelwolf to the exit." Enrique replied.

.....

Manager Chris accompanied Leric toward the exit.

"You can go back now, Manager Chris. I know the road." Leric waved his hand and walked away like a carefree wanderer.

Manager Chris imprinted this peerless image in his mind before he went back to Enrique's room.

"Sir Aethelwolf has left. What are we going to do with this guy?" Chris asked his cousin while pointing at the unconscious young servant.

Enrique's face darkened as he replied through gritted teeth. "I'll interrogate him first!"

Leric didn't immediately go back to the meeting spot. He decided to take a stroll in the busy market of Vale City.

Suddenly, he saw that there were a few red dots in his [Virtual Map].

Seeing this, Leric's eyes turned cold. His figure blended into the crowd before disappearing like a phantom.

Crouching on top of a building, Leric used his enhanced vision to observe the lurking enemies. He noticed that they were secretly spying on the guard who was supposed to meet up with him.

"They are wearing normal clothes so no one can identify their origin, but other than the Northern Viper Group, I can't think of anyone who would dare to tail the guards of the

Reynolds Household.” Leric counted the red dots on the [Virtual Map] and discovered six enemies hidden among the crowd.

“Should I kill them?” Leric muttered with a cold look, but he then shook his head after carefully thinking.

“They might be alerted if they find out that their scouts are killed. I’ll just let them be for now...” Leric was astonished at how casually he could speak about killing. In his past life, killing was a serious crime and it was punishable by law. The offender would end up in jail until his death! However, the Regalis Continent has a different set of rules. The strong can do whatever they wish, while the weak could only follow everything they set up. As long as you have sufficient power or background, you can escape being punished even after killing someone! This is a dog-eat-dog world!

Just as Leric was about to go down the building, he noticed that a big red dot has appeared in his [Virtual Map]. Based on the size of the dot, Leric could immediately tell that the newcomer was a strong Level 3 Esper!

“I have to be quick or that guard might be killed!” Leric immediately got down from the building and put on his casual look. He walked towards the guard and smiled at him.

The guard spotted Leric and bowed at him. “Sir Aethelwolf, I was sent here by Miss Samira to wait for you.” The guard was awestruck by Leric’s temperament. The sword behind his back looked extremely domineering!

“Alright. Take me to see her.” Leric said while observing his [Virtual Map]. He noticed that there were more red dots. They were about to take action, but his sudden arrival made the enemies abandon their plan.

Leric heaved a sigh of relief when he noticed that they had retreated.

The guard noticed that Leric looked alert. He immediately surveyed the surroundings, but he didn’t find anything amiss.

The guard took Leric to a high-end building. From the architecture alone, he could tell that owner has placed great detail in the design.

“Sir Aethelwolf, Miss Samira is in the dining area of the building.” The guard said as he opened the door for Leric.

The interior of the building was also fancy. From the looks of it, the owner must have hired a professional designer to make the building. There were even beautiful ladies dressed in alluring clothes serving the customers.

Soon, Leric spotted Samira and her two maids. They were conversing with a man who seemed to be in his middle twenties. He had a short blonde hair and was dressed like a

noble. There were also four men standing behind this guy like loyal servants. They exuded great pressure that was comparable to Samira's guards.

Leric didn't want to intrude in the middle of their conversation, but he saw that Samira was waving her hands at him with a smile. "Sir Aethelwolf!"

Skylar and Kathlyn also greeted him politely.

The blonde-haired man frowned upon seeing this. Who was this guy? He seems to have a good relationship with these ladies.

"I apologize for coming late, Miss Samira. I met a few obstacles along the road." Leric muttered apologetically.

Samira shook her head and stared at him with a gentle expression. "You don't have to apologize, Sir Aethelwolf. Come! Sit here with us!" She invited him with a smile.

"Thanks!" Leric sat in between Samira and Skylar.

"Miss Samira, is this gentleman a friend of yours?" The blonde-haired man asked.

Samira nodded her head. "Yes! This is Sir Aethelwolf. He is an Alchemist. I invited him to our residence to check my grandfather's condition."

"Oh?" The eyes of the blonde-haired man flashed with a glint. He then smiled at Leric and introduced himself with an air of confidence. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Sir Aethelwolf. I am John Phillip Manzano, the Captain of the army stationed in Vale City."

"The pleasure is mine, Captain John Phillip!" Leric replied with a calm smile. He noticed that this army captain was looking at him with wariness.

'Did I land myself into trouble again?' Leric muttered to himself helplessly.