

## SPELLCRAFT 26

### Chapter 26

“Take very good care of yourself and your mother, Jared,” Alphonse said, already in the carriage.

It was the next day already, and Alphonse was leaving the manor. He had very few belongings, to begin with. Perhaps there was some sort of Magic Tool in his possession that allowed him to stuff many of his properties in one large traveling bag since that was all he brought... and it lasted him five years.

“I will!” I loudly responded, smiling at the old man as he stuck his head out of the carriage window.

He gave me a slight nod, and I nodded back, remembering the promise we made the night before.

SHUUUUUUUUUUUUUU

The many waves of darkness that filled the area dispersed and finally, a semblance of normalcy returned.

“W-wow...” I managed to stutter after experiencing Original Magic for the first time in this life.

Words couldn’t describe the sensation that coursed through me at the sight of Alphonse’s beautifully dangerous power. I was right in believing him to be strong.

“Haaa, Original Magic sure takes a lot out of me...” Alphonse huffed as beads of sweat appeared on his face.

It was understandable since one needed an immense amount of mana pool, mana knowledge, and mana control in order to pull something like that off.

Alphonse saw my stunned gaze and suddenly felt proud of his achievement. He was always so petty.

“So, what do you think?”

I glanced at the grinning face of the old man as he expected an answer from me. I didn’t even know where to begin. The concept, the execution, the conclusion... they were all impressive.

“I certainly learned a great deal from this. Thank you for showing me, Alphonse. I’ll be sure to put what I have seen to good use.” I responded with a mature, good-willed smile.

“A-ah, I see. Is that so? Well, don’t be too impressed. There are way better Original Magic out there, and I’m yet to perfect mine too. It takes a lifetime to fully hone one’s original magic, you know?”

In my mind, I could tell how shameless Alphonse was being.

‘For real? Just take the praise and be satisfied already.’ I rolled my eyes.

Of course, Alphonse’s magic wasn’t the best I had seen. In the past, I had encountered many mages and had researched their skills. I was even acquaintances with a few Grand Mages, and close friends with one in particular.

Compared to theirs, Alphonse’s was a little lacking. However...

‘All magic is beautiful to me! I don’t discriminate.’

“Jared, can you promise me one thing?” Alphonse’s voice suddenly cut into my thoughts.

I looked at him with curiosity and became a little stunned upon seeing his serious demeanor. It reminded me of earlier this afternoon.

“W-what is it?”

“Promise me you’ll keep yourself safe, no matter what! It doesn’t matter when or what the circumstances are. It doesn’t matter what needs to be forfeited. Keep yourself safe! Can you promise me that?” Alphonse asked sincerely.

“S-sure...” I responded a little awkwardly.

“... Shouldn’t you say something like ‘protect your mother and keep her safe’, though?”

Upon hearing this, Alphonse burst out laughing.

I stared at him weirdly, waiting for him to finally stop and fill me in on what was so funny. The old man placed his hand on my shoulder and his smile vanished instantly. A serious, well-shaded expression formed on his face.

“Jared, your mother... can take care of herself!”

Suddenly, memories of the past came rushing in. I recollected all the suplexes she had given Alphonse, and the violent nature she exhibited. Instantly my body stiffened, and I nodded mechanically to the equally terrified man.

It appeared we had both been traumatized by that mons-, I mean mother.

There was also the fact that she was able to make the strongest Advanced barrier magic so quickly, even though it resulted in Mana Shock.

“Understood!” I gave him a thumbs-up, and he responded with his as well.

Finally removing his hand from my shoulder, Alphonse smiled and nodded proudly.

“You’ll be leaving for the Academy a week from now. While it’s regrettable that I won’t be around for your farewell party, I’ll be sure to send my Gift to you before your departure.”

My eyes beamed proudly at my master as I gratefully offered him my thanks. A gift from a Magic-User of his caliber, one who also served as my Magic Tutor, could only mean it was something magic-related.

‘Maybe a Magic Tool?’

Suddenly drool appeared on my face as I obsessively considered what I would receive from my master.

“Ahh, you’re making that scary expression again.” Alphonse yelped, drawing away from me.

“Come on, master! Come and hug your cute pupil!” I beamed, moving closer to him with my hands spread wide.

“S-stay away from me! And that’s ex-pupil to you!” He replied, stepping back more desperately

Due to the power he exerted earlier in using his Original Magic, he was most likely exhausted. There was no way such an old man could fight back against the power of youth!

‘Meaning... I can make good use of his weakness!’

“Hehe. Don’t be shy, Alphonse.” I grinned more widely, quickening my pace.

Before we knew it, both of us were dashing across the destroyed field in a game of tag.

We did this until we were exhausted and finally retreated to our separate rooms to get some rest.

The next day came in the blink of an eye, and apparently, I had slept in. By the time I ran downstairs, Alphonse’s luggage was already being loaded into the carriage.

We said our final goodbyes, and he gave me the recipe and dosage for the Mana Shock curative medicine he used for my mom.

This made me a little surprised since he only mentioned giving us the dosage.

“You seemed interested in the medicine itself, and I was making it too fast for your eyes to take note of every single process at the time, so I wrote them down for you, instead.” He kindly remarked.

I was grateful for this, happily thanking him.

“Take care of yourself, Jared. I’m sure we will meet again soon.” He smiled, nodding knowingly.

I did the same, waving at him as the carriage started moving and his head retracted from the window.

“Goodbye, Alphonse... and thank you.” I smiled.

As I watched the carriage slowly vanish from sight, the reality dawned on me that I was finally a step closer to actualizing my dreams, and while there was a lot to be taken care of before then, it was still worth celebrating.

‘Now then, I should start getting ready to take care of some loose ends.’