

SPELLCRAFT 351

SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

Chapter 351: The Envoys [Pt 2]

Fabian Lestrome Indiavel was surprised—no, conflicted.

'Why would he choose me?'

His eyes narrowed as he stared at Jared with suspicion.

Was this yet another trap? Was this a ploy to take him away from the Royal Capital? To make sure he didn't achieve anything worthwhile?

'There's no way I'll accept!' Fabian clenched his teeth.

However...

~Fabian, accept his proposal!~

... A mental message sharply entered the prince's head.

Instantly, Fabian recognized the voice and turned in the direction of the speaker.

It was Damien Lawcroft!

'Why...? Why would he want me to do that?'

~Don't be so shortsighted! This mission couldn't be more perfect for you!~ The transmission came again.

Fabian struggled to understand, but he was stuck.

~By being the Royal who unified the Races in an Alliance, wouldn't your reputation skyrocket? Based on your performance, your position will solidify and you'll gain immense support, not only in the Eastern Kingdom, but also among the other nations!~

Fabian's eyes widened at the logic he never saw. Because of his apprehension of Jared, he had been blinded from seeing the merits of his suggestion.

~Now is the chance to gain more supporters and experience. It's a foolproof plan, so the Alliance strategy will most likely succeed. You're at no risk!~

Fabian had to agree with Damien's words, but... he still couldn't shake off the bad feeling that crept up on him.

'B-but, Jared surely has an ulterior motive for recommending me, right? There's no way he just said it because we attended Ainzlark!'

As he thought this, Fabian saw Damien smile from where he stood.

~Of course! But, don't worry... if you choose me as your trusted personnel, then you'll be completely fine. Everything will work out perfectly!~

Fabian's heart was set at ease the moment he heard these words in his head.

Truly, he had been so foolish. If it hadn't been for Damien's guidance just now, he would have missed his golden opportunity to once again outdo his siblings.

Which was why, when he was asked by his father...

"So, does my son, Fabian, agree to this?"

... Fabian didn't hesitate to respond.

"Yes, your Majesty. I wholeheartedly accept!"

Even though Jared's pleased expression annoyed him to no end, Fabian controlled his reaction and simply smiled.

'Just you wait, Jared! I'll reap all the benefits from this expedition!'

'I have to know what he's up to!' Damien Lawcroft thought to himself as he stared at Jared.

That was the whole reason why he would tell Fabian to take him along as they left the Empire.

Even though his mission involved staying in the King's Court, and at the Capital, Jared had already injured most of his plans.

To make sure he could re-strategize and make countermeasures for whatever Jared was plotting, he needed to have access to the mission itself.

'I have agents in the Capital, so they can inform me on whatever happens here while I'm away...' Damien thought to himself.

Besides, if it was a case of emergency, he could simply use 'that' to return.

In any case, the most prudent course of action was to tail Jared and see what he was up to.

'I should also contact them... just in case!' Damien thought, glaring at his former ward with a subtle dissatisfied expression.

'Things won't go your way this time!'

I fought internally to contain a snicker.

Of course, he would agree.

"Very well. Since Fabian has no objection, all that remains is for him to choose his Trusted Personnel, and—"

"I choose Damien Lawcroft" The prince stated with full conviction.

As expected.

"Does Damien Lawcroft agree to this?" His Majesty asked.

"Of course, your Majesty. I will do my utmost to ensure the prince's safety and best performance." The man in question stated boldly.

I smiled at him—no, at the whole exchange—and nodded with satisfaction.

"All that is left is to select a Head Representative from the Research Team... correct?" King Albion said, looking in the direction of the scholarly people in our midst.

The Research Team had sent some people to represent them, but their head wasn't present.

"We will need some time to discuss it with our Superior before a decision can be made." The man who appeared to lead everyone—most likely the deputy—responded with a bow.

I understood the need for hierarchy, but we didn't have all the time in the world.

Fortunately, the King read my mind and spoke up.

"Make it quick. The team will leave at the first sign of dawn. Make sure your Representative is ready by then."

They bowed once he gave his words.

"Since that's all, then—"

"Excuse me, your Majesty... but can I make an addition?" Another interruption surged forth.

Normally, everyone would snap at the person, but... it was Serah Crimson who spoke.

The King and Nobles had no choice but to zip it and listen to her.

"I wish to bring one of my trusted personnel with me. I believe it would be a good education journey for her. Would that be allowed?"

She had a fair point.

Having a few Personnel follow us would indeed be to the advantage of the Eastern Kingdom.

The people would properly understand how small they were in a vast ocean of stronger beings.

Cultures. Technologies. Resources.

The world was very vast, and exposing our citizens to what it had to offer wasn't a bad idea.

However, that could wait until after the Alliance had been formed.

Once we had secured our joint participation, deals concerning excursions and international trips could be implemented.

For now, a small elite force was all that we needed.

But, since it was Serah speaking, I couldn't very much object.

Besides, I was a bit curious about who she wanted to recommend.

"O—of course. Who would you be recommending?" King Albion, as expected, shamelessly agreed.

I couldn't blame him, though.

I noticed that Serah was grinning at me, hiding a mischievous look in her eyes. I unconsciously gulped upon the realization.

"My recommendation is Maria Helmsworth, apprentice of the Imperial Forces."

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 352: Conclusion Of Matters

'Maria Helmsworth...?!'

I glanced in the direction of the girl in question.

She stood behind Serah, among the few representatives of the Imperial Forces. Her expression had been hard to read, as usual, and she seemed to have been staring blankly into space.

However, once Serah recommended her, even the usual cold and stoic girl gave a surprised look.

Her pretty eyes bulged and her flawless lips parted, looking at her Superior who recommended her with utter shock.

I watched as Serah glanced at the innocently surprised girl and winked at her.

Then, they both stared at me.

'Hold on... what's going on here?'

I had a bad feeling swelling from the pit of my stomach, but quickly subdued it

'Serah, what are you up to?'

It wasn't like I didn't have a fair idea, but, why was she doing it? For what reason? It didn't seem like Maria put her up to it either.

No, in the first place, the Helmsworth girl wasn't that kind of person.

'Haa, there's no point in overthinking things...'

If I lost my composure here, everything would just go down the drain.

Even though Maria's addition was unprecedented, I simply had to compromise.

'To make it a perfect equation, I'll need to add one more person, then...'

Looking around the hall, my eyes spotted one person that would fit the job perfectly.

"Your Majesty, may I also make another recommendation? If you add both mine and Miss. Serah's suggestions, we'll have seven members. That isn't a bad number." I said with a slight bow.

The King appeared surprised that I too was changing my initial stance, but he didn't seem to intend on refusing me either.

"Alright, Jared Leonard. Let us hear you out."

"Yes, your Majesty. I would like to recommend Ivan Smith, Apprentice of the Eastern Kingdom's West Border's Fort."

"Ehh?!" A loud noise emanated from behind me.

The boy I had just called out made a surprised yelp, and then quickly covered his lips once he realized the error of his ways.

"Oh? Is there any specific reason for that?" The King asked me.

"I witnessed his battle with a Demon Beast. The young man's growth and talent are simply too good to be wasted as an apprentice on the Western Border. I wish for him to see a wider world and improve himself."

In the future, we would have many like Ivan and Maria—those who explored the world to see just how large and diverse it truly was.

"I see. Very well..." Fortunately, the King readily agreed.

"... Maria Helmsworth and Ivan Smith. You will be participating as Envoys of the Eastern Kingdom. Do you have any objections?"

"N-none at all, your Majesty!" Ivan spoke first, shouting more than necessary.

The way he stiffly bowed caused me to laugh a bit.

"As you wish, your Majesty." Maria gave a light bow and spoke in a calm, collected tone.

Looking at her now, it seemed like the surprised expression she had before was only an illusion.

As always, the girl gave a perfectly flawless performance.

"Looks like the only thing we have to wait for is the decision of the Research Department." King Albion stated, and then looked at me for confirmation.

I nodded in response.

'The Alliance is what I'm after. Everything else can be handled domestically, without my interference.'

Since my father, and other capable persons, were in the Kingdom, I expected some progress and a good battle strategy from them.

So, while I would spearhead the Alliance, each Kingdom would have control over its affairs—at least to an extent.

Ultimately, everything would sort itself out.

"Very well. Then... this meeting is hereby concluded!"

As expected, the King requested my audience after the meeting.

The reason was due to what I wrote in my letter... about my intentions to speak with him on a sensitive matter.

As we conversed, I made three pertinent issues known to him.

One was the existence of spies within the Eastern Kingdom.

There were likely to be quite a few among the Noble Households, and even within the Royal Court.

Of course, I had my suspicions and candidates, but it wasn't exactly prudent to move conspicuously at this point.

The best I could do was tell Albion Lestrome to be more careful when handling information.

His Court Magician, one of the Grand Mages of the Eastern Kingdom, seemed like a reliable and smart person.

So, I told the King to personally discuss the issue of spies with the man. Hopefully, he would find a more intelligent way to handle the problem.

The second matter was the outcome of the Demon War.

I predicted that their next strike would overlap with the time I was in the Elf Kingdom.

As a result, the Kingdom was on its own.

I wasn't completely worried, though.

Since I got enough information from Kahn concerning the current position of the Demon Realm's hierarchy, I could predict their next move.

If I was correct, then Zenkiel, the new Vert, would be in charge of the Demon Army.

I once fought against an Army led by his Superior at the time, so none of their tactics were new to me.

At the moment, I was working on some things on my end, but it would still take some time for everything to fall into place.

Before that happened, though... I had no intentions of causing the Eastern Kingdom to fall behind.

"I'll be lending you some tools for this battle. I'll also tell you a few things to watch out for. That way, it'll minimize casualties."

The King could only listen to my words at this point. Even if he had questions, it wasn't my intention to answer any of them.

We were pressed for time, after all.

The third and final subject of discussion was—of course—my reward for the services I had rendered.

I didn't plan on settling for anything just yet, but... it was best to let the King know that I wasn't going so far for nothing.

He understood my stance, and also told me that he would reward me based on my accomplishments.

'Pfft.' I nearly laughed.

If I was to calculate it... the entire Eastern Kingdom wouldn't be enough to pay for everything I intended on doing.

Still, I planned on giving them a good discount.

'Once I'm done... I wonder what he'll offer me in exchange.'

That would indeed be a fun sight to see.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 353: Meeting Before Dawn

After leaving the presence of his Majesty, I found myself in the Palace courtyard.

The breeze of early morning tingled my nostrils, and I felt the cool embrace of the vanishing darkness.

In a few hours, it would be dawn.

Then... the real challenge would begin!

As I enjoyed the fresh night breeze, I felt the subtle presence of someone approaching me.

"I figured you'd come to see me." I smiled, looking behind me.

Still wearing his cloak and multitude of Magic Items, was one of the most important figures of the Eastern Kingdom.

"Well, I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that you expected even this." He smiled.

"Well... you are a Grand Mage, after all. Since you're the closest to His Majesty, I expect that you'd have some concerns about me... and my plan." I smiled.

"Well, I'm glad you understand." The man, Elrich Lendertwale spoke in a polite manner.

I knew very little about him, but... I was certain about one thing.

'He's not my enemy.'

And so, I greeted him with a warm smile.

He finally pulled down his hood, revealing the face he had hidden underneath.

My eyes widened in mild surprise.

"I don't usually do this when I meet people, but... I'll consider you an exception." A young man stood before me, speaking with a bright smile.

He looked twenty--no, even younger!

According to what I had heard about him, he was older than the current King of the Eastern Kingdom.

How was it possible that he looked younger? The answer was quite obvious, though.

"You used Magic to keep your Youth?" I said to him in a mildly curious tone.

His cloak was enchanted with Magic that prevented recognition. That was why many people didn't know what he looked like. I could have peered beyond the blocking Magic, but I decided not to.

That would have brought unwarranted trouble.

Still, who would have thought he would show his face to me?

The man's white hair was the only thing that told me of his age.

The rest of his pale, perfect skin, didn't show me any sign of such. He had a mole under his right eye, and was adorned with some facial jewels... like a couple of earrings and even an eyebrow ring.

They were all enchanted with Magic.

Elrich Lendertwale looked more like an overdressed big brother, rather than a powerful Grand Mage.

"Jared Leonard, I have to discuss some things with you... if you don't mind."

Of course, I wasn't going to refuse.

I had some business with him too.

Looking at the time, it would be more than enough for both of us to conclude what we wanted.

After a little over an hour, Elrich finally left.

Before going, though, he whispered something and gave me a meaningful look.

"Looks like I'm not the only one who has business with you."

His mischievous smile made me grin a bit as well.

I had also noticed the presence of someone else. I thought they would leave after seeing that I was conversing with a Grand Mage, but that person remained till Elrich was about to leave.

'Why...?'

I probably knew the answer to that.

Elrich Lendertwale bade me farewell and vanished from sight.

The moment he disappeared, I looked in the direction of the corner where my other visitor was standing.

"You can come out now. I know you've been waiting there."

The person flinched as I spoke, moving slowly to reveal herself.

'As expected, it's you...'

Once she made her full appearance, I was once again at a loss for words.

'... Maria Helmsworth.'

Her pretty eyes and captivating body had diminished since the last time we spoke. No, it seemed she had gotten even more attractive.

If there was a difference between then and now, it would be the change in height; her body's structure had also morphed to a more mature look.

The once-innocent and child-like look in her eyes had transformed as well. Now, she donned a more ferocious look.

'You've grown, Maria...' I smiled, approaching her where she stood.

From what I could sense, her Mana Core was already at the Gold Core Grade.

How amazing was that? In simply three years, she had reached this far!

Ana was still in the Silver Core Grade, but I understood why.

Unlike Maria, who was mostly focused on her growth as a Mage, Ana was mainly a Scholar.

She spent a great deal of time in research and experiments, rather than actively practicing with her Mana.

Ana had invented quite a few things as well. Plus, with the new project I left in her care, as well as the books I entrusted to her... Ana was too busy to develop properly as a full-time Mage.

In a way, reaching Silver Core Grade was already plenty impressive for her.

Still, that didn't diminish Maria's current growth.

'Gold, uh? Just how hard did you work to achieve this?' My thoughts trailed as I finally reached her.

The moment I was just inches from her, I stopped.

Moving any closer would probably be uncomfortable for both of us.

"You were waiting for quite some time, Maria. What's the matter?"

Her face, stoic and calm, didn't flinch at my question.

"I wanted to... talk about the Envoy issue." Her speech faltered a bit.

It was as though she wanted to say something else, but changed her mind mid-sentence.

"You'll be coming with us, right? It's in a few hours. Shouldn't you be resting as much as possible?"

My question seemed to have been the wrong one since Maria's eyes darkened once I finished speaking.

"I'm fine." Her tone was firm.

'O-okay...'

I mean, she was a Gold Core Grade Mage. I was well aware that her capabilities were well-honed, but... common sense still demanded that one should rest before something so taxing.

Well, I wasn't one to complain, considering the fact that I was guilty of the same offense.

"So, what would you like to talk about?" I asked, staring into her icy-blue eyes.

Compared to the brightness in Ana's iris, Maria's looked a bit darker... more mature.

Still, I sensed hesitation in her gaze. And so, I waited for her delicate lips to open, and for her smooth voice to be heard.

"Do you actually... want me to come with you...?"

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 354: Maria's Soliloquy

"Do you actually... want me to come with you...?"

Maria's words hit me like a sledgehammer. Well, I expected something similar, but why was she asking such a direct question?

Her personality probably made it difficult to be more roundabout with her words.

And so, she waited for my answer with a calm look.

'Whether she comes or not probably depends on my response.'

"Why are you asking? It's not like anything will change depending on my answer." I spoke, coyly avoiding any direct response to her question.

Even if I didn't want her to go with us, Serah's words were absolute.

"If it would inconvenience you, or the mission, in any way, then... I'll make a petition to drop out. So, please, be honest with me..."

Once again, her earnestness caused my heart to squeeze.

"... Am I disturbing you?"

The fact that she unflinchingly stared at me with her eyes was something that unnerved me a little.

'This girl... doesn't she get embarrassed or flustered?!'

Even Ana wasn't this direct in our conversations! Even if she was, we were already pretty close, so I wouldn't consider it strange.

But, Maria was almost a stranger to me.

It was difficult talking to her when she was this forward about everything.

Still, since she asked for the truth with such a steadfast personality, it was my duty to give it to return the favor.

"Then, I'll be honest with you..." I said, making sure I maintained eye contact.

'Two can play this game!'

"I didn't want anyone else except the five I initially mentioned. It wasn't that I don't want you per se, but... I deemed anyone more than the initial five suggestions to be pointless additions."

Once I said this, the look in her eyes darkened even more.

It was only subtle, but I could tell that her mood had changed.

"I see. Then... it's best not trouble you and—"

"I wasn't finished," I said, interrupting her obviously downcast voice.

Her face was currently turned away from me, most likely to avoid any embarrassing display, but... now was the time to strike!

"That was my initial position. After Serah mentioned you, I probably still felt the same way..."

"I—I see..." Her voice seemed even weaker.

"But, with you before me now... that position has changed somewhat."

Once I said this, she sharply looked in my direction.

Both surprise and slight satisfaction were now displayed in her eyes.

No matter how one tried to hide their emotions, their eyes couldn't completely fool another person.

Eyes were a window to the soul, after all.

"You've grown, Maria. I didn't realize it before since I was busy, but now...?"

I smiled, placing my hand on her shoulder. Since I was taller, it was an effortless action.

Standing opposite each other in the dark courtyard, I felt the tense atmosphere lift.

"... I want you to come with us. After all, I'm interested in you now."

'How much you've grown. How powerful you've become. What your training regiment is like. How being in the Imperial Forces has helped you.'

So many questions ran through my mind.

Rather than simply asking, it would be nice to have her by my side to see for myself.

"I... I see..." Her voice faltered even more and, once again, she looked away from me.

'Haha! So you indeed get flustered, don't you?' I mused.

"Is that all you wanted to ask?"

"Y-yeah..." She murmured, and then... her eyes darted to my hand which was still on her shoulder.

"O—oh, sorry about that!" I stuttered, quickly withdrawing my hand.

For a moment, I saw her eyes waver once I stepped away. Was it relief... or disappointment?

Either way, it was all over in a flash.

"I should go now. Like you said... I should rest." Maria said, stepping back from me.

'But you said you were fine...' My mind trailed as I stared at her.

To be honest, it would be nice if we could converse a bit more.

I was curious about how she had been. Plus, I also wanted to ask about Stefan, and other Ainzlark adventures while we were at it.

But, before I could even raise any topic, the girl was already a far distance from me.

"Well, I suppose we'll meet soon," I murmured, looking at her as she left.

There wasn't much to do at the moment, but... it was never too late to get busy with more training, right?

>VWUUUUSSSHHH!!!<

In a spark of lightning and a surge of energy, I vanished from the courtyard.

>THUMP<

>THUMP<

>THUMP<

Maria Helmsworth's heart raced with every step she took.

Her pale face was now flushed with bright pink as she walked away.

It would seem as though her eyes were teary, but... it was simply because of the overwhelming emotion that assailed her.

'Why am I so...!!!' She screamed internally.

Being a prim and proper lady was something Maria had always displayed.

Never had she let any person see an unsightly aspect of her.

Despite being young, her family—one of the Ducal Households—made sure she was perfect in any way.

That was partially the reason behind her usually calm and cold demeanor.

However, everything nearly came crashing down on one fateful day.

The day of the Ainzlark Entrance Exams!

It was the first time she had met Jared Leonard.

Initially, it was just a passing recognition.

'He's handsome. He has a good physique. He's also articulate and carries himself with composure.'

Observing her surroundings and those around her was one of the things she did to keep herself busy.

Still, she hadn't felt like anything about him stood out.

Then, when his argument with Stefan reached a crescendo... the boy made the most shocking move.

He approached her—drew close to her face—and asked her the most absurd question.

"Am I disturbing you?"

That was the first question that started everything.

The boy was brazen enough to approach her so directly.

While he might not have known of her status, wasn't it already clear to many people that she was someone special? Besides, there was no way he hadn't seen her Magic performance!

Even when she didn't add those into consideration, her attractive appearance was enough to make men fall for her.

So, why...?!

How could he have been so straightforward with her?

It wasn't until later that Maria realized just what kind of person Jared Leonard was.

It turned out that the special one among the two of them wasn't her... but him.

[**SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar**](#)

Chapter 355: Departure From The Kingdom [Pt 1]

And so, as time progressed, the question Jared had asked her slowly turned the other way around.

Maria began to feel it... her inadequacy.

"Am I disturbing him?"

That question kept bothering her.

So many things had happened, and now... she had, for the first time, asked him to his face.

In all honesty, she expected her heart to be shattered.

Even though she had trained very hard, Jared surprised her in the Royal Court. It was clear that he had reached another height that she couldn't comprehend.

Would someone like him really not find her bothersome?

However, upon hearing his unexpected answer... Maria was shocked, to say the least.

"... I'm interested in you..."

Maria's cheeks reddened even more.

'How does he not get embarrassed? He really said that with a straight face!'

She couldn't deny that those words made her happy, though.

Even if she hadn't quite measured up to his abilities, she knew that her abilities had vastly improved from the time when they were together at Ainzlark.

It had been 3 whole Years. A lot had changed now.

For one, the girl who was always with him was nowhere to be found.

That's right... Ana was currently absent!

This was Maria's perfect opportunity.

"I'll show you, Jared..." A whisper escaped her lips.

Of all the men she had ever met, this was the only guy who got her so hung up on him.

Until she proved herself and answered that question with her abilities, Maria surmised that she wouldn't be able to rest.

"I'll prove that I can be useful to him too! T-then... after that... will he finally..."

A distant thought appeared in her head as she touched the shoulder on which Jared had placed his hand.

The moment the image appeared, Maria shook off the perverted idea that popped up alongside it.

'It's too soon! Too soon!'

She wasn't even an adult yet... how could Jared intend on marriage at this point?

'In a year's time, maybe...'

That meant she had only a year to prove that she wasn't being a bother!

'Alright! I can do this!'

Jared already said he was interested, right? That was the first step.

Hopefully, their time together would give Maria lots of opportunities to prove to him, and herself, that she was capable enough.

'I can do this...'

With that repetitive thought echoing in her mind, Maria Helmsworth returned to her quarters.

Rest was important, after all.

"Looks like everyone is here! Am I late? Sorry. Hahaha! I had to take care of so many things. Forgive me, hahahahaha!"

The current person speaking was none other than the representative of the Research Department.

Well, calling him a representative was an understatement.

"Hi! My name is Bradford Levyfield. I'm the current Head of the Research Department! Please take good care of me!"

That's right.

The current middle-aged, shabbily-bearded man was none other than the overall Head Of Research in the Eastern Kingdom.

His bright personality and overly energetic exuberance made me cringe for some reason.

At the moment, almost every member of the Envoy was gathered. We were currently at the lounge area of the Capital's Main Gate.

It was an interior area made to house important individuals before they entered the city.

Every large settlement needed to have one of these places.

In case the important person's visit was sudden, or it was a suspicious person, there had to be a secure place used to keep them temporarily.

We had been waiting here for our last two members when our newcomer, Bradford Levyfield showed up.

The man who introduced himself to all of us seemed friendly and harmless, yet why was I feeling so uncomfortable?

I glanced around to see the expressions of everyone else.

I could tell that they all—with the exception of Maria, thanks to her lull face—felt the same way I did.

Apparently, this man, Bradford Levyfield, was late because he had to delegate tasks to his subordinates so that he could come with us.

Was he hoping for a vacation, or...?

"Man, I can't wait! When I heard that we would be exploring strange lands, seeing more things beyond the Kingdom, I realized that I had to go! The King readily agreed, so I'm so happy right now!"

The more I heard of King Albion, the more I was beginning to see him as a pushover.

'He probably didn't want to deal with this guy for very long, so the King just approved.'

Since his presence of absence wouldn't exactly affect the plan, I had to accept things as they were.

"Glad to have you on board, Bradford Levyfield. My name is Jared Leonard, pleased to make your acquaintance." I suppressed my dissatisfaction and stretched out my hand.

>VWOOSH!<

In a flash, he lunged out both of his and shook mine violently.

"So, you're the great Jared Leonard, eh? You look much younger than I expected! So you'll be our team leader, right? I look forward to working with you!" The man kept yammering on.

'Well, he's wrong about one thing...'

"Ahem!" An obvious excuse for a cough rang out.

"Oh? What is it, Fabian?" The oddball, Bradford, called the Prince by his regular name.

That was an obvious sign of familiarity... or disrespect.

'I didn't think Fabian would be well acquainted with this guy...'

"Shouldn't you address me formally?" Fabian responded harshly.

As I thought, they weren't at all acquainted.

"Oh, please. Formality isn't my thing. Besides, I even call Albion by his name, so don't take offense, 'kay?"

"Pfft!" I uncontrollably burst out with a mild snicker.

I couldn't help it.

"Well, that's a good way to live, sir. Can I also address you informally too?" I laughed, shaking Bradford's hand too.

"Definitely! Call me Bradford!"

Even though his beard looked too full, and his overexcited personality was a pain, I couldn't despise people like this.

"Whatever. In any case, you're wrong about the leader of this Envoy, Bradford." Our dear killjoy, Prince Fabian emphasized.

He was right, though.

"Oh? Who's the leader, then?"

"Who else, you dunce!" Damien Lawcroft burst out, apparently unable to control himself any longer.

"His Highness, the Prince is here. Of course, he will be leading the Expedition!"

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 356: Departure From The Kingdom [Pt 2]

"His Highness, the Prince is here. Of course, he will be leading the Expedition!" Damien Lawcroft declared with enthusiasm.

Bradford looked at me for confirmation, most likely finding it hard to believe that someone as pathetic as Fabian would be taking the lead.

However, I gave him a slight sigh and shrugged.

After this, though, I winked at the sharp man.

"Hoho! I see!" He caught my signal and laughed.

"My mistake, then. Let's get along then, Fabian. You too, Damien!"

Both the prince and his assistant looked extremely pissed off, but any more display of their dissatisfaction would simply sully their honor and non-existent authority.

So, they grudgingly accepted the enthusiasm of our newest member.

Bradford went on to greet Ivan--who looked to be in awe of the man.

His brother, Maro, was also a Researcher and Magic Engineer, so he must have mentioned Bradford to him quite a few times.

After greeting the sheepish Ivan, Bradford went on to speak to Maria.

Her reaction, as expected, was completely bland and calm--the complete contrast to Bradford Levyfield.

It was like pouring cold, icy water on heated flames.

The sight was quite funny to see.

"Oh? Looks like everyone is here already!" The voice of our final participant rang out.

Hearing her made me smile unconsciously and I glanced in her direction.

"Serah! I heard you were coming! This is so sweet!" Bradford yelled and dashed in her direction.

'This guy... even to Serah?' I asked internally, somehow looking forward to how things would turn out.

"Bradford! So you decided to come? That's so great! Hahaha!"

To my surprise, or rather... should I have been surprised, Serah and Bradford hugged and exchanged what I could only describe as friendship handshakes and fist bumps

'Of course! Why didn't I see this coming?'

In terms of personality, they were almost the same, weren't they?

"Nice day we have today, isn't it? You are welcome, Miss. Serah." I smiled, moving closer to the Grand Mage.

Everyone else bowed in her presence--except Fabian, of course.

"Please, call me Serah, Jared. I believe we've reached that point, as per our agreement."

'What's with these people and their preference for informal speech?'

It wasn't like I had a complaint, though.

This was perfect for me.

"Alright, Serah." I smiled back, staring into her confident vermilion eyes.

"Well, well, well. Since we're all here, why don't we head off?"

I couldn't agree more.

And so, we all left the room.

There was no Grand Parade.

It wasn't necessary.

Besides, since we left at the first sign of dawn, the entire city wasn't quite awake yet.

The Envoy mission was abrupt, but also urgent.

That was why... even when we arrived at the entrance--or rather, exit--of the Capital, there was no crowd bidding us farewell.

Other than the tightened security that bowed before us, no one could be seen.

'So, they already took care of this place, uh?' I smiled, looking at the spot where my Golem had caused a ruckus just some hours ago.

The Capital sure moved fast.

"So, how exactly do we get to the Elf Kingdom? Has anyone here been there before?" Serah said, looking around her.

For the first time, someone actually asked the question. Who would have thought that the sensible one would be her?

All eyes instantly narrowed on me.

"I indeed told the King to leave the means of transportation to me..."

To be honest, even if we used the Kingdom's finest transit tool, we would never reach the Elf Kingdom in time.

We had less than three days to make our debut, but merely a journey to the border would take longer than that.

I was fast enough to get there in time. Serah was most likely the same.

'But, can the others keep up?'

I knew the answer to that.

Which was why... a simple solution was best.

"We'll teleport there."

My tone was nonchalant and calm, but everyone looked at me with shock.

"WHAT??!"

Some people were surprised that I actually thought such a thing was possible.

Some were disappointed that that was my plan all along.

And Maria simply looked stoic. It confused me on what her actual take on the matter was.

Fortunately...

"It's possible! He can do it!"

... Ivan came to my rescue.

He looked at me with a bright smile and nodded.

After experiencing my power firsthand, he had actually grown. I could tell that he was more broad-minded than before.

Besides, I did give them some Demon Beast Corpses using Space Magic.

He must have surmised that I was capable of teleportation as well.

"That's right. It'll simply be faster if we went by teleportation. We'll arrive there in an instant." I smiled at everyone with confidence.

At least, almost all of them were in the King's Palace when I gave my speech. They must have known that my confidence wasn't without reason.

"Sigh. Very well. We'll go with Jared's plan." Fabian said, trying to exert his authority as our leader at the last minute.

I found the whole thing amusing, considering the fact that no one--except Damien Lawcroft--actually considered him to be our Leader.

Still, I let him believe in his delusions. That way, he would be happy and not completely stand in my way.

'From what I see, he's oddly easy to manipulate. No wonder he has that guy as his personal assistant. Pfft...'

Since everyone was prepared--

Fabian Lestrome

Damien Lawcroft

Ivan Smith

Maria Helmsworth

Bradford Levyfield

--I activated a Spell Card I had in my pocket.

It contained an Instant Teleportation Spell.

This was similar to the Card I used against Legris Damien, so it would disappear after a single use.

Still, I preferred using it instead of an Arcana.

>VWUUUUUSSSSHHHHHH<

A bright blue light enveloped our crew, and everyone was surrounded by a massive Magic Circle. The Spell activated in less than a second, and we all felt our bodies warp.

"One final word, everyone..." I smiled.

They all looked at me, wondering what I would utter when we were almost at our destination.

"... We're going into enemy territory, so... get ready for combat!"

I could see Fabian freeze up.

"What are you--?!" He made to speak, but the teleportation was done before he could finish his statement.

And so, we finally vanished from the Capital in a burst of blue and white radiance.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 357: Struggle Of The Elves [Pt 1]

Freya was conflicted.

As she watched her hometown burn in fiery purple flames, she couldn't do anything but watch.

Even as she was clad in her silver armor, and her white hair fluttered with the wind.

She bit her lip in anger and frustration.

"Evil Demons..." Was all she could mutter.

The cliff she stood on was far enough that the Beasts could not hear her, and her voice wasn't loud enough to agitate anyone.

This was simply the spite she carried within herself.

The Elf Kingdom's Eastern Border had fallen prey to an onslaught of Demons.

An approximate amount of three hundred had struck them, rendering their flimsy defenses obsolete.

Unlike the Humans and Dwarves, Elves were not very keen on technology and Magic engineering.

They believed in the free Gift of nature.

And so, while they excelled well at Potions and Alchemy, they were never able to fully master the aggressive natures of Magic.

But, even with that, their race had a higher affinity for the arts compared to any other—coming second only to the Fairies.

Elemental Magic was their forte, and many Elves had attained a level of utilizing Original Magic, and Mana Field.

Yet, none could fight back against the horde of Demons for one specific reason.

—Racial Weakness!

Miasma was extremely harmful to the genes of the Elves.

Being exposed to pure Mana had its advantages. Longevity and youthful exuberance was a free gift of nature, given to the Elves thanks to their direct interaction with positive Energy.

Their high affinity for Magic was also a result of this.

But, alongside those advantages came a critical consequence.

The Elves were very weak against Miasma.

Their bodies nearly gave out if they so much as got a whiff of it, and exposure to the energy for ten minutes would kill an Elf.

No, if the Miasma was strong enough, five minutes would be plenty to live.

That was why their efforts to defeat the Demon Beasts had been utterly crushed.

In the end, the beings of nature could only resort to the second option—containing the threat.

They had erected barricades with Earth Magic, and strengthened the structures with Mana.

It took the combined efforts of all the Elf Soldiers to achieve this result.

Yet... they were barely able to keep up the defense.

As Miasma ate through their Mana defense, they had to keep supplying energy to maintain the barrier.

Still, how much longer would they be able to last?

At their current rate, not much longer!

"When will reinforcements come...?" Freya murmured, once again staring at the horde of Demon Beasts.

They seemed to be up to something, but she didn't take their movements too much into consideration.

No matter what they did, the barrier would hold.

The problem was what would happen once the Elves ran out of Mana.

As for her question on backup, Freya knew it was useless to ask.

It would take about three days, at least, for the Elf Capita to dispatch the appropriate level of reinforcements to handle the threat facing them.

In fact, perhaps she was being too optimistic.

Still, hope was the only thing she could give herself in such a situation.

Even though she had been the one managing security on the Eastern Border, Freya had failed her mission woefully.

As a result, countless of her people suffered casualties.

Powerlessness and frustration.

Those two emotions could only be sated by the feeling of hope that help would soon arrive.

However—

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!<

In a burst of malevolent energy, all the Demon Beasts roared and poured their blasts in one direction.

The ground shook, causing Freya's eyes to bulge as she took proper note of what had happened.

"N-No—!!!" Her voice matched the shock in her green eyes.

The enemy forces... had broken down the barricade everyone had worked so hard to erect.

'H-how could this...?!'

Her grinding teeth were displayed as she hatefully glared at the Demon Beasts from the cliff where she stood.

"General Freya!" Someone called out to her from behind.

The white-haired Elf sharply turned in the direction of the one who called for her.

It was one of her subordinates, wearing a distinguished armor that glimmered with bronze.

It was her deputy—Maya.

"General Freya, the Demon Beasts have—!"

"I am well aware, I saw it! Did anything happen to the ones maintaining the barrier?"

"Not at all. It came as a surprise to us all."

Freya was trying to understand how they were able to break free.

Nothing was wrong with the entrapment, so what could have gone wrong?

"T-that—!" Her green eyes bulged the instant she realized it.

That was what they had been up to all along.

The density of Miasma in the atmosphere had vastly increased, strengthening the Demon Beasts.

Not only had their destructive blasts gotten much stronger, but they had all focused their attacks in a single direction.

That was the last straw.

The spread-out barrier couldn't have handled such a bombardment and ended up falling.

"W-what do we do now?" Maya asked her leader.

At this point, they had run out of options.

"Can another Barrier be erected?" It was a foolish question to ask, but Freya's optimism was not to be underestimated.

"N-no. Everyone is tired just from maintaining the fallen Barrier. Erecting a new one is... not possible."

That was the obvious answer. Freya, as an insightful Elf—as well as their leader—should have been aware of this already.

"I see..." She spoke bitterly.

Reality is often disappointing, and so the Elves had to face the cold truth...

"We have to hold out until reinforcements arrive!"

... And sacrifice themselves for the greater good.

Maya knew what her leader meant by 'holding out.'

She realized that death—an excruciating one—awaited them all.

Yet, she did not argue.

This was the only choice at this point.

"Understood!"

In a flash, Maya shrouded herself with Mana and flew at full speed, most likely assembling the troops to form an orderly brigade.

Until they were organized enough to barricade the Demon Beasts, though, Freya knew it was her duty to buy them more time.

"Haa... Wicked Demons..." She spoke, now having an angry look in her eyes.

Death was right beneath her.

Should she leave the cliff, only one end was certain for her.

Still, Freya plunged into the abyss.

"FOR THE ELF KINGDOOOOMMMM!!!"

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 358: Struggle Of The Elves [Pt 2]

"Haaaaaa!!!" Freya yelled as she descended from the tall cliff, plunging straight for the Demon Beasts beneath.

Thick clouds of purple smoke filled the area, and even someone as powerful as her would fall within five minutes.

Was this also her optimism, or...?

Regardless, she refused to give in to the creeping fear that plagued her.

Being alive for over a hundred years was nothing especially spectacular to an Elf, but... her life had been somewhat full, hadn't it?

If it was for the sake of her comrades, Freya knew she would gladly give her life in a heartbeat.

Still, was her sacrifice going to be in vain?

Five minutes.

That was all she could buy for everyone.

It sounded like a cruel joke, but... that was the unfortunate reality she had been saddled with.

"Your opponent is meeee!!!" Her voice got the attention of the monsters who were already planning on leaving their barricaded prison.

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!!!<

The barrage of flames that she sent their way was a nice welcome present, causing several of them to burn thanks to the intensity of her strike.

Now stopping their giant bodies thanks to the annoying interference of a single Elf, the beasts glared in Freya's direction.

"GURRUUUUUU..."

A mix of Monsters and Demonic influence were the beings who stood before Freya; The Demon Beasts were ruthless and complete savages.

Unlike Elves who had more refined methods of using Magic, they simply used brute force to decimate their enemies.

"Keukk!" Freya could already feel the effects of the Miasma hitting her body.

She had used Mana to protect herself, but the thick Miasma had already damaged her protective layer.

'I need to make it stronger... so I can last longer!' Freya stiffened her expression and returned the glare of her enemies.

"Come!" She said, summoning her Spirit Blade.

A sword forged with her Mana and the environment's energy—using materials from the World Tree as a catalyst—only a few had the privilege of holding such a weapon.

The blade's power ran through Freya's body, and she felt a huge spike in her abilities.

"GURAAAAA!!!" The three hundred monsters lunged at her.

'If I don't deal decisive hits, they'll keep healing!'

Fatal strikes were the only things she had to achieve.

>VWOOOSH!!!<

She leaped into action, allowing the little Mana around her to carry her body as she glided through the air.

Elves utilized the aid of surrounding Mana in any endeavor they did.

With only Miasma pervading the area, Freya could only rely on her own Mana Pool—making her unable to fight with all she had.

Still, complaints were useless in battle.

What she had to do hadn't changed.

"Hiyaaaaaa!!!"

With beautifully fluid motions, she cut down her first Demon Beast with her blade, quickly lunging toward the next one.

Wasting no movement and ensuring her goal was the immediate deaths of her enemies, Freya killed the second one, and then moved to the third.

However...

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!<

A dark pulse of immense power pushed her away.

Her body was assailed by shock and the immediate invasion of Miasma.

'N—no!!!'

Her Protective Layer had vanished, allowing the negative energy to seep into her body.

It was rapid and completely unexpected.

Freya's green eyes bulged upon realizing that the effects of her corruption were far greater than what she had expected.

Of course, it would be!

Compared to the first time the Demon Beasts invaded, the Miasma density had risen to an unprecedented amount.

"Guark!" She coughed out darkened blood and felt her body turn against her.

At this rate, she wouldn't be able to last three minutes.

Even in that period, Freya was completely powerless—unable to mold any Mana to defend herself.

Before she got a proper grasp of her bearing, her eyes spotted the hulking Demon Beasts.

They surrounded her, outnumbering her line figure three hundred to one.

She could see the utterly wicked gaze they gave her, as well as their malevolent grins.

She was powerless, unable to resist.

And then—

>POW!<

"Arrghh!" A kick directly to her stomach sent the Elf flying into the air.

Her armor—which had already been corroded by the Miasma shattered apart, leaving her bare skin completely open to the harsh embrace of darkness.

The time left toward her death shortened drastically.

Still, if that was all, then perhaps Freya would have been able to die a somewhat uneventful death.

However, the Demon Beasts were not so merciful.

>POW!<

Yet another hit—this time, a punch—was sent to her bare face, causing the white-haired Elf to cough out more blood and groan in agony.

>BOOOMMM<

She crashed upon the dark, corrupt ground.

A place that once bustled with life and exuberance was now withering away... thanks to Miasma.

"Puak!" More darkened blood, spilled out.

At this point, Freya had completely lost all her hope and optimism.

She, a mere shell of her former self, was now completely wasted.

Not only had she received external injuries, but the internal situation of her body was far worse.

'The poison has spread everywhere...'

In a few seconds, she would be dead.

Even then... the Demon Beasts would not let her be.

Her death would be anything but peaceful. Still, they could have at least left her to rot away.

But, no!

The hulking figures surrounded her once more, ready to resume their barrage of hardcore punches and kicks until the Elven body was nothing more than a broken toy—a useless lump of meat.

These sadistic beings were that depraved.

'I'm... so sorry.. everyone...' Freya's thoughts trailed as she realized her fate.

Pain!

Unbearable agony seared through her.

Yet, all Freya could think of were her comrades... and her family.

Her mother. Her father. Her two brothers. And, she couldn't forget... her annoying cousin.

Freya's end was near—no, it had already arrived.

So, just as she was taught—she accepted it wholeheartedly.

Even if she didn't want to, the Elf realized that letting go was the only path to relief.

Regrets assailed her, but... she had done all she could do.

'Maya... everyone... I leave the rest... to you...'

However, even in the depths of her despair, something crept up from within her.

—Her unfading optimism.

'Reinforcements... please...'

It could have been a death wish, but, Freya prayed with all her might.

'... Help us.'

That was her final duty, as the First Princess of the Elf Kingdom.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 359: Salvation [Pt 1]

Stale silence before death would have been preferable.

However, all that rang in Freya's ears as she lost consciousness were the arrogant squeals of the Demon Beasts.

They raised their fists and readied their kicks, ready to assail her already beat-up body until it was nothing but useless lumps of meat.

It wasn't exactly a dignified exit, but, at this point, nothing more could be done.

>WHUUUUMMMM<

Their blows descended.

Freya's blurry vision went dark.

And then—

>BOOOOOOUMMMMMMM!!!<

—An explosive blast of destruction was heard, no, felt through her entire body.

'W—wha...?'

Suddenly, Freya felt relieved. Her body was light, and the pain that assailed her subsided.

Was she finally dead?

Was this how death felt like? Had she finally escaped the horrors that awaited her?

As she felt the warmth around her, as well as the peaceful silence enveloping her, Freya smiled to herself.

"This... isn't so bad..."

"—The hell is this pervert talking about?" A voice rang through her pointed ears.

It was... not her voice!

"Shh! Don't say something like that!" Another voice spoke up.

"Shouldn't we cover her up too?"

"Ah, that's right."

"Here, you do it. The rest of us should look away."

Freya couldn't understand what was happening.

Who were the ones speaking?

The answer to her question would be answered once she opened her eyes... and so she did.

"A—ah...?"

Rather than the darkness she had been surrounded with before death, when she opened her eyes, Freya felt the brightness of the sun tingle her eyes.

She was forced to squint them, slowly getting accustomed to the newfound illumination that now seemed strange.

"Looks like she's awake."

"She didn't hear me, did she?"

She probably did..."

"Just shut up, Ivan."

Freya's eyes widened upon realizing... she hadn't been dreaming.

Actual people were talking around her.

"W—what is—?!"

She sprang up, seating upright as she looked around her.

Her eyes bulged upon seeing six people around her.

Their appearance was similar to hers, except... they didn't have long ears.

They weren't very attractive as well, except for two. And they were both women.

The scenery looked similar to the one she left when she was still alive. However, unlike the Miasma-infested area, Freya found her surrounding to be quite refreshing—filled with Mana.

Just taking in a few breaths made her feel so much better.

It wasn't according to her expectations, neither was it accurate with what the Elders had told her, but... could this perhaps be...!

"... Am I in Heaven...?"

The people surrounding her were probably angels of some sort, right?

"The fuck...?" One rather unruly one with red hair muttered.

>WHAP!<

A smack was sent to his back that very instant.

"Shut up, Ivan. She's just confused."

"Ow! You didn't have to hit me, though."

"What did you just say?"

"N-nothing ma'am..."

Freya watched the weird exchange between a silver-haired girl and the impudent red-haired man.

It was looking and sounding less and less like the Paradise she had often heard of in lore.

"Hey, girl. I wouldn't move so much if I were you." One of the six people spoke up, pointing in her direction.

It was at that moment that Freya took a good look at herself.

Her naked body was currently covered with a large sheet of fabric.

However, thanks to her squirming a lot, the cloth was falling off.

"Kyaaa!" Freya squealed in embarrassment, sharply raising the sheet to cover herself.

Her ears and cheeks were beet red, and her eyes wavered in embarrassment.

As an Elf, she had been taught to protect her chastity above all else.

To think even after death, such teachings would remain ingrained in her thoughts and actions.

"Why is she acting so surprised? It's not like we haven't seen it be—"

Another smack descended on the red-haired youth.

Freya's face was flushed with even more embarrassment.

Of the six people present, four were men. And the fact that they saw her naked meant...

The Elf wanted to die of embarrassment.

"Oh, wait... I'm already dead..." She cried even more.

To her surprise, though, the people surrounding her gave her looks as though she was crazy.

"Just so you know, Elf girl... you're not dead." The red-haired woman among those that surrounded her spoke.

"E-eh...?"

"You're very much alive. This is your hometown. We simply saved you from dying and took care of the Demon Beasts. So... you're welcome."

Freya couldn't believe her ears.

She wasn't dead? And the Demon Beasts were obliterated?

But, how was that possible?

"D-does that mean... you're backup...?" Freya murmured.

"Well, that's one way of putting it..." The Red-haired woman spoke with a shrug.

The Elf was even more confused.

Rationally speaking, backup shouldn't have arrived anytime soon.

Even if they did, would they have been able to wrap up the incident so swiftly?

Besides, the people around her didn't look like Elves.

In fact, based on their appearance and behavior, she could only fit them into one description.

—Humans!

But, even then... why would such a Race be here?

Many thoughts swirled in her mind, but, Freya knew that it wasn't time to be so confused and flustered—especially now that she knew she wasn't dead.

"U-um, please who are—"

"We're Envoys from the Eastern Kingdom, Princess." A voice came from behind her.

Freya's eyes bulged as she sharply turned to the person who approached her.

"Greetings, Elf Princess." A blond-haired boy bowed slightly and gave her a slight smile.

On his hands were her Silver Armor and Spirit Sword.

They were nearly held and handled with care, showing that he understood their relevance. Adding to the fact that he greeted her with etiquette, Freya instantly understood that he was a different breed from the others she had been conversing with.

"E-Envoys of the Eastern Kingdom, you say...?" She murmured.

As she thought, they were humans.

"I am certain that you have many questions, but now is not the appropriate time." He spoke calmly, not forgetting to address her with absolute courtesy.

Freya could hear voices behind her saying stuff like "She was a princess? I didn't know!" and also "Damn, you ruined everything, Ivan!", but she completely ignored them.

The boy standing before her was more important.

"Y-yeah... you're right." The Elf Princess said with a slightly embarrassed smile.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Envoys from the East."

Even if she was still inappropriately attired, Freya felt the need to return his courtesy.

"My name is Freya Vindiel, First Princess of the Elf Kingdom."

The blonde nodded and smiled, once again bowing to her.

His performance was exquisite.

"It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance. My name is Jared Leonard. May the spirits bless our meeting."

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 360: Salvation [Pt 2]

When we first arrived, all that surrounded us was darkness.

The atmosphere was thick with Miasma, and I felt the density of malevolence wafting through the air.

It didn't take me a moment to instantly connect to the environment using Spellcraft.

"Uuurhhh..." I heard a voice croak out weakly.

It belonged to an Elf—one who was close to death.

Multiple monstrous figures encompassed her, looking depraved as they grinned with satisfaction.

Their builds were slightly different from the ones that invaded the Eastern Kingdom, but they shared the same features.

That is, their monstrous appearance and the Miasma they exuded.

We had arrived at a bad time—the Demon Beasts were already loose and a conflict had started.

'This could be a good opportunity...' I found myself thinking with a grin.

The more desperate our potential allies were, the better it was for us.

However...

>VWOOOOOOSSSSSHHHH!!!<

In one straight thrust, one of the Envoys I was with—Serah herself—decimated the Demon Beasts that had gathered around the Elf.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!!!<

Just like that—with a single hit—they were all destroyed.

I found the sight completely ridiculous, considering the fact that she hadn't even been using Mana just a moment earlier.

'No Fusion Magic or Mage Transformation. Just raw ability...!' I thought to myself, staring at the grinning woman.

It seemed that I had to update my earlier evaluation of her.

"Hahahaha!" She laughed, not even minding the dense Miasma around us.

Of course, for the others, I had used Spellcraft to make sure we were unaffected. Still, with or without my assistance, I doubted she would be in any real discomfort.

"I decimated the enemy. What now?" Serah smiled, looking at me.

'Why are you asking me? Don't we have a Leader?' I nearly rolled my eyes as the thought popped up.

Our capable Captain, Fabian was still shaken from Serah's overwhelming display of power. The Miasma around didn't help matters either.

I surmised that he was probably reliving the trauma he faced during the Demonic Disturbance.

"Well, for one, try to avoid collateral damage," I said with a soft, meaningful smile.

Her earlier strike had not only decimated the Demon Beasts, but would have also claimed the entire body of the Elf that was stuck at the center.

If I hadn't used Spellcraft to protect her from my distance, not even a speck from her would remain.

"Let's avoid as many sacrifices as we can, okay?" I smiled.

"Okay, noted." The woman nodded.

'Well, that's surprising... I didn't think she'd listen so easily.'

I suppose, since she was a Superior officer, she understood what priority signified in a mission.

"Now, then, we should resolve matters here as soon as possible," I said, turning to the remaining members of our team.

They must have been prepared for combat, especially after what I told them before teleporting here.

It was a shame that Serah one-shotted all the adversaries.

"I'll get rid of the surrounding Miasma and also salvage whatever stuff I can find. You people should check on the unconscious Elf."

People like Fabian and Damien looked dissatisfied with my concise orders.

"Would you like to input something?" I asked with a raised eyebrow.

"We'll do as you have said. But, please don't forget who the actual leader of this operation is. Let's avoid any form of insubordination." Damien spoke on behalf of his precious Prince.

There were quite a bunch of things I could have said to the man right there and then, but I decided to be patient.

"Sure."

With my snappy response, I got to work.

The clouds of Miasma that were hanging around were too raw and unrefined—even for me.

That was why it took me some minutes to completely dissolve and absorb all the negative energy around.

First, I gathered everything in one spot. Then, after separating the unnecessary elements, I finalized the process and collected the Miasma.

After I was done, I turned around and found that the Elf was already awake.

She had also healed of all her injuries thanks to the Healing Spell I cast on her with Spellcraft.

At my current level of mastery, it wasn't difficult to use Advanced Spells at a far distance.

She was covered in cloth to cover her nakedness, and her expression looked flustered.

However, that wasn't what caught my attention.

'White hair? Don't tell me...!'

At that moment, a distant memory played in my head and I quickly understood that the person I had just saved was Royalty.

It was beyond my expectations, but I immediately considered such a coincidence to be a stroke of luck.

'Why don't I make her a bit more indebted to me?' My grin widened.

While utilizing Spellcraft, I became one with my surroundings. Using Sensory Magic to expand my perception, I could detect even the slightest details around me.

Thanks to this, it was easy for me to find fragments of one of the most important of such an Elf's personal effects—namely, her Spirit Weapon.

I also managed to detect pieces of her Magic Armor as well and repaired both of them.

Controlling them freely, I brought them to me and properly carried them before approaching the group.

'Hopefully, they haven't offended the Royal Elf yet...' I thought to myself, though still wondering why such a high-standing member of Society would be involved in such a battle.

A faint idea popped up in my head, causing me to muse a little.

The Royal Family probably wanted to keep her safe from harm's way, and so sent her to the most peaceful area of their Kingdom—the Eastern Border.

They never would have predicted that the first strike would come from there.

It was ironic, but the opposite of their intentions had come to pass.

'Good thing we arrived...' I smiled, critically observing the girl.

The image of someone overlapped with hers. I didn't even realize when I started to smile as a result of such a bittersweet memory.

'Argh, what am I thinking at this point?'

Quickly snapping myself from dwelling on the past, I heaved a sigh and tightened my resolve.

'Well, let's make a good first impression, shall we?'