

W. Secret 121

Chapter 121: Shock and Disappointment

“Capace? Catherine? Why are you here?”

After all the Dark Vampire Bats in the forest had been eliminated, Wizard Danbe also noticed Capace and Catherine.

“Wizard Danbe, please save Father and Wizard Pario quickly.”

Catherine was obviously acquainted with Wizard Danbe, so she briefly explained everything to him.

Wizard Danbe’s expression changed, then turned to Holmes and said, “Wizard Holmes, what do you think?”

Holmes also understood the whole situation now. After giving it some thoughts, he knew they had to fully grasp the situation of these Dark Vampire Bats to complete the mission.

Thus, Wizard Holmes squinted his eyes and glanced at Catherine and Capace. Then, he lowered his voice and said, “Bring us to the Dark Vampire Bats’ nest.”

Catherine and Capace were naturally happy to hear that, so they quickly answered, “Their nest is not far from here. Let’s go quickly.”

After saying that, the two brought Merlin hurriedly into the forest.

Not long after, the team arrived at an empty land.

Some bloody bodies were lying on the ground. They were the Elemental Swordsmen, Fourth-level and above, Donglin City had sent but most of them had died here. The thick bloody stench made them sick.

Upon seeing so many corpses, their expression turned dark. These people were all intermediate Elemental Swordsmen who could threaten Spell Caster but most of them had lost their lives here. This directly indicated that the Dark Vampire Bats here were difficult to deal with.

“Two caves?”

Holmes frowned. As he looked at the caves, he seemed a little hesitant.

“Screech!”

Right at this time, a sharp noise echoed. They could faintly make out the figure of the Dark Vampire Bats whose bodies gleamed a faint red from the dark caves.

The Dark Vampire Bats flew out of the caves in flocks, covering the sky. Looking from afar, they were as if a cluster of red clouds. As a rough estimate, there were at least a thousand of them. It was no wonder even thirty Fourth-level Ice Swordsmen led by Wizard Pario would be in danger.

“Dark Mist!”

Merlin’s reaction was the quickest. Almost when the Dark Vampire Bats had flown out of the caves, he had already cast Dark Mist.

Instantly, a cluster of mist appeared out of thin air, covering an area of dozen meters. It hovered over the two dark caves. However, Dark Mist had no effect at all. As if they were not affected at all, the Dark Vampire Bats continued dashing toward Merlin and the team in a frenzy.

“The Dark Vampire Bats are Darkness-type Elemental Monster. Your Dark Mist won’t have much effect on them. Everyone, give your all. Without eliminating these Dark Vampire Bats, we won’t be able to enter the caves.”

Wizard Holmes’ voice rang. At this time, his robe had completely set off its defensive power with mysterious runes covering his body. The Dark Vampire Bats which crashed into Holmes crazily were bounced off by the mysterious runes.

“Confinement Wind!”

Wizard Holmes waved his hands. A countless gust of violent wind immediately appeared and confined the Dark Vampire Bats.

“Explosive Ice!”

Holmes’ spells were mostly offensive-type. Even his Ice-type spell had a strong attack power that could injure his enemy in a small area.

Holmes cast his spells continuously. Obviously, he did not dare to keep something up his sleeve and had given his all. He had already cast all his four spells – Ground Dragon Spike, Explosive Ice, Confinement Wind, and Scorching Flame. Under such strong offensive-type spells, the Dark Vampire Bats had no way of getting near to Holmes and Ryllis.

This also directly indicated the powerful ability of Holmes as the genius Spell Caster in the Dark Magic Region!

Holmes had the ability to protect Ryllis who was behind him. However, at Merlin’s side, both Laurinka and Wizard Danbe were not that strong, so they could only protect themselves. They were unable to protect Capace and Catherine

Under the attack of thousands of crazy Dark Vampire Bats, Capace and Catherine were in an extremely dangerous predicament.

Merlin frowned. At this time, he could no longer hide his true ability.

“Sigh...”

Merlin let out a long breath. Following that, he raised his head and his powerful Mind Power rapidly stimulated the Spell Model in his Awareness.

“Thunderbolt Net!”

Since Dark Mist did not have much effect on these Dark Vampire Bats, Merlin could only cast the Thunderbolt Net he had created not long ago.

As soon as Merlin finished his words, flashes of thunder began to light up and rapidly connected into one piece just like a huge net. The net of electric rays hovered over most of the Dark Vampire Bats.

The thunderbolts rumbled, and its powerful force instantaneously blasted toward the Dark Vampire Bats in the net. Thunderbolt Net was originally an offensive-type spell which covered a large area. Moreover, it had a paralyzing effect. Amongst many level-zero spells, it could definitely be counted as one of the strong ones. If this was not the case, it would not require five contribution points to be exchanged in the Resource Tower.

Although the electric force of Thunderbolt Net might still be unable to injure these troublesome Dark Vampire Bats, the paralyzing effect could temporarily halt their movement.

“Swoosh!”

A strong fluctuation of Wind Element flashed on Merlin’s body. He had cast Gale, so everyone only saw Merlin’s figure flashing into the flock of Dark Vampire Bats.

“Kachak, kachak.”

Freezing and destruction occurred repeatedly. Wherever Merlin had been, the place was covered in ice. These paralyzed the Dark Vampire Bats where they had no chance of defending themselves at all. After Merlin had frozen them, they fell to the ground and broke into pieces.

“Fireball, Frostl, Gale, Dark Mist, and Thunderbolt Net. Merlin is actually a Five-Elemental Spell Caster...”

Upon seeing Merlin’s figure weaving in and out among the Dark Vampire Bats and killing those troublesome bats without putting much effort, everyone was stunned.

Even the usually prideful Wizard Holmes could not hide the shock in his eyes after watching Merlin casting five spells.

Five-Elemental Wizard was extremely small in number and rare even amongst large Spell Casters organization. Holmes who had constructed Four-Elemental spell knew very well how much courage and determination those Spell Casters who constructed Five-Elemental spell needed to have.

The slightly chubby Wizard Ryllis wore a confused look. She could recall that Merlin did not even know what contribution point was when he first came to the Dark Magic Region half a year ago. Now, he had become a Five-Elemental Wizard. Such a change was truly beyond belief.

“He’s either a super genius or a madman who has given up on himself.”

Holmes gazed at Merlin with a complicated look. In his view, Spell Casters who could construct Five-Elemental spells were usually determined and equipped with excellent talent. However, Merlin was in Wizard Leo’s tower. He was obviously not thought highly of by the Dark Magic Region and belonged to the not-so-talented group.

People like him had most possibly lost hope of becoming a First-level spell Caster, so he constructed level-zero spell without caring about anything else to increase his strength.

“Five-Elemental Spell Caster... Has he truly given up?”

Laurinka had the same thought as Holmes. She came from a Spell Caster family, so she naturally understood the meaning behind constructing five level-zero spells. That was a person who had the absolute confidence to become a strong Spell Caster of First-level, Second-level, Third-level or even Fourth-level. He must also have had a strong determination to be above his own peer.

Such a person was without a doubt a super genius rarely seen in a hundred years!

However, Laurinka also knew about Merlin’s ability. As a roaming Wizard, the three Spell Models he had constructed might already be unstable. At this time, he did not stabilize the Spell Models he had constructed before. Instead, he constructed more spells. Such a move, in Laurinka’s view, had undoubtedly shown that Merlin had completely given up the chance of becoming a First-level spell Caster.

Laurinka’s eyes were overflowing with disappointment.

Chapter 122: Pool of Blood

As compared to Holmes, Ryllis and Laurinka who were more familiar about Five-Elemental Spell Caster, Capace, Catherine, and even Wizard Danbe stared at Merlin with a dumbfounded look. They watched him as he massacred the Dark Vampire Bats without much difficulties and obstructions. No matter how many Dark Vampire Bats there were, they would not be able to threaten Merlin at all.

“Is this the true strength of a Spell Caster? Wizard Merlin is too strong... Stronger than anyone I’ve seen!”

Capace exclaimed sincerely from his heart.

Wizard Danbe simply took a glance at Wizard Holmes, then he shook his head slightly. Initially, he had thought Wizard Holmes was the strongest amongst them but Merlin had now shown his true strength. Those troublesome Dark Vampire Bats could not cause any harm to Merlin at all.

Thus, he just realized that Merlin was the strongest amongst them.

“Kachak.”

Merlin again froze another Dark Vampire Bat. As he cast Thunderbolt Net, he kept casting his Frost as well. He was definitely in a triumphant state now. It seemed like those extremely troublesome Dark Vampire Bats had no way of harming him at all.

This was a single-sided massacre! However, the only thing Merlin was worried about was a large number of these Dark Vampire Bats. His Frost was not a large-scale offensive spell. If he killed them one by one, even if he depleted all his Magic Power, he could not finish killing the Dark Vampire Bats at all.

Thus, Merlin looked at Wizard Holmes and shouted, “Wizard Holmes, these Dark Vampire Bats are all paralyzed by my Thunderbolt Net. It’s most suitable for you to cast Explosive Ice now.”

Holmes came to his senses. He glanced at Merlin with a complicated look. Even though he did not think that Merlin had the chance of becoming a First-level spell Caster, it was the truth that Merlin was stronger than him now.

However, Holmes did not hesitate. He knew that all these Dark Vampire Bats were not something him or Merlin could deal with alone. With the paralyzing effect of Merlin's Thunderbolt Net on the Dark Vampire Bats, his Explosive Ice could bring the most outstanding result.

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

Wizard Holmes cast nearly ten Explosive Ice at once. Suddenly, a whole flock of Dark Vampire Bats in front of him were blasted into pieces and fell on a large area of empty space.

"Screech!"

A series of sharp noises came from the caves again. The Dark Vampire Bats which were not shrouded by Merlin's Thunderbolt Net immediately turned around and flew into the caves.

Merlin had continuously cast Thunderbolt Net multiple times. The consumption of his Magic Power was overwhelming. After all, he had only just constructed Thunderbolt Net not long ago. Even if he used a Darkness elemental crystal stone to accumulate his Magic Power, he could only continuously cast the spell for about twenty times.

Thus, when he saw these Dark Vampire Bats were retreating, he stopped casting Thunderbolt Net.

The Thunderbolt Net resided, and the flock of Dark Vampire bats did not attack Merlin and the others. They directly flew into the dark caves and disappeared completely in the blink of an eye.

Wizard Holmes gazed at the caves behind him and thought for some time. He seemed to be a little hesitant.

However, he made a decision soon as he said to Merlin and the others, "There are two caves here. We'll divide ourselves into two teams. Ryllis and I will be in a team and enter from the left cave. The rest will form the other team and enter from the right cave."

Merlin and Holmes were not from the same tower. If it was not for this mission, they would not know each other, so Holmes and Ryllis forming a group was expected of him.

After all, if they encountered true danger, Holmes would only stick together with Ryllis.

Laurinka and Merlin exchanged a glance, then nodded as an acknowledgment to Holmes' arrangement.

“Alright. If that’s the case, we’ll make a move first.”

Wizard Holmes brought Ryllis and dived into the left cave directly.

Merlin glanced at Capace and Catherine as he frowned. “It’s very dangerous in there. You can’t help much with your ability, so just stay out here.”

However, Catherine quickly replied, “Wizard Merlin, Father is also in there, so we’ll follow you in there. We’ll be at the back and we won’t bring you any trouble.”

Capace was more mature. He initially wanted to listen to Merlin’s arrangement and stayed out here, but Catherine had already answered Merlin. He had no choice, so he only set his gaze toward Merlin.

Merlin frowned. Of course, he knew the eccentric Catherine only wanted to enter out of curiosity. These two were not that strong but they were good at attracting trouble.

Merlin was a little unhappy and said coldly, “We may encounter some danger in there. I can save you once or twice, but I may not be able to save you a third time. If you want to enter with us, then stay at the back.”

After saying that, Merlin no longer cared about Capace and Catherine and directly entered the right cave.

In the deepest part of the dark caves, there was a spacious stone room where a tall altar was built. At this moment, a skinny, silver-haired old man was standing at the altar.

The silver-haired old man was currently frowning as he stared at a large puddle under the altar. This was a puddle of bright red blood, giving off a thick bloody stench.

Moreover, it appeared like something was hidden under the pool of blood. The surface of the pool of blood resembled a boiling water surface, perpetually forming blood bubbles.

“Not enough. It still needs about a thousand persons’ fresh blood.”

The silver-haired old man mumbled softly. Suddenly, he furrowed his eyebrows and raised his head as if he had just noticed something.

“So, the Dark Magic Region still send people here? It’s almost done anyway. Three months... The reaction of the Dark Magic Region is too slow... After I kill these Spell Casters, I should change a location.”

The silver-haired old man muttered to himself. Then, his expression turned gruesome and pointed at a dozen pillars below him.

On each pillar, a person was tied to it. All his limbs were cruelly nailed on the stone pillar but the odd thing was that there was not a single drop of blood on their injuries.

“Swoosh!”

The old man’s emaciated finger pointed to one of the stone pillars. Instantaneously, a Dark Vampire Bat of a larger size appeared and held the person on the pillar and threw him into the pool of blood.

“Arrrghhh!”

The person who was thrown into the pool of blood kept letting out fearful cries. However, his cries were of no use as he rapidly sunk into the pool of blood.

“Hehe, my babies. Come out.”

The silver-haired old man muttered to himself. His extensive Mind Power directly extended into the pool of blood.

“Bloop... Bloop...”

Soon, the pool of blood came to a boil. Suddenly, two gigantic Dark Vampire Bats with bloody red bodies flew out from the pool of blood.

“My babies, go. Your meal is here. You’ll be satisfied with them.”

Two extraordinary Dark Vampire Bats let out a screech, then quickly flew into the two dark caves respectively...

Chapter 123: Elemental Being I

As soon as Merlin stepped inside the dark cave, he felt a chill straight up his spine.

Although the cave was dark, it was nothing for a Spell Caster like Merlin. They had their Mind Power, so they could see clearly even in the dark.

Merlin was always walking at the front and was always on alert. As soon as he sensed anything, he would halt. After ensuring there was nothing wrong, he would continue his walk.

“Wait. What’s that sound in front?”

Merlin suddenly paused and listened closely.

“Screech!”

The sound became nearer and clearer. Merlin’s expression changed and alerted the others immediately, “Be careful. It may be the Dark Vampire Bats!”

As soon as he finished his words, they saw a gigantic red light appeared in the dark cave in front of them. Moreover, the light was approaching Merlin at an incredible speed.

“Frost!”

Merlin immediately cast his Frost and almost sealed the narrow pathway in the cave.

“Bang!”

A loud bang was accompanied by a strong crash. The red light in front of them was not affected by Frost at all. It directly crashed through the thick ice and dashed straight toward Merlin and the others.

“Hiss!”

At this moment, Merlin had a clear view of the red light. He could not help but took a deep breath.

The red light was, in fact, a gigantic Dark Vampire Bat. As compared to the Dark Vampire Bats they encountered out there, this one was much larger. Its whole body was as red as blood and its figure was hideous. This strange Dark Vampire Bat let out a series of deafening screeches and its speed was even faster than Merlin when he cast Gale.

This one was too quick. Merlin only managed to cast Fireball to halt the Dark Vampire Bat’s speed.

“Bang!”

However, it was to no avail. This Dark Vampire Bat ignored the Fireball which gave out terrifying heat and directly crashed into it. The bat widened its mouth and instantly spat out black mucus which gave off a terrible stench.

The changes transpired too quickly. Merlin did not have the time to react, so he could only avoid it temporarily.

Laurinka who was behind him was also alerted and hurriedly went aside. However, Wizard Danbe was not that lucky. Since the dark mucus came too quickly and the cave was quite dark, Wizard Danbe could not see clearly and cast an Earth-type Defensive spell.

A thick wall made of earth rose and blocked in front of Wizard Danbe. The wall almost blocked off the pathway of the cave.

“Hiss! Hiss!”

The dark mucus spat out by the Dark Vampire Bat seemed to have an unbelievably strong corrosive effect. The earth wall in front of Wizard Danbe only stopped the mucus momentarily. Then, a large hole appeared and the mucus flew onto Wizard Danbe's body.

"What the heck is this?"

Wizard Danbe stared in horror as a bloody hole was corroded through his body. The excruciating pain made him let out a horrified shriek. After that, Wizard Danbe fell on the ground with a gruesome look on his face.

"Hiss!"

Merlin took a deep breath. Fortunately, he did not cast Earth Guard earlier. Although he was confident in Earth Guard, this Dark Vampire Bat was obviously extraordinary having seen Wizard Danbe's ending. It was still difficult to judge whether his Earth Guard would hold against it.

"Retreat quickly."

Merlin howled, knowing this Dark Vampire Bat was special. Other than him, even Laurinka would not be able to defend against a few attacks from this Dark Vampire Bat.

"Screech! Screech!"

The Dark Vampire Bat let out sharp shrieks again. Then, a hint of Darkness Element began to gather around it. In this dark cave, Darkness-type Elemental Monster had its advantage by nature.

This Dark Vampire Bat was currently gathering Darkness Element, obviously trying to cast a spell.

Merlin was shocked. He finally understood how this Dark Vampire Bat was different. Elemental Monster that could cast a spell was rather horrifying. The normal Icelandic Wolf and the Dark Vampire Bats could not cast any spell.

This Dark Vampire Bat could actually cast a spell... Only Vampire Bat King was able to do that!

As she sensed the fluctuation of Darkness Element gradually got stronger, Laurinka could not help but shout, “Not good. Can this be a Vampire Bat King?”

Once a Vampire Bat King was born, it was comparable to a Fourth-level spellCaster and could dominate a certain area of land. It also possessed high intelligence. At this moment, it was no longer called an Elemental Monster but an Elemental Being instead.

From an Elemental Monster to an Elemental Being, it was a change of nature. An Elemental Monster was at most a monster with low intelligence. It was born in some unique place overflowing with Element. Since it was weak, a Entrance-level Spell Caster or intermediate Elemental Swordsman could usually deal with it.

However, once it had become an Elemental Being, it could control Element and possessed higher intelligence, and was no different than a normal human being. Moreover, it would be talented and had an absolute power over a certain Element.

Such an Elemental Being was comparable to the Fourth-level Wizard who could build his own tower in the Dark Magic Region.

“Swish!”

The spell this Dark Vampire Bat cast was a black line which merged with the dark cave. It was difficult to defend against it.

“Is it Darkness Rays? Moreover, it seems to only have an effect as near as that of a First-level spell. This is not a true Vampire Bat King. It should be a Vampire Bat King which is still evolving.”

Merlin’s Mind Power could sharply sense Darkness Rays which blended in the darkness. It was the same for Laurinka, so both could easily avoid it.

However, Catherine and Capace were not so fortunate. Capace was an Elemental Swordsman who was at the peak of Third-level. He could sense a certain amount of danger, so when he felt that it was dangerous, he immediately pulled out his sword and block in front of him.

“Kachak.”

However, it was to no avail. The specialty of Darkness Rays was its extremely strong penetration power. It could easily penetrate even a strong black iron plate, not to mention a normal iron sword.

Darkness Rays, the level-zero spell in the Dark Magic Region, was, in fact, a product of inspiration from the Vampire Bat King. After going through the study of strong Spell Casters, a whole new level-zero spell was finally born.

True Darkness Rays was Talent spell of the Vampire Bat King. It was at the same level as a terrifying Fourth-level spell. Darkness Rays in the Dark Magic Region was way weaker than the Vampire Bat King's Talent spell.

Darkness Rays pierced through Capace's sword. In addition, its power did not lessen and directly penetrated through Capace's palm. Even Catherine who was behind Capace had gotten her whole right arm pierced through by it. The injury shocked Catherine so badly that she almost fainted from it.

Everything happened in a second. Merlin had no other way as well. He could only watch as Capace and Catherine were pierced through by Darkness Rays.

Just as what Merlin had said outside of the cave, he could save Catherine and Capace once or twice, but he might not be able to save them the third time. However, they were still considered lucky. One of them had his palm injured while the other had her arm injured – they did not lose their lives after all.

This experience was a memorable lesson to them.

“Screech!”

This Dark Vampire Bat which was beginning to evolve into Vampire Bat King let out a series of sharp screech. It was still preparing for a stronger attack. Merlin and others were still shrouded in danger.

Chapter 124: Elemental Being II

In the dark cave, the skinny silver-haired old man was currently squinting his eyes. A satisfied grin formed on his face.

“Not bad. There are still some geniuses amongst the Spell Casters of the Dark Magic Region. That Spell Caster with Five-Elemental spell. Tsk, tsk. I’m afraid he’s an outstanding genius in the Dark Magic Region. Sadly, he must die in my baby’s hands. Hehe!”

“However, that Four-Elemental Spell Caster is rather troublesome. His Runic Robe is quite strong. Someone who has a Runic Robe may have other powerful casting tools. I should take note of that.”

The silver-haired old man seemed to be observing the situation of Merlin and Holmes through a certain method. He was warier against Holmes. In his view, although Merlin possessed Five-Elemental spell, he could not win against the Dark Vampire Bat he controlled.

“If it’s impossible, I can only wait for my baby to kill that Five-Elemental Spell Caster, then let both my babies kill that Four-Elemental Spell Caster.”

The silver-haired old man still wore a rather relaxed look. His eyes stared into the giant pool of blood under the altar absent-mindedly. No one knew what he was conspiring now.

“Boom!”

Suddenly, the whole cave seemed to tremble as if it was crumbling apart. The tremble quickly came to an end but the expression of the silver-haired old man had turned dark. His face looked gruesome, almost twisted together.

“Dead... My baby is dead. I want them buried with my baby!”

The silver-haired old man wore a dark expression. He said with gritted teeth and his words were filled with a brutal tone.

Lying in the pathway of the cave, Wizard Danbe laid dead. Catherine and Capace were also injured. They were now withholding their pain and hiding at the sides of the cave.

Even Laurinka had stayed on an alert. Her whole being was giving out intense fluctuation of Element.

“Thunderbolt Net!”

Merlin’s gaze was focused as he cast Thunderbolt Net immediately. In an instant, thunder kept flashing in the narrow cave, painting the dark cave as white as day.

The powerful strength of thunder brought upon by Thunderbolt Net was nothing less than the attack power of Fireball. That was why he could work with Holmes and eliminated so many Dark Vampire Bats.

However, Thunderbolt Net was used against the evolving Dark Vampire Bat now. The effect of thunder on the Dark Vampire Bat slowed down its pace slightly.

Meanwhile, the paralyzing effect of Thunderbolt Net did not affect the evolving Dark Vampire Bat at all.

“No effect?”

As he watched the rapid accumulation of Darkness Element around him, Merlin knew this Dark Vampire Bat was again preparing for its spell. Hence, he did not hold back anymore.

“Rumble!”

A thick pillar of thunder appeared out of thin air, forming a much stronger Thunderbolt Net than before. Merlin finally activated the strengthened version of Thunderbolt Net. This was the first time Merlin cast the strengthened version of the spell after constructing so many Spell Models.

The overall ability of this Dark Vampire Bat was obviously above any normal First-level spell Caster. A normal level-zero spell had no effect on it anymore.

Thus, only Merlin’s strengthened version of the spell could cause some damage to it.

If the thunder of Thunderbolt Net Merlin cast before was only the size of a single strand of hair, then the thunder of this strengthened version was the size of a finger. The power contained in it was naturally very much different.

Thick pillars of thunder were blasted on the Dark Vampire Bat one by one. Even if the Dark Vampire Bat had already started evolving, it was still screeching right now. Its speed gradually slowed down and the redness on his body slowly receded.

Finally, the Dark Vampire Bat was finally paralyzed in five meters before Merlin!

Merlin was elated. His true trump card was, in fact, his strengthened version of spells. Once he cast the spells, each spell would infinitely behave like a First-level spell.

Thus, he also knew that the paralyzing effect of Thunderbolt Net could not be maintained for long, so he kept casting spells.

“Large Frost!”

Strands of chilly air engulfed the Dark Vampire Bat fiercely like a snowstorm. However, this Dark Vampire Bat was no less expected of one which was evolving into an Elemental Being. Even Large Frost was unable to annihilate it.

However, Merlin had more skills up his sleeve. A gigantic fireball appeared before him. Its scorching heat could be felt even by Capace and Catherine who were far away from him.

“Large Fireball. Explode!”

Merlin howled and the gigantic fireball lit up the dark cave. Then, it whistled by and flew toward the Dark Vampire Bat. Meanwhile, the Dark Vampire Bat, which was completely frozen by the Large Frost, could not defend against this gigantic fireball at all.

“Boom!”

A loud bang rang when the gigantic fireball exploded. Since the space in the cave was too narrow, the aftermath created from the explosion was shockingly large. It seemed to cause the whole cave to tremble.

Even Merlin could not stand the scorching heat wave, so he could only cast Gale and hid behind.

After a while, the cave resumed its peacefulness. The fire earlier had turned the cave as bright as day but the cave fell into a total darkness again now.

Merlin's Mind Power did not relax at all. He extended his Mind Power into the dust and checked the situation of the Dark Vampire Bat. However, no matter where he looked, he could not find a trace of the Dark Vampire Bat.

"Is it dead?"

Merlin finally heaved a sigh of relief. The Dark Vampire Bat which was frozen by Large Frost eventually could not withstand Large Fireball and turned into dust completely.

This also showed that the Dark Vampire Bat was only starting to evolve into Vampire Bat King. Once it had become a Vampire Bat King, it would be a terrifying Elemental Being. Even if it was dead, it would leave a body just like any normal living being.

Obviously, this Dark Vampire Bat had turned into dust. Just like the Darkness Vampire Bats which Merlin encountered outside of the cave, they dissipated after they died. They were not living beings but Elemental Monsters were different as they were completely made up of Element.

After dealing with this strong Dark Vampire Bat, Merlin set his gaze on the injured Capace and Catherine. Although both were injured, the injuries were not fatal.

Thus, Merlin said coldly, "If I'm you, I'll leave the cave now and stay outside."

Catherine could no longer speak due to the excruciating pain. Meanwhile, Capace tried hard to stand up and supported Catherine gently. A hint of regret flashed across his face as he muttered softly, "We're too naïve... Wizard Merlin, we'll leave the cave now and wait for you outside."

After that, Capace supported Catherine as they slowly walked out of the cave.

Merlin shook his head slightly. Although they experienced some hardships this time, it was not a bad thing after all. However, he soon placed his gaze on the pathway in front of him which remained dark. With a small frown, he said, "Let's go. I have a premonition that we'll have a larger problem in front."

Laurinka stared at Merlin's back with a complicated look. Earlier, Merlin had not relied on any casting tool but he had annihilated a Darkness Vampire Bat which was comparable to a First-level spell Caster.

This was already not something that a usual Spell Caster could achieve. Without a doubt, there might be some shocking secret about Merlin.

"Maybe he's not completely without a chance to become a First-level spell Caster..."

Laurinka shot a thoughtful look at him and mumbled softly. After that, she hurriedly followed behind Merlin and continued walking into the deeper part of the cave.

Chapter 125: Shaman

In the dark cave, they could finally see a string of light. Merlin and the others walked for a while in the narrow cave before noticing a faint light not far in front of them.

This indicated that they were near the end of the cave. There might be more danger in front, so Merlin and Laurinka were not particularly happy about it. Instead, they became even more cautious.

Both gradually walked out of the passage and arrived at a large cavern with multiple gigantic rock pillars.

A dozen of Elemental Swordsmen and two Spell Casters who were barely breathing were tied on the rock pillars. As if they sensed the motion, a hint of surprise ran across the Spell Casters' faces. They opened their mouths wide but no words came out of it.

Merlin was shocked because he had guessed their identities. They would be Wizard Pario and Marshal Wharton sent by Donglin City. He did not expect to see them caught in the cave and became the way they were now.

"Swoosh!"

Suddenly, Merlin felt an outrageously strong Mind Power hovering over him. The strength of this Mind Power was similar to a Second-level spellCaster.

Merlin was overwhelmed with shock and quickly raised his head and looked for it. He found a tall altar in front of him and a skinny silver-haired old man stood there.

Other than his strong Mind Power, this silver-haired old man also gave a dangerous feeling to Merlin.

“Who are you?”

Merlin felt that this silver-haired old man was closely related to the Dark Vampire Bats outside of the cave.

The silver-haired old man did not answer. Then, Merlin saw two people walking out of the passage at the side. They were Wizard Holmes and Wizard Ryllis.

However, Wizard Holmes and Wizard Ryllis seemed a little messy at the moment. The runes on Holmes’ robe were dark as if the runes were badly damaged. Meanwhile, Ryllis was pale as if she had gone through a life-and-death battle earlier.

“Hmm? Wizard Merlin, Wizard Laurinka, you’re here as well?”

Holmes raised his head. When he saw Merlin and Laurinka, he was stunned, then shook his head. He exclaimed, “Fortunately, you didn’t take our path just now. If you met the Dark Vampire Bat which was about to evolve into a Vampire Bat King, then it’ll be a life-and-death situation for you! Ryllis and I didn’t even mind using the First-level spell Scrolls we exchanged from the Resource Tower to annihilate it.”

From Wizard Holmes’ gaze, it seemed that he still shuddered at the thought of the Dark Vampire Bat he met in the passage.

Merlin seemed serious. He did not explain but he nudged Wizard Holmes to look at the altar.

Holmes and Wizard Ryllis followed Merlin’s gaze and noticed that mysterious silver-haired old man on the altar and both became alerted immediately.

The silver-haired old man took a glance at Holmes and Merlin and sniggered. “Hehe. Both of you killed my babies. Nothing less expected of the genius Spell Casters in the Dark Magic Region! However, my babies will definitely love your meat. Haha...”

The silver-haired old man laughed as if he had gone mad.

“Two?”

Holmes thought for a while, then stared at Merlin with shock. He could not help but exclaimed, “You met the Dark Vampire Bat which was about to evolve into a Vampire Bat King as well?”

Laurinka naturally understood what Holmes was thinking. She took a complicated glance at Merlin, then replied in a low voice, “We met that strong Dark Vampire Bat as well but Wizard Merlin have dealt with it.”

Holmes was surprised even if he knew that Merlin had Five-Elemental spells and was stronger than him. However, how did Merlin and Laurinka annihilate that strong Dark Vampire Bat without a casting tool?

Without waiting for Holmes questioning further, the silver-haired old man on the altar mumbled and pointed to the pool of blood below the altar.

“Come out, baby. Your meal is here. Kill them, eat their flesh. You’ll become a true Vampire Bat King!”

As soon as the silver-haired old man finished his words, the pool of blood immediately bubbled. Slowly, a large, two-meter-tall Dark Vampire Bat came out of the pool of blood. Its whole body had almost taken up half of the pool of blood.

Looking at this strange Dark Vampire Bat, the silver-haired old man’s gaze revealed a hint of crazy passion.

Merlin and Holmes took a deep breath and exchanged glances. They could see the shock in each other’s eyes. The Aura of this large Dark Vampire Bat doubled than the one they met in the passage.

Moreover, its Aura appeared even more violent. Most importantly, thick blood vessels, bones, and flesh full of life could be seen on this Dark Vampire Bat. When they checked with their Mind Power, they could sense a weak living Aura from it.

An Elemental Monster did not have a living Aura as it was formed from rich Element. The ability to produce living Aura indicated that this Dark Vampire Bat had evolved into a true Elemental Being. Indeed, it was a terrifying Vampire Bat King!

The Dark Vampire Bat flew out of the pool of blood. Its large size brought a strong visual impact to everyone. However, when it revealed its whole body, Merlin and Holmes heaved a sigh of relief.

This was because they found that only half of this Dark Vampire Bat had given off a weak living Aura. Other parts did not have any sign of life. This showed that this Dark Vampire Bat had not completely evolved into an Elemental Being.

Nevertheless, it was still much stronger than the two Dark Vampire Bats they encountered in the passage.

“So, you’re an ancient Shaman. You want to build a pool of blood and forcefully turn Dark Vampire Bats into Elemental Beings? It seems that you’re the one who controlled those Dark Vampire Bats to suck living beings’ blood dry in Donglin City.”

Wizard Holmes revealed the identity of the silver-haired old man. This was the advantage he had as a disciple of a large Spell Caster family. At least he knew some of its secrets.

After hearing Wizard Holmes’ words, Merlin instantly recalled some legends regarding the Shamans.

Before Spell Caster had appeared, the whole world was controlled by the ancient witches. There were many types of ancient witches. Some could tame beasts while some were good at producing weird potions. The potions of Spell Casters were mostly improvised from those of ancient witches.

Another unique type of ancient witches was Shamans. They neither tamed beasts nor produced potions. Instead, they specialized in rituals and prayers. After a long time had passed, this had greatly improved their Mind Power. Some Shamans even controlled all sorts of Elemental Monsters in the world with their strong Mind Power.

Moreover, they had a strange method to catalyze the evolution of Elemental Monsters into stronger Elemental Beings.

However, since the birth of Spell Casters who could control all sorts of Elements and held immense power, ancient witches had gradually disappeared.

This silver-haired old man might have received the legacy of Shaman by accident. Thus, he wanted to create an evil pool of blood and let Dark Vampire Bat evolve into Vampire Bat King.

“Someone actually still knows about Shaman. Hehe. Such a shame. What will happen even if you know? After I kill you, I’ll leave the area under the Dark Magic Region’s influence and wait for the Dark Vampire Bats to completely evolve into Elemental Beings! Baby, kill them!”

The silver-haired old man wore a cruel look and pointed at Merlin and Holmes. In an instant, the strong Dark Vampire Bat’s sharp gaze immediately locked onto Merlin and Holmes.

Chapter 126: Crisis

“Let’s go! Our mission is to investigate the situation of the Dark Vampire Bats. Now that we’ve found this out due to the Shaman’s doing, we’ll go back to the Dark Magic Region and report the situation. Then, they’ll sure send strong Spell Casters here to annihilate this Shaman.”

Wizard Holmes immediately took a step back and ran toward the dark passage. He understood well that the Dark Vampire Bat was not easy to be dealt with. Moreover, they had completed their mission. If they returned to the Dark Magic Region now, they could still collect the reward for this mission.

As for the silver-haired old man and the strong Dark Vampire Bat, they would be dealt with by the Dark Magic Region. Not only would they send a Fourth-level Spell Caster or above to kill the Dark Vampire Bat which had not completely evolved into an Elemental Being but also the Vampire Bat King which had completed its evolution with its strength comparable to the level of a Fourth-level Spell Caster’s.

After all, the era of ancient witches had passed long ago. It was the Spell Casters who held absolute power now!

“V-room!”

Just when Wizard Holmes retreated, a door made of rocks immediately came down and completely closed off the two passages. It would take quite some time to break it open.

Under the hostility of the strong Dark Vampire Bat, it was impossible to break the door which blocked their way. Instantly, Holmes' expression turned dark.

“Hehe, want to leave? You don't have the chance to do so anymore.”

The silver-haired old man smiled grimly. At the same time, the gigantic Dark Vampire Bat dashed toward Merlin and Holmes.

“It seems that we can only give our all!”

Wizard Holmes said through gritted teeth.

“Confinement Wind!”

Wizard Holmes quickly cast Confinement Wind a few times. A violent gust of wind appeared out of thin air and binded the large Dark Vampire Bat.

However, this seemed to be futile as the speed of the Dark Vampire Bat did not slow down. A normal Zero-level spell seemed to have no effect on it at all.

Even the Ice-type spell which the Dark Vampire Bats most afraid of was also the same – no effect at all.

“Ground Dragon Spike!”

“Explosive Ice!”

“Scorching Flame!”

Wizard Holmes cast the spells continuously but they did not cause much damage to the Dark Vampire Bat. Even slowing it down was a difficult task.

Considering that the gigantic Dark Vampire Bat was about to collide with Wizard Holmes, Merlin squinted his eyes and acted. He knew that it would be very difficult to deal with this Dark Vampire Bat on his own so he needed to work with the others to gain a slim chance at defeating it.

“Frost!”

Merlin’s powerful Mind Power was simulating the Spell Model in his Awareness frantically. He had continuously cast Frost three times. One after another, he had almost frozen the Dark Vampire Bat into a thick ice statue.

However, in the blink of an eye, the Dark Vampire Bat had broken out of the ice. A normal Frost could not threaten it at all.

“Large Frost!”

Merlin cast Large Frost, a more powerful and infinitely close to a First-level spell. It seemed to have a slight effect on the Dark Vampire Bat as it was now frozen.

“Bang!”

However, the ice was soon smashed into pieces. The Dark Vampire Bat turned into a shadow and instantly crashed into Wizard Holmes.

The mysterious runes on Holmes’ robe immediately shone a bright light, protecting his body. Even so, the powerful impact of the Dark Vampire Bat still threw Wizard Holmes to the ground.

“Hiss!”

Merlin could not help but shudder. His Frost and Wizard Holmes’ robe could not withstand against the Dark Vampire Bat at all.

Fortunately, Wizard Holmes was protected by this robe, so it was just a slight shock as he did not sustain much injury. However, his expression did not look good. He might be fine this time, but the Dark Vampire Bat's attack earlier had caused the light on his robe to darken.

If the attack continued until his robe was destroyed, he was afraid that he would be unable to stop this terrifying Dark Vampire Bat then.

Holmes stood up and took a glance at the silver-haired old man standing on the altar and shouted to Laurinka and Ryllis, "The Shaman uses Mind Power to control the Elemental Monster. You guys kill that silver-haired old man. Then, this Dark Vampire Bat naturally won't be any threat to us."

Laurinka exchanged a look with Ryllis and they immediately approached the altar respectively.

However, the silver-haired old man did not show any hint of fear. He mumbled to himself and the Dark Vampire Bat instantly turned its gaze to Laurinka and Ryllis.

"I still have one last scroll, Earth Cage. Hehe. This is a First-level spell that is used to bind a strong presence. Even a First-level offensive spell can't break out of it. Go!"

Wizard Holmes gritted his teeth and took out a black scroll. This was the First-level Binding spell, Earth Cage, which he had specially exchanged from the Resource Tower for this mission.

Originally, Wizard Holmes had exchanged a few scrolls. However, when he faced the Dark Vampire Bat in the passage, he had used a few to finally annihilate it. Now, he only had one more Spell Scroll left.

"Rumble!"

Wizard Holmes directly initiated the Spell Scroll and released Earth Cage. In that instant, the whole cave seemed to shudder. Thick earth walls as hard as steel suddenly rose from the ground and turned into a cage, trapping the Dark Vampire Bat in it.

After Earth Cage had trapped the Dark Vampire Bat in it, Holmes and Merlin heaved a slight sigh of relief. Laurinka and Ryllis were approaching the altar. Both were Spell Casters from the Dark Magic Region. Even if that silver-haired old man might be a roaming Wizard, how would he be able to stand against both?

Once they killed the silver-haired old man, the Dark Vampire Bat which had lost its controller was nothing to be afraid of.

“Puff...”

Suddenly, a strong fluctuation of Dark Element appeared in Earth Cage. Merlin’s expression changed, and he said in a low voice, “Not good. Dark Vampire Bat may be casting a spell!”

“Thunderbolt Net!”

Merlin did not hesitate and cast Thunderbolt Net. It was not the ordinary Thunderbolt Net but a stronger and strengthened version, hoping that it could paralyze the Dark Vampire Bat.

“Swoosh!”

However, it was to no avail. Two thin black lines instantaneously penetrated Earth Cage and flew toward Laurinka and Ryllis unexpectedly.

This was a Darkness-type spell – Darkness Rays – that had a strong penetrating effect. Moreover, it was Darkness Rays released by a Dark Vampire Bat which was halfway into a complete evolution, demonstrating an even stronger penetrating effect. Thus, even the First-level spell Earth Cage cast by Holmes using a Spell Scroll, could not block the penetration of Darkness Rays.

In an instant, Laurinka and Ryllis were facing a life-or-death crisis.

Chapter 127: Tragic I

“Zero Degree Ice Seal!”

A white scroll appeared on Wizard Ryllis’ hand and she immediately cast it. Zero Degree Ice Seal was a First-level Ice-type Defensive spell. Once it was released, the temperature surrounding the Spell Caster would immediately drop to an unbelievable level. Any attack would be weakened once the attack entered the region of Zero Degree Ice Seal.

“Hiss!”

After Darkness Rays entered Ryllis’ region of Zero Degree Ice Seal, it was immediately weakened by half. However, a small portion still penetrated the defense of Zero Degree Ice Seal and hit Ryllis’ right shoulder.

Meanwhile, another ray headed straight toward Laurinka.

Laurinka was overwhelmed with shock but she did not panic. A yellow shield carved with all sorts of mysterious runes appeared in her hand. This was a pure defensive casting tool she had exchanged at the Resource Tower with a large number of contribution points. Initially, she had thought that she would not need this shield as she did not expect to face such a life-and-death crisis. Left with no other choices, she had to use the Runic Shield.

“Bang!”

After an intense clash, the runes on the shield gleamed, then disappeared. Then, the shield began to crumble and finally turned into smithereens. Laurinka’s face immediately turned pale. Even with the protection of the Runic Shield, she was still gravely injured. She was barely hanging on now and thankfully she did not pass out.

In the blink of an eye, the tables were turned. Ryllis and Laurinka were injured and had lost their combat ability. To be able to protect themselves indicated that they had already done their preparation well.

However, this did not indicate that Ryllis and Laurinka were weak. They had received systematic learning in the Dark Magic Region and the Spell Models they constructed were also stable. In terms of ability, they were definitely better than most roaming Wizards.

This time, they faced a Dark Vampire Bat which had completed half of its evolution. Darkness Rays, the spell which it released, contained a force that came close to that of a Second-level spell. It was only expected that they were unable to defend against it.

“Hehe. Just be obedient and be my babies’ meal...”

The silver-haired old man was satisfied with the Dark Vampire Bat’s performance. He had overcome many difficulties and spent a dozen years for this, hiding in many places and building the

pool of blood secretly under the influence of the spell casters' organizations. Once he noticed any changes that attracted the attention of the spell casters' organizations, he would immediately leave.

While he was hiding, he let the Dark Vampire Bat gradually evolve. Now, it had completed half of its evolution. Once he killed these Spell Casters from the Dark Magic Region, he would leave Donglin City and build another pool of blood at another place. Soon, he might be able to let the Dark Vampire Bat to fully evolve into a Vampire Bat King.

“Rumble!”

Wizard Holmes' Earth Cage was completely destroyed by the Dark Vampire Bat. A red shine flashed across the Dark Vampire Bat's body, then its speed increased significantly, heading toward Wizard Holmes.

“Bang! Bang! Bang!”

The Dark Vampire Bat ignored the attack of the spells and frantically crashed into Wizard Holmes. Even if the robe on Wizard Holmes was great for defense, it also seemed rather difficult to hold on under the fierce attack of the Dark Vampire Bat.

After all, any casting tool had a limit in usage, including this Runic Robe. Until the runes on it had been depleted, the robe would no longer have any effect.

In another round of fierce attack, Wizard Holmes could not defend against it at all. He was already feeling dizzy and nonplussed from the attack, so he could not retaliate effectively against the Dark Vampire Bat.

“Swoosh!”

Right at this time, Merlin's figure flashed as he had cast Gale and saved Wizard Holmes.

“Wizard Holmes, we must gather all strengths now. Otherwise, I'm afraid we'll all be in a deep trouble.”

Merlin lowered his voice and said in a serious tone.

Wizard Holmes wore a dark expression. He had never been in such a tight corner before, but this Dark Vampire Bat had rendered him out of ideas and had fallen into a disadvantaged position.

“Wizard Merlin, what do you think?”

At this time, the prideful Wizard Holmes had no choice but to admit that Merlin was their only hope now.

Merlin shot a thoughtful glance at the Dark Vampire Bat. He caressed the Bell Pendant he wore on his neck. If there was a huge number of Large Fireballs stored in the Bell Pendant now, he would not be in such a loss facing the Dark Vampire Bat.

Merlin took a deep breath and suppressed the messy thoughts in his mind. Although he no longer had the Bell Pendant, his current strength was far stronger than before. Thus, Merlin said, “Wizard Holmes, I need the Runic Robe you’re wearing!”

Holmes stiffened slightly. This Runic Robe was the casting tool used as a last resort for protection. If he gave it to Merlin, he would be in a great danger.

However, Merlin appeared determined as if he was ready for the final battle. Holmes gritted his teeth and took off the robe. As he handed it to Merlin, he said, “Wizard Merlin, if you lose here, we’re all going to die.”

Merlin nodded solemnly. Then, he wore Wizard Holmes’ robe. Instantly, he sensed a magical force covering his entire body. This was the force of runes on the robe. However, after the Dark Vampire Bat had hit it many times, the power of runes could not hold on for long.

“I can’t kill the Dark Vampire Bat no matter what. But it’s not impossible to kill the silver-haired old man who’s controlling the Dark Vampire Bat!”

Merlin squinted his eyes and shot a glance at the Dark Vampire Bat and the silver-haired old man. This Dark Vampire Bat who was halfway in evolution was simply too strong. Even his Large Frost did not cause much damage to it.

Thus, to leave this place alive, he would have to kill the Shaman, the silver-haired old man as he held absolute control over the Dark Vampire Bat. Once the Shaman was dead and his Mind Power broke apart, then the Elemental Monster he controlled would die with him.

This was also the most obvious weakness of the Shaman.

However, Merlin understood that the silver-haired old man would order his Dark Vampire Bat to attack frantically fearlessly. It was still unknown whether he could withstand the fierce attacks of the Dark Vampire Bat. This was the most important reason why Merlin needed Holmes' robe.

“Swoosh!”

Merlin moved and strong fluctuation of Wind Element appeared with him as he cast Gale. Facing the Dark Vampire Bat, he fiercely cast all his spells without reserving his Magic Power.

“Fireball!”

One after another, fireballs poured on the Dark Vampire Bat frantically like raindrops, including gigantic fireballs.

Along with the improvement of Merlin's Mind Power, his speed to cast spells had reached the extreme. The spells were almost cast in an instant. Immediately, forty fireballs were released.

With Merlin's accumulation now, he could cast Fireball and Frost for about fifty times at once. Thus, Merlin exhausted a large amount of Magic Power in Fireball's Spell Model instantly.

“Explode!”

Numerous fireballs exploded and the heatwave spread throughout the cave. However, Merlin knew that these fireballs could not hurt the Dark Vampire Bat. His aim was to simply hold down the Dark Vampire Bat for a moment.

Therefore, other than Fireball, Merlin also cast the strengthened version of Thunderbolt Net and countless Frosts. He threw the spells, aiming at the Dark Vampire Bat.

It was such a horrifying attack. Only the spells cast by Merlin could be seen throughout the cave. Even Wizard Holmes was wide-mouthed, staring at the scene before him.

Now, he knew how huge the difference truly was between him and Merlin!

The silver-haired old man stood at the tall altar, watching as Merlin cast his spells like a thunderstorm. Although he also seemed surprised at the situation, he did not worry at all. He knew that these attacks did not account much to the Dark Vampire Bat.

“Hehe. Even if you exhaust your Magic Power, it doesn’t make any difference!”

However, as soon as the silver-haired old man finished his words, he realized in horror, that Merlin revealed a smile on his face. He saw that Merlin quickly turned around and dashed toward him.

“Not good! His aim is me!”

The silver-haired old man had just realized Merlin’s true intention. He immediately controlled the Dark Vampire Bat to gather Darkness Element as preparation to cast Darkness Rays.

“Swoosh!”

Merlin’s speed, in fact, multiplied. The fluctuation of Wind Element on him almost reached the extreme. This was also the first time Merlin cast the strengthened version of Gale. At this moment, his aim was to bring an unexpected turn of event!

Chapter 128: Tragic II

“Die!”

Merlin’s speed rose and approached the silver-haired old man unexpectedly. Even Merlin could see the horror on the silver-haired old man’s face.

“Dark Mist!”

Without any hesitation, Merlin cast Dark Mist, not once but thrice, enveloping the entire cave.

“Dark Mist. Hehe. You think you can bring me into a hallucination?”

The silver-haired old man’s voice was sharp as he guffawed. At the same time, Merlin sensed a powerful Mind Power exploding instantly and tearing Dark Mist apart.

Although Dark Mist could cause others to fall into an endless hallucination, it was only targeted at those with weak Mind Power. Meanwhile, this silver-haired old man had attained the legacy of a Shaman where he possessed exceptionally powerful Mind Power. The Mind Power he had now had even reached the peak of a Second-level Spell Caster, slightly approaching the Mind Power of a Third-level Spell Caster.

Such a powerful Mind Power could easily tear Merlin’s Dark Mist apart without falling into the hallucination.

“Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!”

At the same time, Merlin sharply felt a strong sense of danger behind him. Even without checking with Mind Power, Merlin also knew that this must be Darkness Rays cast by the Dark Vampire Bat. Moreover, it was more than one string of Darkness Rays.

The speed of Darkness Rays was extremely quick. If Merlin cast the strengthened version of Gale, he could avoid it now. However, this would give a chance for the silver-haired old man to regain himself. If he wanted to approach the old man again thereafter, it would not be easy.

So, Merlin gritted his teeth and focused his gaze.

“Dark Mist!”

Once more, Merlin cast Dark Mist, but it was the strengthened version. The Spell Model in his Awareness shook frantically. An even thicker mist appeared and enveloped the silver-haired old man.

The force of the strengthened Dark Mist was naturally more powerful. Although the silver-haired old man possessed a Mind Power similar to the peak of a Second-level Spell Caster, Merlin still had the confidence to hold him down momentarily.

A moment was enough to Merlin. The silver-haired old man was not the Dark Vampire Bat – any spell could kill him.

“Large Fireball!”

As expected, Merlin saw that the silver-haired old man appeared idle. He wore a blank yet panic-stricken face – he had already fallen into a hallucination. This would be the perfect time to kill the silver-haired old man.

The gigantic fireball whistled by and flew toward the silver-haired old man. At the same time, Merlin did not hesitate to cast an Earth-type spell, Earth Guard frantically.

“Ka-chak! Ka-chak!”

One after another, the earth walls were penetrated by Darkness Rays. The Dark Vampire Bat could have released multiple Darkness Rays so Merlin did not dare to be careless. Almost giving his all, he had even cast the strengthened Earth Guard. However, he still felt a strong sense of danger. This indicated that his Earth Guard could not block Darkness Rays at all.

“Large Frost!”

Merlin cast Large Frost to create a large ice crystal behind him. Fortunately, this thick crystal could slightly block Darkness Rays.

To exhaust the power of Darkness Rays, Merlin had done all that he could. However, regardless of Earth Guard or Large Frost, he could not completely defend against Darkness Rays.

Merlin only had his last shield – the Runic Robe he received from Wizard Holmes!

“Hiss!”

Then, Merlin felt three slight chills. He immediately realized that these were Darkness Rays.

The shock of Darkness Rays cast by the Dark Vampire Bat was not strong but its penetration power was beyond imagination. In the blink of an eye, three Darkness Rays had already penetrated the Runic Robe which Merlin wore. The runes on the robe had disappeared as well. This robe with great defense power that took many contribution points was now destroyed.

The last barrier on Merlin had been penetrated. He could clearly feel as if his entire body was pierced through by an exceptionally sharp force and a surge of violence rose in his heart.

Other than its strong penetration effect, Darkness Rays usually brought a strong negative effect in the form of uncontrollable, negative emotions which had risen in Merlin's heart now.

“Explode!”

Merlin's eyes became red. His whole body was shivering due to intense pain and the violent aura. Exhausting his remaining Mind Power, he immediately exploded the gigantic fireball.

“Blast!”

The furious flame rose upwards and spread to the sides. It even blew a large area of mist away. Merlin held his fist tightly as Darkness Rays were still causing damage in his body.

Thankfully, the three Darkness Rays did not hit Merlin's vital organs. Moreover, Merlin could also suppress all negative emotions in his heart with his powerful Mind Power.

The largest injury was still on his body. If it was a normal Spell Caster with a weak physique, even a Darkness Ray could injure him heavily and cause death, not to mention three Darkness Rays. Take Laurinka and Ryllis for example, they were hit by one Darkness Ray each and they immediately sustained heavy injuries and lost all combat ability.

If it were three Darkness Rays, a normal Spell Caster would have been dead, but Merlin was different. He had the mysterious relief sculpture and had practiced the posture for years. Although Merlin's physique was improving slowly, it was evident that he was becoming stronger.

Although Merlin's physique had not reached the level of a Fourth-level Elemental Swordsman, he had reached the level of a Third-level Elemental Swordsman. Thus, he could barely withstand the attack of three weakened Darkness Rays.

However, Merlin had lost the robe now. If the silver-haired old man had not died, he could not withstand the attack of the Dark Vampire Bat at all.

Therefore, his gaze stared deadly at the place where Fireball exploded.

"Screech! Screech!"

Suddenly, the Dark Vampire Bat which had slightly evolved shrieked sharply and scurried around as if it had gone crazy.

At last, the Dark Vampire Bat fell on the ground as if it was tired. The redness on his body kept blinking and, in the end, it had completely flickered out. The living aura initially emitted by the Dark Vampire Bat had now disappeared.

"Dead?"

Not only this Dark Vampire Bat but thousands of Dark Vampire Bats hidden in the cave had become violent. They fell into the pool of blood in a frenzy and gradually disappeared.

Meanwhile, Dark Mist had dissipated at the place where Fireball exploded, revealing a distorted body. It could barely be recognized as that silver-haired old man.

Merlin's anxious nerves finally relaxed. Instantly, he sat down on the ground and took large breaths of air.

There were three places at his back that caused him excruciating pain. Merlin touched them with his hands and they stained with blood. It seemed that he had sustained heavy injuries. Then, he looked at Wizard Holmes, Laurinka, and Ryllis. Except for Holmes who appeared to be better, others had lost half of their combat ability.

"This is rather tragic, huh..."

Merlin shook his head slightly. Although he had thought that they would face certain danger in this mission, he had not expected it to be so tragic that the whole team almost died.

Shaking his head, Merlin set his gaze toward the silver-haired old man's body. He suddenly thought of the old man's terrifying Mind Power which was approaching a Third-level Spell Caster.

Such a strong Mind Power could not be attained through meditation alone. Back then, the black-robed old man had meditation method, but he had only reached the peak of a First-level Spell Caster after decades.

The silver-haired old man might have received a certain legacy of ancient witches where his Mind Power was rapidly improved.

At this thought, Merlin's gaze became sharp as he slowly stood up and walked toward the silver-haired old man.

Chapter 129: The Return I

The silver-haired old man's body was already charred black, so his face could not be recognized.

Merlin scanned his body with Mind Power and immediately found a ring on the old man's finger. This silver-haired old man could be an Entrance-level Spell Caster. He might have only constructed one or two Spell Models, so he could have not been that strong. He was powerful probably because he had received some legacy from the Shaman.

Thus, Merlin's aim was the legacy of the ancient Shaman.

Placing the ring in his hand, Merlin's Mind Power directly delved into the ring.

There was a huge space contained in the ring. The silver-haired old man's ring was even better than the one Merlin received from the black-robed old man. The space in it was larger by several folds. Moreover, there were a variety of objects, filling up space in the ring to the brim.

In addition, other than a few strange potion ingredients, there were mostly precious elemental crystal stones and all sorts of stuff like Spell Casters' notes.

Merlin checked out the notes randomly and found that it was the experience of a Spell Caster in Fire City.

Fire City was also a spell casters' organization near the Dark Magic Region, as famous as the Abyss Fort and the Dark Magic Region. Since this note was in the silver-haired old man's hands, this showed that the Spell Caster might already have died in his hands.

The more Merlin looked at the things in the ring, the more he was surprised. This silver-haired old man could have stayed in many areas under the influence of spell casters' organizations. Moreover, he had killed several Spell Casters before. These roaming Wizards did not account much since they were not wealthy. However, the Spell Casters in spell casters' organization had all sorts of elemental crystal stones and potion ingredients.

These things were not of much use to the silver-haired old man since he was probably not good in constructing Spell Model. If that was not as such, his own ability would not be that weak.

Now that the silver-haired old man was dead, Merlin was the one who took over his belongings.

After searching for some time, Merlin did not find any Shaman's legacy from the silver-haired old man. There were too many things in the ring and it would take a long time to find it, so he directly retrieved his Mind Power. He planned to search for it slowly after returning to the Dark Magic Region.

Merlin kept the ring properly, then met with Holmes, Ryllis, and Laurinka's gaze. However, they did not say anything. After all, the silver-haired old man was almost killed by Merlin alone, risking a great danger. Therefore, everything on the silver-haired old man naturally belonged to Merlin. There was no further discussion needed on this.

Thus, Merlin slowly stood up and touched his back lightly. A stabbing pain shot throughout Merlin's body but at the very least the bleeding had stopped. This indirectly proved how strong Merlin's physique was now.

"Wizard Laurinka, Wizard Ryllis, are you alright?"

Merlin looked at Laurinka and Ryllis, both looking pale as they were injured by Darkness Rays, just as Merlin, who knew how painful it was. With their weak body, it would take a long time to recover.

“We’re alright.”

Both stood up and held onto their injured parts, seemingly still able to hang on.

The only one uninjured here was Wizard Holmes, but his expression was rather complicated. When Merlin returned the robe to Wizard Holmes, his expression appeared a little dark.

“I lose more than I gain this time...”

Holmes mumbled softly. This robe cost at least a dozen contribution points. Even if they had completed their mission this time, they only received a mere fifty contribution points hence he truly lost more than he gained.

Following that, Wizard Holmes raised his head and shot a thoughtful look at Merlin. He said without emotion, “The mission has been completed. I still need to return to my family, so I’ll take my leave here.”

Wizard Holmes did not even turn back. He immediately cast his spell and blasted the rubble which was blocking the cave. Bringing Ryllis with him, both left the cave together.

Merlin simply shook his head. He did not mind Wizard Holmes’ attitude. In fact, other than being a little arrogant, Wizard Holmes was a nice person.

“Laurinka, let’s go.”

Merlin supported Laurinka carefully. When he was about to leave, Laurinka pointed to his back. Merlin turned around and saw the people who were tied to the rock pillars in the cave.

“Boom! Boom! Boom!”

Merlin cast a few Fireballs at will and blasted the pillars to smithereens. The Elemental Swordsmen and Spell Casters who were tied up broke free and took deep breaths of air. It seemed that they were tortured badly on the pillar.

“Let’s go.”

Merlin did not care about these people anymore. He had completed his mission and he might not meet these people in the future.

After going through the passage, Merlin and Laurinka finally walked out of the cave. Capace and Catherine were still waiting anxiously outside.

“Wizard Merlin, did you see Wizard Pario and Father?”

After Merlin had come out from the cave, he immediately approached Merlin and asked him about his father. Capace’s palm was only slightly injured in the cave so he simply wrapped his injured palm hastily with a cloth.

Merlin pointed at the cave and said monotonously, “They’re in the cave. They should be fine.”

Capace heaved a sigh of relief and respectfully bowed to Merlin. Merlin shot a glance at Catherine who seemed exasperated. Her arm was gone. This was a big blow for a naïve girl.

Merlin did not say anything more. With Laurinka, they quickly left Donglin City. They planned to return to the Dark Magic Region to receive the reward of the mission.

...

“Swish! Swish!”

Two bright light glimmered. Then, Merlin and Laurinka staggered as they walked out of the Runic Magic Circle.

Merlin looked around and found that it was an empty land. He even saw the seagulls in the sky landing on the beach to search for food.

“Finally back...”

Merlin shook his head as he smiled bitterly. Although the journey was smooth, they had wasted some time along the way. Unfortunately, Laurinka’s injury worsened during the journey, so they had to stay a little longer on the way.

That large stone tablet of the Dark Magic Region still stood solemnly. Merlin could still recall clearly how shocked he felt when he first came to the Dark Magic Region and saw the black cat floating out from the stone tablet.

However, after spending half a year here, Merlin had turned from a newbie Wizard into a strong Six-Elemental Spell Caster!

“Sigh...”

Just when Merlin and Laurinka approached the stone tablet, a black mist floated out from the stone table and turned into a spirited black cat.

“Young Spell Casters, have you just returned from your mission?”

The long tail of the black cat swayed lightly and it appeared elegant.

When Merlin saw the black cat, he could not help but smile, feeling rather warm seeing it. He walked a few steps forward and grabbed two Ice-type elemental crystals the size of a thumb each, from the ring. He threw the crystal stones at the black cat.

“Meow!”

The black cat bit the thumb-sized elemental crystal stones as its eyes brimmed with passion. Then, it crunched the elemental crystal stones and swallowed them.

“Not bad. They taste really good. Young Spell Caster, the great Sir Didimoss will bring good fortune to you.”

The black cat said without emotion, apparently satisfied with the elemental crystal stones. It still seemed to be recalling the delicacies it had earlier.

Merlin bowed slightly and asked softly, “O’ great Sir Didimoss, can you not recognize me?”

“Hmm?”

The black cat glanced at Merlin closely, shaking its head. A moment later, a light flashed across its eyes as it mumbled softly, “Oh, you’re the newbie Wizard half a year ago. Your name is...?”

The black cat could not seem to remember Merlin’s name, so Merlin replied softly, “Wilson Merlin!”

“That’s right, Wizard Merlin!”

The black cat raised its paw and pointed at Merlin. It continued, “I didn’t expect to see the newbie Wizard back then to become a Six-Elemental Wizard after half a year... Not bad. The great Sir Didimoss is very satisfied with the elemental crystal stones, so I’ll give you some gifts.”

A black light shone on the black cat’s body. Then, the light flew straight into Merlin’s body.

Merlin was shocked. He did not expect this black cat to see through him with one glance. Nothing less expected of the spirit of Runic Magic Circle carved by the Great Wizard Fidel himself.

Moreover, according to the Spell Caster who welcomed Merlin then, Didimoss was, in fact, a unique living being. It was rather shocking to Merlin who knew a little about runes. Even Runic Magic Circle could produce life?

However, meeting Didimoss once again, Merlin had indeed sensed a rich living aura from it, much richer than that of the Dark Vampire Bat he met in the cave a few days ago.

When the black light on the black cat flew into Merlin’s body, he could not help but shiver for a brief moment.

However, some changes had occurred to his Mind Power. Initially, Merlin's Mind Power could support six Spell Models but it was a heavy burden to him. Sometimes, it was even difficult to use his Mind Power at will. Now, after the black light was absorbed into his body, Merlin's Mind Power had obviously improved where it had become smoother for him to cast a spell now.

The fact that it could directly increase a Spell Caster's Mind Power was beyond Merlin's comprehension. What sort of unique living being was this black cat exactly?

"Wizard Merlin, you should go in!"

Didimoss appeared a little exhausted. It turned into a black light and dived back into the stone tablet.

After seeing that Merlin was still stunned, Laurinka patted Merlin lightly. She commented with an envious tone, "You only used two elemental crystal stones to make Sir Didimoss reward you. Tsk, tsk. Back in the time, there were Spell Casters who gave Sir Didimoss a bunch of elemental crystal stones but Sir Didimoss did not reward them whatsoever."

Merlin took a thoughtful look at the stone tablet, then bowed slightly. Although he did not know what sort of living being Didimoss was, it had obviously noticed that Merlin urgently needed Mind Power and thus, it increased his Mind Power.

Even if it was an intermediate Mind Meditation Spell, it would at least take one or two months for his Mind Power to increase by this much.

Then, Merlin and Laurinka took out their Dark Magic Ring and initiated the mysterious runes on it. Instantly, a pillar of light enveloped Merlin and Laurinka.

Both of them disappeared in the blink of an eye...

Chapter 130: The Return II

In the Mission Hall, Merlin and Laurinka stood in front of several gray-robed Wizards and extended their arm forward to hand in their Dark Magic rings.

"Please wait a moment while we go through the verification process."

These gray-robed Wizards had previously inscribed new mysterious runes onto the rings which functioned as a tracker to locate Merlin and the others' whereabouts.

Hence, these gray-robed Wizards would know if the Wizards had achieved their assigned missions.

While Merlin was patiently waiting in silence, he suddenly noticed that the Dark Vampire Bat mission at Donglin City on the surrounding walls had been marked as "Accomplished."

Soon, Laurinka also noticed it after glancing toward Merlin's way. Instead of feeling surprised, she said almost nonchalantly, "Perhaps Wizard Holmes and Wizard Ryllis have returned to the Dark Magic Region a step ahead of us and have reported their mission."

Merlin nodded. This kind of independent mission would be considered accomplished as long as the Wizards found out the circumstances required, then they could come in themselves to obtain the rewards. Due to Laurinka's deteriorated condition, their journey back was slightly delayed. Hence, it was not impossible that Holmes and Ryllis had made their return earlier.

Not long after, several gray-robed Wizards returned with Merlin and Laurinka's rings. One of the gray-robed Wizards looked at Merlin with a serious expression on his face and later revealed a faint smile. "We've been through the verification process. It appeared that you both have completed the mission, and you both did greatly indeed! Wizard Holmes and Wizard Ryllis have already come by yesterday to claim their rewards. Would you like to claim yours right now?"

"Certainly."

Merlin replied without hesitation. Both him and Laurinka needed an excessive number of contribution points and First-level Fire-type Furious Flame.

The gray-robed Wizard nodded before inscribing new mysterious runes on Merlin and Laurinka's Dark Magic rings once again. Slowly, the word "Fifty," which represented fifty contribution points, appeared on Merlin's ring.

Apart from fifty contribution points, they were also rewarded First-level Fire-type Furious Flame that they had been yearning for quite some time.

Several gray-robed Wizards were giving Merlin strange looks. Merlin guessed that they had figured out from the mysterious runes on his Dark Magic ring that he was a Six-Elemental Wizard.

Six-Elemental Wizard was hard to come by, even in large-scale spell casters' organization. Naturally, these gray-robed Wizards were surprised at their discovery.

Shortly after, Merlin performed a slight bow as a sign of gratitude and respect then left the Mission Hall together with Laurinka.

When they returned to Wizard Leo's tower, Laurinka glanced at Merlin with a complicated look and said after a long consideration, "I'll be sent out of the Dark Magic Region soon. So, I'll stay in the tower during this period trying to construct a First-level spell."

Merlin understood that Laurinka had made up her mind to perform her best.

"I wish you success in constructing a First-level spell and level up to a First-level Spell Caster, Wizard Laurinka!"

"Let's hope so..."

Laurinka knew that she had a slim chance to achieve that, but she would not settle without even trying. After a brief chat, the two of them bade goodbye and left for their respective rooms.

...

Once Merlin returned to his room, he quickly examined the condition of his Mind Power. Previously, his Mind Power had been forcefully enhanced by the black cat. It was something beyond his knowledge, hence he needed to inspect it carefully to find out if there were any side effect.

However, after a thorough examination, he realized that not only was there no side effect but his current Mind Power was also extremely stable. Indeed, it resembled the state he would attain after an arduous mediation process.

"No wonder Great Wizard Fidel is the creator of the Dark Magic Region. The spirit of Runic Magic Circle possesses such extraordinary power..."

Merlin gasped in admiration. Since arriving at the Dark Magic Region for the past half year, Merlin was already quite familiar with Great Wizard Fidel, the creator of the Dark Magic Region.

Being the only Great Wizard placed above and greater than Nine-Elemental Spell Caster, Great Wizard Fidel was almost the symbol of the Dark Magic Region! Besides, Great Wizard Fidel, who specialized in Runic Magic Circle, had personally created numerous Runic Magic Circles for long-distance transmission in the Dark Magic Region since thousands of years ago.

Otherwise, even some other spell casters' organizations were not able to establish so many Runic Magic Circles.

As for the spirit of the Runic Magic Circle like Didimoss, it was something beyond the comprehension of general Spell Casters. Perhaps only Spell Casters who had done extensive research on runes would know what was going on.

Merlin was relieved when he realized that nothing unusual occurred. Then, the ring he obtained from the silver-haired old man a few days ago appeared in his hand.

Merlin never had a proper chance to look at the ring carefully. No one would bother him now that he was back at Wizard Leo's tower. Therefore, Merlin eagerly counted the items inside the silver-haired old man's ring.

There were at least a hundred elemental crystal stones of various attributes, with some larger than the size of a baby's fist. Elemental crystal stones of this size would be worth at least dozens of contribution points in the Resource Tower.

Certainly, the silver-haired old man had collected these numerous elemental crystal stones from some of the Spell Casters he had killed. With these elemental crystal stones, Merlin would not need to go to the Resource Tower to exchange for expensive elemental crystal stones using a large number of contribution points if he wanted to construct new spells in the near future.

In addition to elemental crystal stones, there were also some notes left by the Spell Casters. Merlin used these notes for references to a certain extent, but they were not of great practical help. Merlin's actual target was the inheritance of Shamans obtained by the silver-haired old man.

There were many items in the ring, and Merlin carefully discerned it one by one. It took him almost a few hours to finally locate a roll of animal skin.

“Well? Found it!”

Merlin was getting excited when he discovered the animal skin, and immediately opened it.

“Shaman’s method to communicate with Elemental Monsters.”

“Several methods to transform Elemental Monsters into Elemental Creatures.”

“Method to build a blood pool.”

On the animal skin roll was ancient records of the Shaman, the ways to control Elemental Monster, and some peculiar methods to speed up the transformation process of Elemental Monsters into Elemental Creatures.

Among them was the blood pool constructed by the silver-hair old man. According to the records, to transform the Dark Vampire Bat into an Elemental Creature in a short period of time, at least the fresh blood of tens of thousands of people, in addition to some special means of the Shaman practice were required.

Merlin looked at the methods of controlling Elemental Monsters with great interest but soon, he shook his head. A Shaman was first required to communicate with an Elemental Monster, which was an extremely complicated process. It also required plenty of time to have complete control over the Elemental Monsters.

Naturally, Merlin would not reject what was at hand and seek what was far away. Even if he was able to have control over an Elemental Creature, he would only be a Spell Caster of a Fourth-level.

In the Dark Magic Region, more than fifty wizard towers had been built. In other words, there were at least fifty powerful Spell Casters of Fourth-level or above, perhaps some of Fifth, Sixth or even Seventh-level.

In comparison to Spell Casters, the ancient Shaman's ritual had indeed fallen, and their era had also long since disappeared. Therefore, Merlin only looked briefly at the complicated process of controlling Elemental Monsters, and then proceed further with his search.

He knew that the ancient Shamans were all very powerful. The silver-haired old man, for instance, had a Mind Power close to a Third-level spell Caster. This was the reason why Merlin was looking for ways to how the ancient Shamans enhanced their Mind Power.

“Found it!”

At the end of the animal skin roll, Merlin finally found a way that the Shamans practiced to enhance their Mind Power at an amazingly fast speed – a formulation of a special potion.

“Magic Monster Potion?”

It was a strange name for a potion. On the animal skin roll, there was also a specific formula to formulate this portion but Merlin was unfamiliar to most of the ingredients listed.

Merlin realized that his energy was limited since he arrived at the Dark Magic Region. He had attended several runology lessons casually, but soon gave up completely, and put all his energy into Mind Power Meditation and spells construction.

He was also not too bothered about other runology lessons, alchemy classes, and potions classes. So even if he obtained a potion formula, he would not know what the ingredients of the formula were.

“Seems like I've to spend some time learning about potions with Wizard Howl.”

Merlin knew about that one official member of the Dark Magic Region living in Wizard Leo's tower, Wizard Howl, who devoted almost all his energy in researching potions. Even if Merlin had no idea about the ingredients in the formula of Magic Monster Potion, Wizard Howl would.

Merlin put away the ring and retrieved the reward received from his mission, which was a volume of First-level Furious Flame.

Based on the condition of his current Mind Power, it was impossible for Merlin to construct a First-level spell but he could first study it and see how complicated the First-level spell was.

“Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!”

Suddenly, Merlin felt a slight vibration in the air. Then, on a white wall in the room, a mysterious rune began to flash, forming a strange Magic Circle.

The Runic Magic Circle on the wall gradually radiated a faint light, and then it formed a translucent human face, which belonged to Wizard Leo.

“Merlin, come to my room!”

As the voice fell, the mysterious runes on the wall gradually disappeared. The translucent human face also quickly collapsed, and the room restored to its original calmness.

Merlin looked up, glanced around, and seemed to have understood something. This tower was built by Wizard Leo himself, and if he wanted to, he could easily see through every room.

This was the purpose of the wizard tower, also the magical power of runes at the same time.

“What would Wizard Leo want?”

Merlin frowned as it was not common for Wizard Leo to specially ask for a Spell Caster from the tower.

He quickly left the room with a heart full of doubt. With the help of Runic Magic Circle, soon, Merlin arrived outside of Wizard Leo’s room.