

SPELLCRAFT 571

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

Chapter 571: The Pope's Verdict

"Send your votes through the polls now!" Suddenly, two options popped before every single member of the congregation that sat in the pews.

The options were in the form of panels displayed right in front of them, and they were meant to pick either 'Pass' or 'Fail'.

I had thought it would be something more magical, but this ended up being nothing more than a glorified survey.

'But, what's the purpose of using a famous congregation to come to a decision?'

They were simply projections of my and Maria's thoughts.

"Looks like the results are in!!!" The Pope declared, drawing my eyes toward the large panel they spread across the air above me.

I waited patiently to see how we had fared. After all, this was the whole reason I went through this.

Though my eyes glanced at Maria for a moment, and I quickly looked away. I could also feel a gaze on me, but decided not to look.

'Let's just get this over with. We can always discuss everything that happened, later...'

The Pope's grin widened, and he announced the results squarely.

"Jared Leonard... and Anabelle Frederick... you've passed!"

I nearly jumped in joy, because that meant my reward was not for nothing.

'Finally you'll give us our reward, right?'

"Since the opposition has been silenced, we can continue with the Marriage that was our oh hold before."

'E-eh?'

"Hold on a sec... weren't we promised a blessing? A Gift?" I tried to raise the issue.

The Pope glanced in my direction and nodded.

"Indeed. My Gift to you is the blessings you need for a good marriage."

'Ahh...!!!' I wanted to scream.

How long was the process before obtaining the Arcana? If I wasn't certain about the reliability of completing certain tasks in a Dungeon, I would have just burned everything to the ground in a bid to find what I was after.

'Fine...' I stared at the smiling Pope, seeing as the chair and ropes and bounds me began disappearing me.

'... Let's play along, for now.'

"I hereby declare you, man and wife."

There was an awkward silence in the air, and I could feel several gazes on us.

"You may kiss the bride."

Now, that was just ridiculous. It made me consider what would have happened if I came here alone.

Still... I did what I had to do.

Maria and I looked at each other. Passion could be seen in her eyes, and I was pretty sure she could see some sparks in mine.

'It's not like this is the first time... right?' I reassured myself as our faces drew closer to each other.

In less than a second more, our lips would collide, and I slowly began to anticipate it myself.

However, once again—

"Okay, guys... that's enough. Break it up!"

'Huh?'

—The unexpected happened.

Right before our eyes, the cathedral began to lose its luster.

The pews vanished, the alter turned to dust, and the congregation vaded away.

I looked around me in confusion, and so did Maria. We saw everything turn to mist—as though they were never there. Even our wedding attires... disintegrated.

Ultimately, everything 'fake' was gone, and we were now standing in a completely empty room.

"I suppose I should apologize for taking my little roleplay a bit too far."

Even though everything in the room vanished, one person remained.

He was adorned in his ceremonial garb, and a smile hadn't left his face.

His staff was clutched tightly on his left hand, and on his right hand was a book.

"You're a Singularity, aren't you? I sense Aether on you... and Merlin's Mana? I see. So you spoke to our leader."

Once again, I was confused.

But, unlike before, I didn't feel any form of restriction.

"Maria, can you see thi—" I paused mid-sentence, upon noticing that even Maria wasn't present.

"Where is she?" I looked around me, noticing nothing but utter darkness, with the Pope being the only thing that shine brightly.

"The other one can't be present. She doesn't have a connection to Aether. It seems the only reason you can communicate somewhat freely is because Merlin's power still clings to you."

'Ah, did he mean the Arcana of [Strength]?' I shook off my hesitation instantly and decided to get answers to the question I had.

The Pope before me had grey colored hair, but his youthful face and round glasses made him look very young.

He was somewhat tall, and his calm appearance put me at ease. I wondered what kind of person he would have been if he was still alive, and how he was able to manifest his Soul so freely even though a lot of time must have passed since his demise.

'The story of the Arcanas started centuries before I was even born. These people... must have been really skilled at Magic to have made such a projection...'

Modern Mages couldn't compare to them in the slightest.

I mean, no one's Magic had surpassed any Arcana till date. Neron was close, but even he admitted that [The Hermit] greatly assisted him in furthering his Magic.

I was certain the title of 'Great Sage' rightfully belonged to them, since their inventions and knowledge were potentially greater than mine.

And here I was, standing right in front of one of them.

"You must have a lot of questions, but there's really no time. I spent too much energy putting on that elaborate show. You know... I've always been into roleplay, and I always wanted to do this when I was alive."

For someone who claimed not to have too much time, he sure took his time talking about things that didn't seem urgent.

"I was a virgin till I died... which is why it is greatly fitting I became a clergyman, one who has taken an eternal vow of celibacy." He smiled, as if that was something to be proud of.

'To each man, their own... I guess.' A smile spread across my face.

I couldn't comprehend how he felt, but that didn't matter at this point.

What was most important at this moment... was answers.

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

Chapter 572: Abrupt Encounter

Even though I was called 'The Great Sage', I had my fair share of experiences with women.

There was Emilia, then Karlia... and then Lilith.

As a result, I couldn't empathize with the Pope who spoke.

I only wanted to get to the bottom of the mystery that gnawed at me.

"Can we get to the point, please? You're starting to dissipate." I commented, noticing the Pope's body slowly turning into light.

"A-ah, that's true. I guess I got a little carried away. Haha!"

'A little...?' I found his statement questionable, but let him go on.

"My name is Morgan, a member of the Apostles of Aether."

Finally, I was getting answers.

"In our time, a great darkness emerged... and my friends and I had to stop it."

"The Nether?"

Morgan nodded with a smile when I said this.

"Looks like Merlin already told you. The Nether is a threat that will consume this world, and will go further to wreak more havoc."

"Further? Wreak more havoc? I don't understand..." I suspected he was leaning at something, but I couldn't believe what was appearing in my heart.

"Nether isn't after the branch, that is our world... he is after the stem itself, all the way to the root."

"What?"

"Nether seeks to consume Aether. Those two were never meant to coexist. Just as existence and non-existence, or matter and non matter should, never converge."

I was confounded, but it slowly made some sense... just a bit if sense.

"So you're saying... our world is a branch? A branch of what? What is this root? What exactly is Nether? What is Aether?" I needed a breakdown of everything.

"Ah, I'm not good at explanations. This is why Merlin should have been the one to do this. Haa, this is... oh no, it's too late. I'm disappearing already." Morgan spoke in a deflated tone.

Something about the whole thing made me suspect that the guy never intended on giving me too many details.

And so, as I watched him tone into nothing but white smoke and glimmering light, he made a final statement.

"Be wary of Ciel."

And then, he vanished.

As the particles of light that danced before me, I grew confounded once more.

'Who is this Ciel...?' Rather than having the answers I sought, I now had more questions.

The Apostles of Aether, and the Ciel person must have been in conflict since ages past. To understand, perhaps I had to look through other myths and stories... tales that went far beyond just the Arcanas.

'Haa... this is bothersome.'

The darkness around me began to crack, indicating I was going to be let out of the area pretty soon.

I would be reuniting with Maria... which was a different problem on its own.

"This is gonna be awkward."

External light seeped in from the cracks appearing around me, and slowly, the confined space I was in broke apart.

As though I was wrapped in a dark sphere, the veil slowly lofted, and I could see an empty room around me.

No pews. No cathedral. No altar. Just an empty room.

"J-Jared... you're back!"

A shaky, yet relieved tone rang out, causing me to sharply glance in the direction.

Not only did I hear Maria's panicky voice call out for me, but I was also sensing the energy of another.

>WHOOOSHHH<

In a flash, I appeared in front of Maria, blocking her from the hooded enemy that stood a small distance from her.

He had a long black hooded coat, and I could feel a dangerous aura from him.

'This energy... it's not Mana!' The hooded man was emitting almost the same kind of power as someone I knew and despised.

"Legris Damien?!" A whisper escaped my lips as I watched him with caution plastered on my face.

The moment I said that, he smiled.

"Jared... that's a disappointing thing to say." The person chuckled slightly.

'A-ah...?!'

The closer I looked—beyond the energy he emitted, the stranger looked no older than me.

Sure, he was tall, and had dangerous features, but in the end, he was a young man—barely an adult yet.

'Who is he? What's he doing here? Someone like this is also a part of the Nether Cult?'

"J-Jared... that is... Stefa—"

"I'm Stefan Netherlore. Surely you remember me now?" The boy removed his hood, revealing his pitch black hair and deep blue eyes.

His handsome features were now more mature than I remembered, but the moment I saw the face, I recollected the boy I knew back at Ainzlark.

"Stefan? What in the world—?!"

"Don't look so surprised. That expression doesn't suit you."

My surprise slowly morphed into anger as I glared at him.

"What are you doing with the Nether Cult, Stefan?!"

Usually, I would be happy to see an old friend again, but he was currently with the enemy. I hadn't seen him in so long, so there was no way I could let my guard down now.

Why and how he became a member of such an organization... I had to know!

"That's none of your business. It seems I was a bit late, though. You retrieved the Arcana. Looks like my hunch, and Legris' theory was correct."

My eyes bulged the moment he mentioned Legris Damien.

'Just how close are the two of them? If I capture Stefan here, will I be able to get my hands on more information? He feels almost the same as Legris. That means they're connected, right?'

I observed him with my gaze, and he didn't seem extremely powerful. Besides...

'Stefan falls under Maria in terms of talent. Even if he trained his ass off, there's no way he could be as strong as Kuzon or me.'

I wasn't going to assume, and I was going to be careful, but it would be foolish to let him out of my grasp.

The possibilities of using him against the organization was endless.

Plus—

'I'll be saving him from the Nether Cult!'

—I wasn't one to waste an opportunity.

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

Chapter 573: Netherlore

Casting [Unknowable] on a Spell of mine, I launched it in Stefan's direction using Spellcraft.

As a result, the mass of energy lunged from behind him, enough to cause sufficient damage.

"Hm?" Stefan looked behind him, most likely noticing the Spell.

'He can see it?! Well, this is my chance!'

Since he was distracted by the Spell, I augmented myself with multiple Spells and summoned a blunt blade to use against him in combat.

'Stefan is a Mage, so I'll use Martial Arts to be certain of quick victory!'

Of course, I was still going to be on guard in case my opponent was a skilled fighter, but it would be a waste of time to prepare a contingency for everything.

>WHOOOSSHH<

With Mana completely shrouding my body, I darted at him with determination.

I spotted his gaze shift in my direction, but his body was motionless.

'Am I too fast for his body to react to? Or is he simply waiting?' It was hard to decide, but as my Spell closed in on him, I was also nearing Stefan at remarkable speed.

He could only evade one!

"I didn't come here to fight."

>DUUUUUUMMMMMMM!!!<

Suddenly, I felt a pressure unlike any other. My body became too heavy, and before I knew it... my body was on the ground.

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMM!!!<

The exploding Spell collapsed, and I could feel an unexplainable heaviness envelop me.

Hardly able to move my body, my eyes reached Stefan as I displayed shock.

'What? How? An Arcana?!'

"So you're an Upper Member?!" I blurted out bitterly.

According to the information I had, only the top brass of the Nether Cult could use Arcanas.

Placed on Stefan's fingertips was a spinning card. It warbled as the boy smiled at me.

"We're only down to eight Seat members, so every one of us has an Arcana."

'A-ah, that must have happened because of the Arcana Search. Why didn't I think about that?'

Was Stefan just a Lower Seat who was graced with an Arcana? The heaviness I was feeling, and the lack of mobility... it had to be caused by gravity manipulation.

'He's using an Arcana that controls gravity?!'

"You've given us a bit of trouble, Jared. Placing all those disrupters to mess with our search for Arcanas... it's a smart move."

'Yeah... but for Stefan to be here, they figured it out.'

"It must suck that two people who know how you think are in the Cult. You'll have to be smarter next time." He smiled, his hands in his coat pockets.

"Duly noted." I spoke, finally breaking free from his gravity manipulation by using one of [The Tower]'s abilities to teleport back to my previous position.

"Nice. Nice. You have Arcanas too."

The simple teleportation was done without having to resort to a Spell Card or my Original Magic.

Since I had been studying the use of Arcanas without a need for aids, I could perform simple Spells like this without using the Arcanas themselves.

'So, he controls gravity, eh? This will be tricky.' I glanced in Maria's direction to make sure she was safe.

Her eyes looked very frightful, and the fact the young woman wasn't speaking made me realize the situation was indeed very dire.

"Like I said, I didn't come here to fight. I'll just be leaving with the information I've retrieved here. There's no need to engage."

"Don't you want the Arcana?" I eyed him suspiciously.

"Not really. It really doesn't matter what you do, we'll still win. Why do you think the Leader hasn't moved yet, despite your constant annoyance?"

I remained silent, thinking of ways to stop him.

'Anti-Magic doesn't work on Arcanas, so that one is out of it...'

For some reason, the energy around Stefan made it difficult for me to use Spellcraft in his immediate vicinity, and even if I could, it would be thwarted by his Gravity manipulation.

The only way to win was to overpower him with my sheer number of Arcanas and skills. Things would get a bit destructive, but I was going to win.

'What should I do to—'

As I readied myself to strike, I noticed Stefan's gaze shift to Maria. A wider smile formed on his face, and suddenly—

"Kyaaaahhhh!!!"

—Maria suddenly lunged in his direction.

'Wha—?!'

As if she was being pulled by an invisible force, she sharply moved toward Stefan, and the smile I saw on his face told me he meant business.

'Shit!' Quickly using another function of [The Tower], I switched positions with Maria and decided to take this as another moment to strike.

'Grand Fusion Mo—'

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHH!!!<

The 'Pull' effect suddenly became a 'Push' one, and my body was sent flying away in a mighty blow.

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM<

Crashing on the wall far from Stefan, I coughed out in pain, struggling to regain my composure before any harm befell Maria.

"Argh!"

It hurt!

The blow from my front, and the crash on the shattered wall.

My vision was blurry, but I quickly teleported Maria to my side—just to be safe.

'Did I go easy on him because he was my friend? Did I underestimate him?'

I wondered why I wasn't playing as many Cards as I usually would.

"I had to resort to that since it didn't seem like you were going to let me go just like that." I heard Stefan, watching as he ascended beyond my reach, flying to the ceiling.

"Why are you in the Nether Cult? Don't you know all they've done? What their motive is?"

"I don't care." Stefan replied with a shrug.

I was surprised to see how much he had changed.

From the way he condescendingly gazed at me and Maria, he seemed to relish the moment of our weakness.

"Ah, and one more thing, Jared..." Stefan narrowed his gaze.

"I'm the Fifth Seat of the Nether Cult... so I guess you're wrong about that too."

My eyes bulged the moment I heard the absurd statement.

"We'll see eventually. I'll simply tell the Leader that you got away with the Arcana using another trick of yours. Legris always uses that as an excuse."

Before I could say more, Stefan vanished as he went through the ceiling, leaving me confused and petrified.

'What is going on here?!'

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

Chapter 574: Seeking The Truth [Pt 1]

Maria and I passed through the ceiling too—since it served as an Exit, and we found ourselves at the surface of the Dark Desert.

I looked around and saw the vast expanse gleaming with darkness—just as we left it. Perhaps I was hoping to see some sign of Stefan, but he was long gone already.

'Damnit...'

There were many questions I wanted answers to, but first I needed to take care of Maria.

'She's really shivering. This expression she's making... it's like she had a never-ending nightmare. Is it trauma?'

Using [The Tower], I briskly teleported myself and Maria away from the Dark Desert and we arrived at a more comfortable place.

>VWOOSH<

The blue portal closed behind me as I brought Maria into the large, well-lit room.

The ambiance was warm and nice, and as I took in the familiar scent permeating the room, I felt nostalgia.

'Why did I first think of this place? I guess this really is home for me...'

I laid Maria on the large bed within the room, and fetched a Potion from my Subspace. It glowed bright white, and it was supposed to grant relief to whatever psychological distress she was suffering.

'Spells like [Calm] and [Stability] have been imbued within it...'

Even if one wasn't in a traumatized state, it was still a good Potion to take for meditation and relaxation.

At the moment, though, it seemed Maria really needed something to calm her down.

'She won't stop trembling...!' My thoughts trailed as I tried force-feeding her the Potion.

Her eyes appeared blank, and I knew she was barely holding on to her string of consciousness.

"I don't want to be rough, Maria. Just a bit more, and—"

>WHAM!<

The door behind me suddenly opened, and someone appeared from outside it.

"What in the world?!"

I sharply glanced back, donning a guilty look as I made eye contact with the matriarch of the property I was on.

"M-mom, relax. I can explain."

"What was I hearing from behind the door? You don't want to be rough? What are you doing to that young girl?"

'A-ah...'

Now that I looked at things, my position appeared very compromising.

Maria was incapacitated. She was currently lying down on my bed, and a sweet-smelling Potion was in my hand. Not only did the situation appear completely suspicious, but my Mom was a very very big exaggerator.

'How do I get out of this mess?'

I instantly blamed myself.

I just had to choose the one place where Anabelle Leonard would be.

"You have to calm yourself mother." I could already see her hyperventilating as she looked at me with worry and disappointment.

"I'm not trying anything shady! Trust me, Mom!" I yelled

"What have you become, Jared." Tears fell from her eyes as she covered her mouth while sobbing.

"This woman—"

My attention sharply fell back on Maria, and I saw her tremble once more.

"I don't have time for this!" Sharply moving in a fluid motion, I made sure to pour the Potion at just the right angle.

"J-Jared wait—!"

Ignoring my mother, I treated my friend. It didn't matter what kind of image she had developed in her.

Once everything was done, I just needed to explain things to her.

"Haaa..." My eyes beamed as I saw Maria's tensed body relax.

The sweat on her body stopped flowing, and her condition stabilized.

"You better have a good explanation for this, Jared..." My Mom drew closer, now gaining a better perspective of the situation.

"... Wait, isn't this the daughter of the Helmsworth household? Hold on, why are you even here, to begin with? Ah, so many questions."

I still had no idea why I teleported here in my desperate state. However, deciding to place my trust in my mother... I decided to spill a little bit.

"Can we talk?"

Anabelle, my mother, ordered the servants to take care of Maria.

They were to bathe for her and freshen her up as gently as possible. Since she was soaked in her sweat and was also recovering from trauma, it was best to handle her with care.

As for me, I decided to leave the ladies to their business.

Lingering around the room would only make me appear more suspicious... and I couldn't have that, could I?

After she was done directing the maids, my Mom entered our private lounge—where I was patiently waiting for her.

She gave a gentle sigh, and then smiled at me.

"She'll be fine. Just let the servants do their thing."

She was quite perceptive, considering I did my best to hide my worry. Perhaps because she was my mother?

"That's a relief to hear." My response was that of relief.

A lot of unprecedented things happened in our quest for [The Pope] Arcana, and while I was worried about the others, Maria's condition worried me.

'If Stefan appeared on our end, the others could also be in danger...'

However, so far, I had gotten no response from them. Even though Ciara and Lemi didn't agree with the Soul Brand idea, their partners had them.

That meant I could still monitor everyone's safety.

'So far, they don't appear to be in any trouble. If they were, they can also use the Spell Cards I have them...'

With that in mind, I decided to dedicate my brain power to the current situation at hand.

"So... explain yourself, Jared. What's going on?"

To be frank, I was under no obligation to tell my Mom about the things that were occurring. There was also the question of how much to divulge.

However, at the moment, I needed someone to talk to. The shock of Stefan's new identity, and my deep-seated worry about Maria's shaken state...

'... I don't like this feeling.'

Which was why I decided to confide in my mother.

"Mom... how did you fall in love with Dad?"

I could spot my mom's eyebrow being raised, and I knew that wasn't where I ought to have begun my inquiry. However... the question just came out.

A smile formed on her face, and I realized that she was having another one of her weird thoughts.

'Haa... what am I doing?'

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

Chapter 575: Seeking The Truth [Pt 2]

"It was an arranged marriage, Jared. There was no love involved."

My mom's initial statement jerked me back to reality. I mean, I should have known of that, yet I had to ask.

"There's hardly any Noble Marriage that follows the concept of love, you know? Most unions are arranged—based on well-analyzed profit and whatnot."

I remained silent, watching as my mother explained.

"It was the same case for your father. Our family needed the Leonard's influence, and the Leonard family needed to produce a Mage.

Other families would rather not take the risk of sullyng their bloodline of Mages, but our household was ready to take the chance..."

I slowly began to understand my mother's position.

"I had to produce an heir that could use Magic. The results weren't guaranteed, but I did my best."

Fortunately, I came along.

'I've often wondered what would happen to this family if I hadn't reincarnated...'

With this body's poor talent and extremely low Mana Particles, I doubted the 'original' Jared Leonard would have gone very far in Magic.

Sometimes I even felt a little guilty for possessing the body of the child of two innocent Nobles, but I realized it was probably for the best.

"So, you don't love father?" I asked her with a straight face.

"My sweet Jared... I don't know how to answer that question. What do you think love is?"

Wasn't that a simple question? Wasn't love the feeling a person had when they possessed deep romantic interests in another party?

"Love takes time to blossom, Jared. Feelings can morph into Love, but it takes time regardless."

"A-ah...?"

"The truth is, I hardly know your father. He's busy with work, and I don't blame him. I have grown to respect him a lot, and I like certain things about him. But..." Her face grew sterner as she spoke.

"... You can't love someone you hardly know."

Somehow, I felt those words resonate with me. Something within me shook, and I remembered my past.

'I guess it's no wonder I have been so hesitant with Maria...' A soft smile played on my face.

Compared to Emilia, Karlia... even Lilith... I hardly knew the young Helmsworth.

'So, I have feelings for her. But it's not love, at least not yet.'

But what about her? Maria seemed genuinely into me. Did she simply love what she knew about me? Perhaps our feelings for each other were just as shallow...

"But, can I tell you a secret?" My mother suddenly intruded on my thoughts, causing me to look at her once more.

"Y-yeah."

"Love is... like a seed. It starts out small. And then it grows. It's possible to feel a strong sense of affinity for someone. Give it time, and it could blossom into something."

"A-ah, even if you hardly know the person?"

"It's possible for someone to fall in love with someone they don't really know. But, that would mean that they simply have a wrong knowledge of their object of interest."

'Ah, I get it now...' My thoughts trailed as my eyes widened.

"If you're not careful, you may end up loving someone who doesn't exist. That's the most tricky aspect of the concept of love."

'If I'm not careful...' A smile formed on my face and I nodded.

My mother was right, after all.

"Thank you, Mom." A genuine smile formed on my face as I took in the proud expression of my lovely mother.

"Yeah, anytime! Come to me for more counsel."

I doubted I would do that anytime soon, but...

"Sure, I'll think about it."

"Now, it's my turn to ask the questions." A scary smile suddenly appeared on her face, causing me to tremble slightly.

'What is this bad feeling?' The hairs on my skin rose.

"Why don't you fill me in on your adventures, Jared...? What's your relationship with that Helmsworth girl?"

My mother's smile was broad, but dark. I could tell that she was in no playful mood.

She cracked her wrists and winded her arms, sending a message of what would happen if I didn't comply.

'Shit!' My mind trembled in defeat.

I knew the inevitable truth. It was either I answered her question with unfettered honesty... or get a mighty suplex.

"Ah! Hmmm..." Anabelle rubbed her chin as she seriously analyzed the situation.

When she had first caught her son in his room, trying to force a girl to do something she was obviously not into, Anabelle was appalled beyond words.

Her only child, and the Hero of the Eastern Kingdom, was into something like that? Her mind could not comprehend it.

Fortunately, he cleared up that misunderstanding, giving her heart some measure of rest.

Then, when Jared asked about 'Love', she was caught off-guard once again, but her maternal instincts instantly took over and she managed to say some words from her heart.

'I might have said nonsense, but...' Anabelle tearily smiled to herself.

After she was done answering his question, the Noble Lady had some of her own.

Her child, Jared, would be an adult in some months, so she couldn't supervise his actions for much longer—not that she was doing much of that these days.

While she missed him a great deal, Anabelle understood perfectly. He was just like his father—both were busy men.

The moment Jared asked about love, though, Anabelle connected the dots and had inquisitions of her own.

For one—

'Does Jared love anyone?'

The image of the Helmsworth girl flashed in her mind, and Anabelle could not help but feel even more giddy and interested in the whole thing.

As a result, she decided to find out... no matter the cost.

And so she did.

"Jared, you..." Anabelle's voice was trembling at this point.

After her son was done explaining the situation to her, she could not believe how hopelessly dense he had been.

"... You're truly hopeless."

A deep-seated respect began forming in Anabelle's heart for Maria, and she silently supported the young girl's endeavor.

It would be nice if Jared married someone he loved, and who loved him.

Unfortunately, the boy didn't even know what love was.

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

Chapter 576: A Shoulder To Lean On

"You're a genius when it comes to Magic, but..." Anabelle shook her head at her son's ignorance.

Of course, she knew he would eventually grow into the knowledge of love, but her patience was already waning.

'No matter the cost, I'll make sure you don't turn out like your father!'

"So, what should I do?" The boy posed a question.

Anabelle had forgotten the last time Jared has asked a genuine question for something he did not understand.

He always seemed to know so much.

At this moment, she felt triumphant, for some reason.

"Don't you worry, Jared..."

Finally, she would take the lead!

"... Just follow my instructions."

"U-urhh..." Maria slurred as she woke from her deep slumber.

She had never felt so comfortable waking up. It was like her entire body had gone through a restructuring, because it felt too good.

As she yawned, her body stretched in the most pleasant way, and she was happy to be awake.

'Haaa...!' She didn't yet know where she was, but she was already enjoying her stay there.

Slowly, though, her memory returned, and she remembered what actually occurred.

Her eyes widened instantly, and the pleasant emotions she felt slowly started to fade.

Still, she felt a strange calm wash over her. It calmed her nerves, but it didn't change the fact that she was freaking out.

"Haa... Haaa..." Sweat started forming on her body again, and it seemed like fear would consume her once more.

However—

"Maria, calm yourself."

The young girl's eyes sharply moved in the direction of the voice, and she noticed Jared appearing from nowhere.

He had a certain charm to him at this point, but Maria's fear was skyrocketing due to the ever-increasing return of her memories.

"Relax... I'm here."

Before her emotions could peak even further, Jared swiftly embraced her.

"A-ah..." Maria was stunned, but not repulsed.

At that moment, a hug was probably what she needed the most—especially since it was coming from someone like Jared.

"It's fine, Maria. Calm down. I'm here." The young lady tightened her grip on Jared as she heard those words.

For the first time in a really long time, tears broke forth, and she began shaking. However, this time it wasn't fear.

No, it was more of relief.

Yes—she was relieved.

"T-thank you..." Maria whispered.

As she remained locked in his arms, the fear and anxiety she felt slowly disintegrated—overshadowed by a higher emotion.

"... Thank you, Jared."

It took some time for Maria to calm down, but I waited patiently.

We embraced for so long that I forgot how much time had passed.

At some point, I felt she was already past her fears, but she kept hugging me. It almost felt like a baby who didn't want to let go of a grown adult's body.

She just 'stuck' to me.

I was tempted to speak up, but considering what she had just gone through, it was only fair I humored her.

As expected, after a while, she let go of me. Her moist eyes had dried up, and she was looking much better.

A smile formed on her frosty face as she thanked me and sat up on her bed.

"You're welcome." I smiled.

I had never seen this side of Maria. Experiencing it made me feel a certain kind of emotion that I couldn't quite put into words.

The major issue of concern was the reason why she acted in that way. Of course, I understood she was still recoiling from shock, but it would do a lot of good if I knew the problem.

'Let's not rush things, though. She should rest first. I can always ask later...' With that in mind, I asked some simple questions about her body and how she was feeling.

She replied positively, of course. But, as expected, she had a few questions of her own.

"Where are we?"

"Ah, well... this is my home. You're currently in my room." I didn't realize the implication of my words until after they were uttered.

'Stupid!'

"A-ah... r-really?" I noticed Maria suddenly developed an interest in her surroundings.

Her eyes scoured everywhere, taking in the details as I spoke to her nervously.

"I brought you here without thinking. Forgive me..."

Logical reasoning told me that I would have simply taken her to one of the numerous Guest Rooms we had in our Manor.

Why did it have to be here? No, more importantly... why didn't Mum say anything about it?

'That sly woman...'

So much for teaching me about Love.

"I-it's fine, really. So this is where you grew up... it's less fancy than I thought."

"Haha... yes." I laughed.

There was no way I could tell her that while this was my personal room, I spent most of my night hours with my mother.

She didn't like sleeping alone, and to be honest... neither did I—especially after the stunts my Mom pulled over the years.

My body was simply accustomed to having a partner while sleeping.

'I still prefer being alone than sharing an awkward moment in bed, though.' I instantly shook my head and tried to return to topic.

"When you were in traumatic shock, I brought you here so you could feel comfortable and relaxed. So, don't worry about anything and make yourself at home."

While there really wasn't enough time, I didn't want to put Maria in a position where she would have no choice but to relive whatever caused her that trauma.

"I-I think I'm ready to talk, Jared. It's better to get it off my chest as soon as possible..." She murmured.

'Ah? She's saying it of her own volition?'

"I know you're being considerate by not asking me about what actually happened. But... I don't want to slow you down, Jared. Even if, at this point, I can't catch up to you... I would rather not be a burden as well."

Maria's eyes glowed with determination. How could I refuse her offer?

"Very well. So, tell me. What happened?"

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

Chapter 577: Dark History

It all happened when Maria was a little girl.

She was barely four years old, and her Mana training had officially begun.

Since she was a genius, she had Awakened much earlier than others—at the age of three years old.

As a result, while others were still trying their hardest to go past the threshold, she was already learning the concepts of Magic.

If there was one word to use to describe the elegant young girl, it would be 'Genius!'

Maria was the genius of the Helmsworth family—one of the great 4 Nobles.

The Crimsons, the Leonards, the Netherlores, and the Helmsworths.

Their families were as old as the Eastern Kingdom itself, so her family had access to numerous resources.

Still, according to what she was told, she was a bright star in their family—one whose talent was unmatched.

Maria, at that point, felt glad.

While it was not something she chose for herself, she relished the fact that she was special.

The only downside was when they compared her to her cousin—Stefan.

The Helmsworth family and the Netherlores used to be one household—until a portion defected and made the Netherlore faction.

As a result, she and Stefan were distant relatives—cousins to be precise.

It was unavoidable that they would meet—and every time, she would see the gaze Stefan used anytime their eyes met.

'He doesn't like me much...' She often thought to herself.

It was only expected, though.

Childish jealousy was something that young humans were capable of. Besides, Stefan must have also received a lot of pressure from his family.

Naturally, his inclination toward his more talented competitor would be sour.

Maria decided to talk to him—patch things up eventually.

Magic didn't determine their relationship as family... or as friends.

Unfortunately, the next day, the most ghastly thing occurred.

"RUUUUUNNNN!!!"

"We can't beat that thing!"

"What is this monster?!"

"Evacuate the young lady! Guark!!!"

While training in the field—trying her hardest to perfect the simple Spell her tutor made her practice alone—a horrendous monster appeared.

It fell from the sky—like a meteorite.

The ground shattered, like glass, and it was only a miracle that Maria didn't get badly hurt—or worse—during the incident.

An invasion of the Helmsworth estate was never going to be taken lightly, so of course several Mages and Knights appeared to get rid of the monster.

However, no matter how many of them arrived at the scene, they all horribly failed.

'W-what is that?!' Maria asked herself as she sat on the ground, too petrified to move.

Her body had given up all the energy they had, so she couldn't even stand.

The monster—like a murky dark sludge—was so repulsive that Maria would have vomited several times over if she could move her body in the slightest.

The smell of ammonia tingled her nose as she realized she had soiled herself while staring at the pure black slime monster.

It was over ten feet tall, and its several tentacles, coupled with its extremely flexible and durable physique, made it an impossible monster to kill.

Also, for some reason...

"Magic isn't working!"

"What kind of Magic Beast is this?"

"This energy I'm sensing... is this even Magic?!"

All her protectors could do nothing in the presence of such absolute power.

They all dropped like flies—dying one after the other.

Even the ones who avoided combat and simply tried to evacuate her met the same fate.

Maria watched as blood and gore littered the field where she usually had her training. The monster showed no compassion as it slaughtered everyone in its path.

Maria waited for her turn... though it never came.

Finally, after wreaking enough destruction and carnage, the monster vanished—or more like it imploded.

Maria, who had patiently waited for her death while being drenched in sweat and pee, didn't stop trembling even after the monster disappeared.

Whether it had died, or was simply waiting for the right time to kill her, she didn't know.

And so, she could do nothing but shiver and replay the deaths of the brave men and women who sacrificed themselves for her—the true genius if the Helmsworth household.

By the time her parents—who were in an important meeting at the Royal Palace—along with several important figures in the Helmsworth household, arrived, the damage had been done.

The monster was gone... and the genius of the Helmsworth family was scarred forever.

"It took me weeks to stop shaking after that incident. Even after, I found it hard to properly express my emotions, so I was taught to numb them."

'Ah, I see. That's why she's usually blank.'

"I went through Magic Therapy, and it took me a lot of time to recover. But, even while going through the process, I heard that the day after that attack... Stefan Awakened."

"Really?"

I still had no idea what connected the monster in her childhood to Stefan, or why she was suddenly reminded of that childhood experience when Stefan showed up after so many years.

"I often wondered at the coincidence, but since I wanted to forget that incident, I let everything go..." Her eyes were now looking very dark as she spoke.

It was like a burning anger was swelling within her.

"The reason why I brought up my past, and how it connects to Stefan is..." As she locked eyes with me, I could sense certainty.

"... Stefan's felt exactly the same as that monster all those years ago."

'Huh?!' My eyes widened slightly.

'What is she talking about?'

"You felt it too, didn't you? That power surrounding Stefan. It wasn't Mana, was it? It felt completely different... repulsive! Its exactly the same as that monster from my childhood!"

"But you were young then. There's no way you can vividly remember precisely how the energy—"

"Yes, I can! I've been able to distinguish certain Spells and Mana attributes from one another ever since I was a kid. I know what I'm talking about."

My eyes widened as she responded. Maria truly was a genius.

Still, about what she said... I had to believe Maria at this point. Everything seemed too intense to be a lie.

'If she's right, though... then we're in a bigger mess than I thought.'

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

Chapter 578: Getting Closer

"Stefan Netherlore and that monster... they share a connection."

My eyes widened and my brain began calculating the possibilities.

'A monster that is immune to Magic. It appeared and disappeared mysteriously, killing the many Helmsworth Mages and Knights that challenged it...'

Stefan also got Awakened the next day, and the whole incident seemed as though it never happened.

"The Helmsworth family is one of the major powers of the Kingdom. There's no way their security is weak..."

That meant the monster had to be unimaginably powerful. Shouldn't such a beast have left some sort of trace?

"We never got any whiff of it, Jared. It was like... it never even existed, to begin with." Maria muttered.

The more I learned, the more conflicted I became.

'They would have employed anything in their power to solve this mess. It bothers me that they haven't done so yet.'

Besides... what is Stefan's connection to all this?'

I was still unsure of the definite conclusion, but even I felt a strange energy around Stefan. Or rather, I couldn't feel it at all.

It was just... like a darkness I couldn't comprehend.

"We'll need to investigate this further."

"H-how?" Maria looked at me with an unsure expression.

'A-ah, right! This all happened over ten years ago. How would we even start...?'

Unfortunately for me, I was now obsessed with this subject. When that happened, I needed to reach the bottom—no matter the subject.

"We'll pay the Netherlores a visit."

"R-really? I don't know, Jared... I don't think I'm up for it."

"Why not?"

"If what I sensed is right, the Netherlores must have a connection to that monster... and to Stefan. You didn't see the thing, Jared. It's impossible..."

Somehow, her words wounded my pride.

"Maria... do you think I'm incapable of protecting you?"

"I didn't say that. It would just be better if you went on your own. I wouldn't want to be dead weight or anything..."

'What's up with her?' I asked myself.

It was understandable if she was scared, or I'd her trauma couldn't allow her to face any possibility that could lead her to the monster she described.

But... this felt completely different.

"Well, suit yourself," I murmured with a shrug.

I tried understanding things from her perspective, so it was better to leave her be.

'No use in forcing anything.' I nodded gently.

"B-by the way... when will we talk about... 'that'." Maria's voice was low now, and her eyes sharply observed me.

"What do you mean? That?" My brain was already saturated with multiple thoughts that I didn't completely get what she meant.

"The fact that you're Lewis Griffith in tha—"

"OHHHHHHH!!!!!" I sharply interrupted Maria with a howl, staggering back as I covered my face with my hand.

'Ah, shoot! Why did you tell her, Jared?'

It felt like how a sober man would regret the decisions he made while in a drunken state. The game we played—Truth or Share—had made me too much on my heart. That caused me to make such a fatal mistake.

'Shit! Oh, great! This is going to be awkward...' Nervousness set in, but I didn't let any of it show.

"What's there to talk about—?"

"Are you kidding? I want to know everything! It sounds so crazy! Well, it sort of makes sense, considering everything we've been through... still..."

"Hm... I don't know..." I rubbed my chin, pretending to give the entire thing a thought.

'I need to find [The Fool] Arcana quickly. That way...'

"Don't even think of erasing my memories. I like that I know! Hold on, how many people know already?"

"Including you, I'd say five."

"Yesss! Looks like I'm a part of your inner circle now." Maria gave a surprising smile.

The whites of her teeth showed, and I could sense excitement bursting through her face.

'Is she a Lewis Griffith fanatic, like Ana?' If that was the case, then I was in danger.

"W-well, the truth is I've not completely figured out why I got reincarnated into this body. It's still a work in progress."

"Still... I have lots of questions to ask."

"That means you'll have to come with me. I'm leaving to investigate the Netherlores. Time is of the essence."

We would be facing Stefan sooner or later, and I really wanted to understand the strange power he now wielded—especially how he was able to reach such a rank in the Cult.

'There's no way everything is just a coincidence.'

"F-fine, I'll come. But you have to tell me everything!" Maria beamed.

'Everything? Why would I do that?'

"You seem more excited than usual." I pointed out.

Usually, Maria never showed such extreme emotions. Usually...

"Well, I just feel like we now know each other's past—our respective secrets.

Of course, they are not by any means comparable, but... it's just that, after this exchange, I feel we've gotten a bit closer."

"A-ah, I see. You're right." I indeed felt more invested in Maria after learning more about Maria.

If it was the same for her—despite the awkward truth—that meant my Mom was right.

'Knowing people more deepens that bond of love—or, er... feelings...'

"Are you sure you have no problem with me being an old man?" I awkwardly raised the question.

"How old are you, Jared?"

"You mean my cumulative age, or—"

Suddenly, I felt Maria's hand pressing on my chest. She had moved so quickly that her body was now pressing against mine, and I could feel her warmth once more.

"I mean 'how old are you?'"

Feeling her body so close to me caused a reaction in my body, and I swiftly stepped away before the symptoms grew worse.

"See? That explains everything, doesn't it?" She watched me blush, and I felt like she was teasing me.

'This girl...!' Even after realizing who I was, it didn't seem to faze her a bit.

"Weren't you the one that proposed an unverified theory in one of your Treatises... about the Soul's age? "

'A-ah? She knew that?!' My eyes widened in surprise.

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

Chapter 579: Investigating The Netherlores

"You literally said that it's possible that our Souls are thousands of years old, that maybe we're all connected to the Soul of this world, and that we return to it once we die."

"H-how do you even—? That was a limited, older edition. I wasn't sure anyone would be crazy enough to read or remember the contents."

Except fanatics like Ana, of course.

"Well, I studied Lewis Griffith too, okay? Just because I wasn't a loudmouth about it doesn't mean I didn't appreciate his works."

'A-ah, I see...'

Maria was basically using my unverified theory to justify my soul being old, yet my body being young.

"You just happen to have your memories intact, different from the rest of us. Or maybe..." Maria's eyes widened slightly, as though another idea popped into her head.

"What do you think happened to the Soul of the original Jared Leonard?"

"I don't know. This isn't the time to think about that, though. There's no point fishing for answers if there isn't sufficient information... or time. Why do you think I haven't explored further into my Reincarnation?"

Maria nodded slightly, sighing as she returned to her position on the bed.

"In any case, we should be heading out now..." I cast a glance at Maria's fixated expression.

Unlike before, where her expression was blank, the only thing I saw her do now was smile.

'Stop staring at her, Jared!' Now feeling self conscious, I cleared my throat and prepared a teleportation Spell Card.

"We'll use Magic Tools and the [Unknowable] Spell to sneak into the Netherlore Residence. That way, we'll get what we want faster."

The issue was whether or not the Spell would work, considering the fact that even Stefan was immune to its traceless function.

"We could put on disguises too. That would make it easier for us to escape liability if we're caught."

"Nice thinking!" I beamed at Maria.

The disguise had to be without the use of Magic—considering we didn't know what to expect there.

She blushed upon hearing my words, and seeing her make such a face also made me blush. It was crazy!

'I guess telling her wasn't so bad, after all...' A smile formed on my face as I free closer to the bed.

"You're telling me everything, remember! I haven't forgotten!"

"Y-yeah... I know." I awkwardly laughed, taking back my earlier thoughts.

'Shit! Shit Shiiiiitttt!!!'

A man was rapidly trying to clear a vast amount of resources from a shelf and his desk.

There were also several workers who did the same outside his office.

In the vast room, they all hurriedly began packing every material that was linked to what they were researching—in essence, everything in sight.

"Shit! This is so sudden! How are we supposed to get all of this done?!" He lamented as he kept doing his work.

The man—alongside the other personnel who worked as hard as they could—were all within the Netherlore Estate.

This was a secret facility, and according to the Intel they got, it was about to get compromised.

'We have to clear everything before he arrives? Shit!'

That meant it could be anytime from now.

The angry, but worried man—Professor Ladvel—was a brilliant mind within the Eastern Kingdom.

Many praised him of an intellect on par with Lewis Griffith himself. But, since that wasn't enough for him, he decided to prove himself as superior.

Comparing someone of his caliber to an outdated scholar was nothing short of an insult.

The Netherlore family contacted him many years ago, and he had been working for them in a groundbreaking project ever since.

That was probably why he was so frustrated that he had to evacuate his life's work within the short amount of time he had.

'They would have had me destroy these precious notes of research instead? Those barbarians!' Ladvel growled, quickening his pace.

The grey streaks on his full black hair fluttered as he moved in a hurry. He was already balding at his scalp, and several of his hairs were falling out, but he ignored them.

'Using Magic would have been so much easier...!' He glanced at the remaining documents he had to pack within his large bag.

He understood why he couldn't dare use something like that here, so he decided not to be hung up on the subject.

"Almost done. Almost done! Almost—!"

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

A blast rang out from outside Ladvel's office, making him groan in utter annoyance and frustration.

As he feared, they were too late in evacuating.

'Shit!' He quickly packed the rest of his items, hoping his staff would hold the enemies back until he was done.

Just some seconds more, and that would be it!

"So this is the place? It does look shady... like a lab." He could hear the voice of a boy ringing out loud.

'So, he's finally here, uh?'

The one who just entered the room was none other than Jared Leonard. There was no way Ladvel wouldn't recognize his voice.

"Shit!!!" The man knew he could only pray for his subordinates.

'I have to hurry!'

Okay, so we teleported to the Netherlore Residence using [The Tower].

I gave Maria one of my [Unknowable] cloaks, so we were both immune to sensory abilities and Magic detection.

As expected of a Noble Household, it was very vast.

It wasn't as large as the Leonard Residence—probably because we lived in the rural area. That meant more land for us.

'Okay, let's begin!' I telepathically communicated to Maria, who was beside me.

~Sure!~

Thanks go 'Resonance', we were both able to sense our respective locations and communicate effectively.

As a result, bypassing the guards was not too difficult.

~Where exactly are we going?~

'Beneath us.' I answered Maria's inquisition.

Since I could use Spellcraft to sense everything around for miles—as long as there was Mana involved—it made sense that I would be able to locate where everything and everyone was.

But, even though I should have had access to every nook and cranny of the place—after all, Mana was everywhere—I couldn't sense anything at all in a particular point underneath.

It was like a dark blot in the entire space.

No Mana at all!

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

Chapter 580: Strange Elements [Pt 1]

We made our way down, using the intangibility function of our cloaks.

As we passed through the walls, like ghosts, Maria and I descended the stairs and have hidden passages that should have kept strangers away.

The building was structured in such a way that it had so many levels—even underground.

Mana Gems provided illumination, and the structure seemed to be built using a rather strong alloy as the base material.

The walls had a metallic gleam to it, but I chose not to focus on those for too long.

I sensed some activity in every floor, making me curious as to what exactly the Netherlores were doing in such secret underground structure.

'Time to find out!'

Fortunately, I came prepared.

Summoning my Automatons—all of which had the [Unknowable] effect on them—I sent them to the various locations we bypassed.

'That final spot underground... that's the goal!'

I spotted so many Magic Traps and defences. I as we ventured deeper. Unfortunately for the Netherlores, none of them were going to be of any help.

They couldn't sense Maria's presence or mine. Besides, even if they could, we would simply pass through them.

'It's perfect!'

My heart somehow raced in both excitement and dread as we got close to the blot in space.

What I was sensing from there almost felt... forbidden.

'Could this be it? The big Netherlore secret?' My thoughts rang.

Soon, we arrived close to the point where Mana was basically nonexistent. Maria and I halted, now standing before a door.

'I don't know what exists beyond this door. It could be dangerous. If you want, I could teleport you away and take care of this myself—'

One glare from Maria made me realize I had said something unnecessary.

~We've already come this far together. Let's end this the same way.~

I couldn't agree any more.

As we both nodded while grinning ear to ear—at least, it felt like that was the expression she made.

'Alright. Why don't we pass through this—'

As I touched the large metallic wall, my body felt hard and stiff.

"U-uh?"

I wasn't intangible—or invisible—any longer.

'What in the...?!'

It was unexpected, but the [Unknowable] effect on my hand had gone.

Realizing this, I quickly removed it from the metallic wall—causing another strange phenomena to occur.

'It returned to its invisible state...?'

Why? What was happening?

'Could it be Anti-Magic?'

No—my [Unknowable] was a product of the Tower Arcana. I extrapolated one of its space-bending functions to allow myself become intangible and non-visible.

Kind of like I was at a particular place, and also not there at the same time.

Anti-Magic couldn't interfere with Laws that complicated. It simply offset the effects of Magic made from Mana and Miasma.

Besides... this didn't feel like Anti-Magic.

There was no trace of Mana or Miasma behind the door.

There was no trace of anything!

"We'll have to destroy this door. There's a possibility we've already been compromised. To get what we want, we're going to have to move quickly."

Magic perhaps wouldn't work, even if I attempted to destroy the door with it.

'Let's find out.'

>SHUUUUUUUU<

The moment my Mana or Miasma attack touched the surface of the door, it dissipated. There was no resistance at all. The Spell simply melted away into nothingness.

'This is serious. So it doesn't just offset the Spell or disrupt the process... this stuff simply kills it.'

As I observed the door, I wondered what kind of element it was.

If only I could use Magic on it, things would be much easier, but it just looked like a pitch-black metal door.

~What should we do now? Give up?~ Maria's thoughts echoed in my head.

Give up? Me?

It appeared Maria Helmsworth did not know me very well.

When confronted with impossible tasks like this, I found it very hard to detach myself from exploring all the possibilities.

Unless every single route was cut off, I wouldn't stop! This obsession was a great strength of mine, but also a flaw.

As I pondered on what next to do, a sudden thought sparked in my mind.

'Hm... why don't I try this?'

I reached out for my Subspace and brought out a card. It was, of course, an Arcana—one of the two that I had currently had in my possession.

'[Strength]. I smiled at the glowing card.

It gleamed with its usual malleable energy—taking fluid-like form and several colors while warbling.

I somehow had the inclination that this would work. And so...

'What Spell should I try with this? Maybe a Fireball?'

>VWUUUUUSSSHHHH<

Before I even completed my thought, the Arcana's took the form of glowing ember, and flames suddenly manifested in front of me.

The intensity was unlike anything I had ever felt, though it was in minimal form.

'It... read my mind and generated the Spell?'

I hadn't fully deciphered the capabilities of [Strength], but at this point I was understanding even more.

'The energy I'm sensing from it isn't Mana or Miasma. It's something else entirely...'

However, compared to what was behind the door, the power of [Strength] felt better... more familiar.

'I can't explain it, but... it feels so different, yet so familiar.'

Two new different forms of power were currently evident before me. And I had no idea what to call them!

'What matters now is that I don't think the door can resist this fireball. I'll think about the rest later. For now... let's get what we want!'

~Agreed.~

The fireball spun as I directed it at the door.

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

The door was instantly destroyed—burned to nothing.

'A-ah!'

That wasn't all!

The blazing trail kept burning through everything, until it finally died out.

I was amazed by the destructive capability of a single ball of flames—something that would qualify as Basic Magic by normal standard.

Sure, I knew it was denser and more powerful than a normal fireball, but not to this extent!

As I watched the simmering hot smoke and glowing embers left behind by the flame's attack, I was beyond shocked.

'E-everything in its path... got destroyed!'