

W. Secret 131

Chapter 131: The Attendant I

“Wizard Leo!”

Merlin shouted loudly from outside the door.

“Come in.”

Wizard Leo’s voice came through the door, so Merlin pushed the door and entered the room.

“Wizard Leo, what can I help you with?” a confused Merlin asked as he bowed in greeting.

Wizard Leo’s vacant, gray eyes still made Merlin shudder. Thankfully, after a few encounters, Merlin now managed to look into those eyes directly.

“Buzz!”

Wizard Leo did not answer the question but waved his hand in the air. Numerous runes densely packed together surfaced on the wall behind his back. Merlin was able to see clearly that amongst the runes, there was a scene where Merlin killed the silver-haired old man in the cave.

“This...”

Merlin trembled slightly as he stared with fear at Wizard Leo’s face that was nothing far from a terrifying nightmare.

“Hehe, Merlin, don’t you worry. The gray-robed Wizards from the Mission Hall sent this to me. Naturally, the gray-robed Wizards have to notify me when there exists a Sixth-Elemental Spell Caster among my students.”

Wizard Leo seemed to see through Merlin's mind at a glance, and a smile appeared on his face reluctantly. However, Wizard Leo's amiable smile seemed to be uglier than crying, which gave Merlin goosebumps.

"I was only lucky..."

Merlin lowered his head and said softly.

"This is not pure luck. The gray-robed Wizards said that you've built a total of six Zero-level spells and it would be self-defeating enough to not think of becoming a First-level Spell Caster! But I have different opinions. Not only will you not give up on yourself, but you'll also do your best to construct a First-level spell and become the only Six-elemental Wizard in the Dark Magic Region since the past hundreds of years, isn't it?"

Wizard Leo had a solemn look on his face. The bloody vertical eye on his forehead was glowing a faint red light, emitting a strong oppressing sensation.

Merlin took a deep look at Wizard Leo, before whispering, "Yes, Master Leo, I've never given up on becoming a First-level Spell Caster!"

"Good! Very good! When I first entered the Dark Magic Region, like you, I was full of pride. I wanted to construct Five-Elemental and Six-Elemental spells, but I didn't have the determination to do so. Eventually, I managed to construct only Four-Elemental spells!"

Wizard Leo sighed with emotion, but Merlin remained silent. He knew that Wizard Leo had not called him over alone to listen to his regrets.

Sure enough, Wizard Leo quickly changed his tone, and said with hints of excitement, "Regarding Six-Elemental spells, not to bring up other concerns, obtaining appropriate First-level spells would require a lot of contributions points. It might be different if you have a long time to spare, but you only have two years left in the Dark Magic Region!"

Wizard Leo paused mid-sentence, nodded slightly and continued speaking after seeing there was no change of emotions on Merlin's face, "Those First-level spells are very expensive, ranging from dozens of contributions points to hundreds of them! However, if you attend the Dark Magic Region conference that's happening in one month's time as a member representative for the tower, and not emerge at the bottom and let me gain face in front of the old guys, I'll gift you whichever First-level spells you need in the future without any contribution points!"

“Without any contribution points?”

Merlin was tempted by the offer. Just as Wizard Leo mentioned, putting aside other concerns, if he wished to construct a First-level spell, it required an abundant amount of contribution points what more a series of First-level spells. Besides, he did not have much time left in the Dark Magic Region.

Naturally, it would be great if he could get contribution points for free.

As he thought of this, Merlin came to a decision and accepted the offer. “Thank you, tutor, for giving me this opportunity.”

“Haha, I also know that Spell Casters who are assigned to my tower are not blessed with natural endowments. The old guys have been teasing me for many years now. This time, you just have to earn me a good ranking. Not only can I gain some pride, but it’ll also be good for you too. The Dark Magic Region conference that’s held once every three years is mostly participated by those who haven’t become official members. If they perform well, they’ll even be noticed by some Wizards who are actually great at teaching.

“I’ve no patience to explain to you the knowledge on Spell Models. If you can perform well at this conference and be noticed by other Wizards, I’ll not stop you from going over to learn from them.”

Merlin was a little surprised. He did not expect this conference would offer such an opportunity. Presumably, this was also to prevent qualified Spell Casters, under various reasons, being assigned to some Wizards who were not good at teaching. Hence, they could still stand a chance to be noticed by other powerful Spell Casters if they gave a good performance.

“Alright, go ahead and prepare yourself.”

Indeed, Wizard Leo was not a man of much patience. He soon waved his hand to signal Merlin’s leave.

Merlin bowed slightly, bade farewell to Wizard Leo, and then returned to his room.

He would have to be well-prepared for the conference that Wizard Leo had mentioned earlier. There was one month left and it would be sufficient for him to be prepared. Merlin did not dare to look down on other temporary members in the Dark Magic Region, as some of them were potentially close to becoming powerful First-level Spell Casters.

Merlin was no longer in the mood to study First-level Furious Flame after knowing about the conference. His current Mind Power was definitely not at the desired level to construct a First-level spell.

“If Magic Monster Potion could be formulated successfully, my Mind Power would be greatly improved. Maybe by then, I can try constructing Furious Flame.”

Merlin thought of the Magic Monster Potion formula that he had just gained from the silver-haired old man. If the formulation was successful, his Mind Power could be greatly increased within a short period of time, which in turn allowed him to construct First-level Furious Flame with ease.

There was a fundamental difference between a First-level spell and a Zero-level spell. If the construction was successful, Merlin’s strength would increase rapidly.

However, it was not easy to formulate potions. Merlin had not even attended Potion Class before, and to do so now was obviously already too late.

“I should consult Wizard Howl!”

Merlin thought of Wizard Howl who lived in Wizard Leo’s tower. He was among the few official members who lived in Wizard Leo’s tower.

As he thought of this, Merlin walked straight out of the room and went to the bottom of the tower as Wizard Howl lived on the first floor of the tower.

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“Wizard Howl!”

Soon enough, Merlin located Wizard Howl on the first floor of the tower. As expected, Wizard Howl had occupied himself with researching some viscous dark green potion which emitted an unpleasant smell.

Even without raising his head, Wizard Howl said with little interest, “Spill it quick if you’ve anything to say.”

Merlin shook his head helplessly looking at the raunchy, slovenly looking Spell Caster who had almost gone crazy in potion research, but still, he explained the purpose of his visit, “Wizard Howl, I’m here to consult you about problems of formulating potions and potions ingredients.”

Wizard Howl, who was not as enthusiastic as Laurinka, replied coldly, “Attend potion classes if you want to study potion, not come to me.”

However, Merlin was not fazed as he had already expected to be treated like this by Wizard Howl. He flipped his palm and took out a blue flower with only one leaf from the ring.

“Well? Blue Charm Flower? This is the main ingredient for formulating Blue Heart potion. Where did you get it from?”

Looking at the potion ingredient in Merlin’s hand, Wizard Howl immediately became more enthusiastic, his eyes flashing with a glimmer of brilliance.

Merlin smiled slightly. “I received this unexpectedly when I went on a mission a few days ago. I’ve no idea how to make a potion, so I’m giving it to you, Wizard Howl.”

There were a variety of potion ingredients inside Merlin’s ring. Merlin knew the value of this precious Blue Charm Flower and giving it to Wizard Howl would certainly please the other party.

Sure enough, Wizard Howl appeared contented and satisfied. He quickly accepted the Blue Charm Flower, and his voice changed to a friendlier tone, “You would like to learn more about potion-making, Wizard Merlin? It’s very simple. Come to me every day for an hour, and I’ll teach you some knowledge about potions.”

Merlin’s heart filled with joy and immediately began asking more questions about potion-making.

For the next few days, Merlin consulted Wizard Howl on potions. Wizard Howl also tried his best to answer all the questions.

Therefore, in just a few days, Merlin had already mastered the general steps of potion-making. He was not planning to really study potion-making but only wanted to understand the steps of formulating potions so he could gather the ingredients for Magic Monster Potion and use the Matrix to precisely control the proportion of ingredients to formulate Magic Monster Potion.

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Ten days later, Merlin stayed quietly in a spacious room.

There were several long wooden tables in the room, which were placed with various kinds of delicate glassware, which was necessary for formulating potions.

Merlin spent almost all his twenty contribution points to exchange for the glassware at the Resource Tower, and these were only the simplest tools, per say. Even hundreds of contribution points were not enough to build a complete potion lab.

Merlin took out some potion ingredients from the ring. Instead of formulating Magic Monster Potion, he wanted to try making Coagulation Potion.

This simple and effective potion could stop bleeding quickly. This was a formula recommended by Wizard Howl for beginners who first learn how to make potions.

Besides, Merlin had the Matrix, which he could use to precisely control the proportion of ingredients. This was a great advantage that an average Spell Caster could never attain. Even Spell Casters who studied potions extensively were not able to have complete and precise control over the proportions of ingredients.

It was exactly because of this advantage that Merlin wanted to try formulating potions himself.

“Matrix, activate potion formula for Coagulation. Precise control over the proportion of ingredients and strictly follow the steps of potion-making!”

Merlin had already scanned with the Matrix beforehand and recorded the required ingredients, proportions, and even every step of potion formulation into the machine. When it was time, he could strictly follow the steps given by the Matrix to formulate Coagulation Potion.

“Knock! Knock! Knock!”

At this moment, there was a rap of knocks on the other side of the door before a familiar voice came through, “Wizard Merlin, it’s Laurinka!”

“Wizard Laurinka? Isn’t she trying to build First-level Furious Flame?”

Merlin frowned but had no choice other than to temporarily pause the preparation of potion-making. It would be something important if Laurinka was here at this hour.

Chapter 132: The Attendant II

“Creak...”

Merlin opened the door ajar, and indeed, Wizard Laurinka was standing on the other side.

Wizard Laurinka seemed to have made an effort in dressing up today. There was light makeup on her face, and a low-cut shirt made from a thin material hung over her chest. Her pale, rounded peaks were vaguely visible even at one quick glance. On her lower body was a white skirt that revealed her pale calves. Laurinka’s style today lit up Merlin’s eyes.

“Wizard Merlin.”

A faint smile appeared on her face as she entered the room. Wizard Laurinka casually glanced around the room, before finally focusing her gaze on Merlin, but her expression was difficult to fathom.

Merlin frowned, and then whispered as something came to his mind, “Wizard Laurinka, I borrowed five contribution points from you previously and haven’t had a chance to return them. Let’s agree on a time so I can return the contribution points to you.”

Looking at Laurinka now, Merlin abruptly remembered that he had borrowed five contribution points from her before he went on the mission to Donglin City.

Laurinka shook her head gently. “Five contribution points are nothing at all. There’s no rush.”

“Right, how was the construction of your First-level Furious Flame?”

Merlin knew that Laurinka had been trying to construct a First-level spell since returning to the Dark Magic Region, but he did not know about its progress.

Laurinka’s expression changed slightly. She shook her head as she heaved a sigh. “The construction was a failure.”

“It failed?”

Merlin was shocked. Generally, Spell Casters who failed would suffer from injuries. In serious cases, even the Spell Models which had been simulated previously in Awareness would be affected.

However, looking at Laurinka now, it seemed that no serious harm had been done, so this was already a blessing in disguise.

Laurinka continued, “In fact, it was what I’ve already expected. I’m not willing to give up, but I’ve failed after all...”

Merlin did not know how to comfort the dispirited Laurinka so he just listened quietly as she spoke. Perhaps at this time, Laurinka would prefer a quiet listener whom she could spill her sorrow to.

Suddenly, Laurinka lifted her head and stared right into Merlin’s eyes. She raised a question in a low voice, “Wizard Merlin, do you have any clue about attendants in the Dark Magic Region?”

Seeing Merlin’s doubtful expression, Laurinka explained, “An attendant is a servant who signs a contract swearing loyalty to a Spell Caster. In the Dark Magic Region, only Spell Casters of First-level or above are eligible to have attendants. A First-level Spell Caster can have one attendant, a

Spell Caster of Fourth-level or higher can have two attendants, and a Spell Caster of Seventh-level or higher can even have a total of four attendants.

“These attendants, although not official members of the Dark Magic Region, are also entitled to enjoy privileges like that of the official members since they’re completely attached to Spell Casters in the Dark Magic Region.”

Laurinka paused, and then took a deep breath. It seemed that she had made up her mind when she next looked at Merlin. “So, I hope that in the future, when Wizard Merlin becomes a First-level Spell Caster, henceforth an official member of the Dark Magic Region, Wizard Merlin will let me be your attendant!”

Merlin lifted his head to look carefully at Laurinka. Although attendants had to pay the price of contract and freedom, there was no doubt that in return they got to enjoy the same privileges as official members of the Dark Magic Region.

Although the Dark Magic Region was not the most powerful spell casters’ organization, it was not easy to enter. There were countless roaming Wizards out there who would love to enter the Dark Magic Region but did not have such opportunities. It showed how difficult it was to be a part of a spell casters’ organization.

After a long time, Merlin’s mouth curled up into a sly smile, and whispered, “Wizard Laurinka, you should know that I’ve constructed six Zero-level spells. You’re from a Spell Caster family so you should know how difficult it was for a Six-Elemental Spell Caster to become a First-level Spell Caster.”

Laurinka shook her head slightly and immediately replied, “Yes, I’ve thought about it for a long time, and this decision was made after careful consideration. Previously, I did not think you’ll succeed in becoming a First-level Spell Caster. However, you’ve never shown a trace of slack in your eyes, and your body seems to always radiate with confidence.

“Although I don’t know where you obtain this confidence from, when there’s a hope, there’s a chance... You wouldn’t know. Spell Casters like me who are about to be sent out of the Dark Magic Region and going back to my family means a lifetime of desolation. My family will never provide me with any more resources so I must find a way out for myself!”

After a pause, Laurinka lifted her towering chest and approached Merlin gently. She revealed an attractive smile as she spoke again, “You can have all my contribution points if I become your

attendant. I've accumulated a total of seventy points so far, and my family has provided me 500,000 gold coins for contribution points redemption. I can give them all to you before leaving."

Merlin took a deep look at Laurinka. 500,000 gold coins. That was an equivalent of fifty points if they were all converted into contribution points. In addition to the seventy points, that would make a total of a hundred and twenty contribution points.

Now that Merlin had spent twenty contributions points in exchange for the numerous glassware from the Resource Tower, his fifty contributions points awarded from the mission was only left with thirty contributions points. However, if he could obtain one hundred and twenty contributions points, Merlin would have a total of one hundred and fifty contribution points.

With so many contribution points, he was even able to redeem a piece of rune robe as the one Wizard Holmes wore before.

Seeing that Merlin was still a little hesitant, Laurinka took a deep breath and then threw herself at Merlin. Her rounded peaks were almost rubbing on Merlin's back.

"I can even give myself to you!"

Laurinka's bright red lips pressed down on Merlin's ear as she teased him by blowing warm air into his ears.

"Swoosh!"

Merlin stood up abruptly and stared at Laurinka with sparkling eyes. His lips curled into a playful smile as he asked in a husky voice, "Wizard Laurinka, you're playing with fire... If I didn't become a First-level Spell Caster, you're going to lose everything you have, even yourself."

"There are times where you're forced to make choices, no matter if they're right or wrong..."

Laurinka smiled softly, and her weak, soft arms, like a snake, wrapped themselves around Merlin.

"Boom!"

Merlin's mind became a complete blank. Desire filled every part of his body as the soft and full body crept behind him. As he hugged Laurinka into his arms, his nostrils were filled with a strange fragrance that further aroused his desire.

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The dawn was just breaking when Merlin opened his eyes. He scratched the back of his head and smiled bitterly when he saw the room in chaos. He gradually remembered the madness from last night.

Merlin looked to his side – Laurinka was no longer there. She had left to deal with some matters about going away from the Dark Magic Region, leaving behind only a trail of alluring scent in the air.

Although it was also Laurinka's first time, she gave Merlin a different feeling from the experiences with Princess Charise and Avril. The latter was very conservative while Laurinka was wild. Last night, when the two were in the midst of the madness, it was mostly Laurinka who took the initiative.

Without Merlin's realization, Merlin actually pondered over the madness that they had last night.

However, Merlin always had a strong self-control over this sort of things. He quickly dismissed these confusing thoughts with a scratch of his head while still lying in bed before finally getting up.

He had wanted to formulate Coagulation Potion yesterday but was interrupted by Laurinka's arrival. Now he had to restart the process again.

"Matrix, restart the process of formulating Coagulation Potion!"

Merlin activated the Matrix. Soon, the mechanical female voice of the Matrix rang in his mind, "The formulation of Coagulation Potion begins now. Please prepare the following ingredients – silver blue grass, wogue flower, graphite ink..."

Merlin had tons of these common ingredients in the ring. He took them out one by one according to the Matrix's instructions.

Merlin had recorded the steps for formulating potions into the Matrix in advance. Only in strict accordance with the steps that there could be a greater success rate in formulating the potions.

“Firstly, ground silver blue grass and wogue flower into juice and pour them into a glassware...”

Merlin began to formulate the potion according to the steps listed by the Matrix. Merlin had to be extremely meticulous to avoid making even the slightest mistake with the steps and the dosage of each ingredient had to be strictly controlled – this was also the biggest benefit of acquiring the Matrix.

Since potion-making had been developed for thousands of years, the measuring instruments for various potions had been made precisely. Hence, Merlin did not have to worry about not reaching the doses strictly required by the Matrix due to careless spillage.

It had taken two hours of Merlin’s time just to prepare for the formulation of potion. It was a cumbersome process, but in the end, Merlin managed all the ingredients required of the potion.

“Add in graphite ink, heat it for half an hour, and wait.”

The last step was to add in graphite ink then heat it. Merlin added the graphite ink accordingly as mentioned by the Matrix. Immediately, in the glassware, the original dark green concoction became cloudy.

Merlin heated it directly with flame. Within seconds, slight squeaks came from the glassware and exuded hints of unpleasant odor. It seemed that this sticky potion had undergone some strange changes which even the Matrix could not expect.

After half an hour, Merlin turned off the flame and waited quietly for the potion to cool.

While waiting, Merlin carefully examined the records of the Matrix again. He found out that each step he took earlier was strictly in accordance with the requirements listed by the Matrix. Moreover, this was Coagulation Potion, a very simple potion so he could have kept everything under control.

Two hours later, the potion had completely cooled down. Merlin began to closely inspect the condition of Coagulation Potion.

Chapter 133: Temperature

Merlin opened the glassware and saw a thick black smudge. The potion exuded a disgusting foul scent.

“Is this Coagulation Potion?”

Merlin’s expression revealed his confusion. According to Wizard Howl’s description, Coagulation Potion would be black and had a faint refreshing scent. How could the one he formulated end up like this?

“Let’s give it a try!”

Although Merlin’s Coagulation Potion seemed to be somewhat different from the usual ones, Merlin would not be at ease if he did not at least try it.

“Swish!”

Merlin used a sharp dagger to slit his arm several times without mercy. All these only led to one shallow cut, which showed how strong his current physical attribute was.

After making a cut on his arm, Merlin hurriedly applied the newly prepared coagulant to the wound on his arm. This Coagulation Potion was for external application and did not need to be consumed hence it reduced possible risks that might arise and Merlin was not worried to test this potion out.

The effect of Coagulation Potion was to stop bleeding quickly. When Merlin applied the coagulant to his arm, he immediately felt a burning pain. Then, the wound on his arm almost rotted at an alarming speed, even visible to the naked eye.

Merlin was shocked but managed to remove Coagulation Potion from the wound with the sharp dagger before it took his arm entirely. Although Merlin was tough, he still felt excruciating pain as he sucked in air through his gritted teeth.

Merlin frowned as he looked at the piece of rotten flesh that had fallen to the ground. The Coagulation Potion that he formulated had undoubtedly failed.

Merlin's heart sank. He did not care much about the injury on his hand. With his current physical attribute, the wound would heal in a few days.

Merlin's current confusion was the failure of the formulation even though he had clearly followed the steps to the letter. He had also controlled the dosage of the potion ingredients strictly according to the Matrix, but why had it not worked out well?

"The most important thing in potion-making is to control the dosage of potion ingredients and the steps to formulating it!"

Merlin carefully recalled every step in formulating the potion and the dosage of potion ingredients used. Merlin had definitely followed the steps strictly in accordance with the tips provided by the Matrix, and he had also utilized accurate instruments. Hence, it was impossible to perform mistakes.

As for the potion formulation steps, Merlin played the records in the Matrix repeatedly and it seemed that he had not done any obvious error.

At the moment, Merlin was confused. He would not dare to try formulating Magic Monster Potion if he did not first figure out the reason for this failure. After all, some ingredients of the Magic Monster Potion were too precious. There was not much in the silver-haired old man's ring, and naturally, he could not afford to squander them at will.

Moreover, the worst thing that could happen was that a mistake in preparation might turn Magic Monster Potion into a highly toxic potion.

"Fire, right, it must be fire. There must have been some unknown changes that happened in the heating process!"

A thought flashed across Merlin's mind. Often, in the process of formulating potion – heating, cooling, or sometimes even more special processes were required.

Perhaps, during the heating process, Merlin did not grasp the right temperature, which led to the failure of formulating this potion. It was the same with chefs. Although all the steps were done

accordingly to the recipe, the taste of the dishes would not necessarily be the same, mainly due to the temperature.

The concept of temperature was similar to a Spell Caster being familiar toward potions. This was something even the Matrix could not have precise control over.

As practice makes perfect, once again, Merlin began formulating Coagulation Potion. In comparison to other Spell Casters, Merlin still had a natural advantage because he had assistance from the Matrix. For others, maybe they could only attain a deep understanding of potions after many formulation trials and loads of ingredients wasted.

However, Merlin did not need to go through the same process. He only needed to do accordingly as the Matrix instructed and focused on keeping an eye on the temperature.

Sure enough, although Merlin failed again the second time, he successfully formulated Coagulation Potion the third time, with a 30 percent success rate.

This success rate was quite terrifying. Even Wizard Howl who had studied potions for such a long time might only be able to achieve a 30 percent success rate.

“A 30 percent success rate is totally acceptable!”

Merlin often felt that his energy was limited. It was not possible for him to put all his energy into potion-making as he might become a great master of potion-making but not a great Spell Caster.

In the next few days, Merlin spent part of his time each day in potion-making. He wanted to familiarize himself with the temperature of fire in the formulation process to ensure that the success rate was improved when he was ready to formulate Magic Monster Potion.

Since the last crazy encounter with Laurinka, Merlin had not seen her around anymore. Although Merlin sort of missed that one night of madness that they shared together, he did not take the initiative to look for her. Instead, he made the best use of his time in potion-making and Mind Meditation.

After all, there was only another month before the Dark Magic Region conference would take place.

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A few days later, Laurinka finally appeared in front of Merlin. However, this time, Laurinka was done dealing with her affairs and would soon be sent out of the Dark Magic Region.

These few days would be the last chances she had with Merlin.

After a few passionate exchanges, Laurinka draped her fair arm over Merlin's body. She heaved a soft sigh and said gently, "Merlin, I'll leave the Dark Magic Region in a few days, and there are some things I've to tell you. My family is a small Spell Caster family. The strongest of the family is just a Third-level Spell Caster, who has been missing for many years. There's only a handful of First-level Spell Casters among the rest. Potential members of the family would usually be sent to a spell casters' organization..."

Laurinka shared details about her family. Merlin listened carefully as this was not information he got to hear often.

Laurinka's family had been established for centuries and could be considered as possessing a long legacy. Therefore, they had the ability to send potential members in the family to various spell casters' organizations for further training.

However, there were only so few who eventually became First-level Spell Casters. Most of them were like Laurinka, who, upon returning to the family, would be given up and not be able to obtain even any cultivation resources. Eventually, they would succumb to death in desolation.

Perhaps many people, like Laurinka, would gamble their life before leaving the organizations, and make every effort to pull strings with some Spell Casters who had the potential to become official members.

However, only a handful were able to get what they wanted! As Laurinka said, sometimes, people had to make choices no matter if they were right or wrong.

"Don't worry, I'll remember Shadison Family of Tolle City! I'll go to you as soon as possible..."

Merlin's tone was firm and determined.

Laurinka pouted her lips slightly and replied with a faint smile, “Well, then I’ll wait for you, First-level Six-Elemental Spell Caster. There hasn’t been one since the establishment of the Dark Magic Region...”

When Laurinka finished her words, she looked at Merlin eagerly, and the next second, both of them were entangled together once again...

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Three days later, Laurinka was sent out of the Dark Magic Region. Her seventy contribution points, as well as the 500,000 gold coins her family gave her, were also converted into contribution points and transferred to Merlin.

At present, Merlin had a total of one hundred and fifty contribution points, which was quite rich for a Spell Caster who had just entered the Dark Magic Region for slightly more than half a year.

Due to this, Merlin paid a visit to the Resource Tower. Seemingly inspired by the discovery of Magic Monster Potion, he looked for potions that could increase Mind Power.

Unfortunately, Merlin did not find a potion that was able to increase his Mind Power, except several ancient potion recipes. The effects recorded in these recipes promised the possibility of Mind Power enhancement.

However, its price alone was enough to make Merlin shake his head helplessly. Each formula required at least five hundred contribution points or above, which was more expensive than many other casting tools. What puzzled Merlin more was that these potions were all covered in thick layers of dust, as if they had been left unattended for a very long time.

Merlin also specifically consulted the gray-robed Wizards in the Resource Tower regarding the potions. The potion ingredients were mostly priced at a higher range so they were pricey to Entrance-level Spell Casters such as Merlin. On the other hand, a few hundred contribution points would not matter a lot to Spell Casters in the Dark Magic Region of Fourth-level or above.

However, Merlin had been told that there were no potion ingredients!

The fundamental reason that no one showed interest in those potions which were able to enhance Mind Power was basically that the ingredients for these potion recipes were not available in the Dark Magic Region.

Not only were they not available in the Dark Magic Region but also in many surrounding spell casters' organizations.

Spell casters' organization had control over the growth of a large number of precious ingredients. Naturally, it was due to this reason that these spell casters' organizations were able to become stronger. Even many Spell Casters families would do everything possible to send potential members from their family into the organizations.

If the Dark Magic Region and several other spell casters' organizations did not have the ingredients for these potion recipes, then these potion recipes were basically as useless as chicken ribs.

Merlin also carefully looked through the Resource Tower for some of the ingredients needed for Magic Monster Potion. As expected, these ingredients were extremely rare in the Resource Tower as well. Furthermore, most of those ingredients also cost an exorbitant price.

This made Merlin experience first-hand the cruel reality of being a Spell Caster – the scarceness of resources!

It wasn't surprising that Laurinka, even if she was to lose her freedom and become Merlin's attendant, was willing to do so just to stay in the Dark Magic Region. In the outside world, various resources were scarce. The main reason the roaming Wizards were not better off than Spell Casters in organizations was due to the fact they had no access to knowledge from systemic learning, they also had no means of obtaining the required resources.

"It seems that formulation of Magic Monster Potion must be done with extreme caution. I would rather postpone it at the moment and begin when I have thoroughly familiarized myself with the various steps of formulating it. I must not simply fail the formulation and waste these potion ingredients."

Merlin had already planned to formulate Magic Monster Potion. After all, the Dark Magic Region conference was nearing with each passing day. Merlin needed to increase his strength quickly. He was even ready to try constructing First-level Furious Flame.

Therefore, Merlin successfully formulated several kinds of potions. With the help of the Matrix, he finally grasped the methods of potion-making, and he was ready to formulate Magic Monster Potion!

Chapter 134: Compatibility

Numerous glassware were scattered around every corner, making the room messy. This seemingly crowded room was Merlin's temporary laboratory.

Every Spell Caster needed a laboratory – whether it was for formulating potion or researching runes or even constructing Spell Model, having a laboratory was essential.

The most basic requirement of a laboratory was absolute silence and safety. Merlin's simple and crude lab obviously did not meet these requirements. Spell Casters of Fourth-level or above could build a separate wizard tower in the Dark Magic Region and use one of its floors as their lab.

In fact, Wizard Leo stayed in his lab all year round. Located at the top of the tower, Wizard Leo spent more than ten years setting up the lab to perfection.

However, Merlin only needed his lab for potion-making and this room was enough.

“Matrix, start formulating Magic Monster Potion!”

Merlin took a deep breath and immediately activated the Matrix.

“Beep. Mission established! Checking the ingredient list for Magic Monster Potion...”

The Matrix began working in an orderly manner according to the pre-set steps. Firstly, it sorted and counted the potion ingredients. The ingredients for formulating Magic Monster Potion were rather extraordinary, and there were eighty-nine different kinds in total.

The Coagulation Potion formulated by Merlin the last time only consisted of eleven kinds of ingredients. It was nothing compared to Magic Monster Potion that required numerous rich and precious ingredients.

Merlin had already known almost all of these potion ingredients through Wizard Howl, but there were too many and it made the process very cumbersome. It took Merlin a few hours to put all the ingredients together on the long wooden table.

Next would be processing the ingredients – some were only needed in a tiny fraction, some needed to be grinded into juice, and some even needed to be dried out.

Therefore, the preparation work before potion-making already took almost half a day of Merlin's time.

However, at the prompt of the Matrix, Merlin still completed the preparation of formulating potion perfectly. Besides, to facilitate the continuous preparation, Merlin actually prepared four portions of potion ingredients.

“Phew...”

Merlin heaved a long sigh and whispered, “I’m finally ready!”

The preparation before potion-making was already very complicated. If there was no Matrix, perhaps Merlin would have been unable to perform a detailed preparation even if he studied the course for a few months.

The most important aspect in formulating potion was the details where it determined the success of formulating a potion. A tiny flame, a drop of water, and etcetera would affect the result of the final product.

It was only by relying on the Matrix that Merlin could try formulating such complicated Magic Monster Potion in a short period of time.

When all preparations had been done, Merlin followed the procedures listed by the Matrix to formulate the potion, one step at a time. First heating, grinding, adding water, drying, etcetera. After a series of steps...

Finally, the Magic Monster Potion was formulated. However, further examination was needed to determine if the formulation was a success or failure.

“Matrix, check if it meets the criteria of Magic Monster Potion.”

Merlin has previously used the Matrix to record the color, composition, and so on of Magic Monster Potion, just so the Matrix could utilize the information to verify the potion.

“Beep. The result shows there’s a color difference of six percent, perhaps due to an unknown change so it’s not recommended for use!”

The mechanical female voice of Matrix rang again. Merlin was concerned as he stared at the Magic Monster Potion in his hand.

Potion formulation was a very delicate matter. Even if there were just subtle differences in color, there could have been many undetectable changes which took place where a good potion could have easily been turned into a highly toxic potion.

Therefore, an apothecary would be able to formulate potion and also identify the potion to confirm its safety. Numerous accidents had occurred where many Spell Casters just followed the procedures blindly.

Therefore, although the Magic Monster Potion formulated by Merlin only had six percent difference in color, which was really difficult to observe with the naked eye, this slight color difference basically indicated the potion was unsafe for use.

In other words, Merlin’s first try in formulating Magic Monster Potion had failed.

The reason for each failure had to be noted. Fortunately, with the help from the Matrix, Merlin could recheck each of his steps to figure out what went wrong.

It took a lot of effort to locate the cause since the process of preparing Magic Monster Potion was overly complicated.

Finally, a few hours later, Merlin found the reason. It seemed that the failure happened because he did not dry the moisture on one of the potion ingredients promptly during the formulation process.

Merlin forced out a smile and shook his head. Despite strictly following each procedure in formulating the potion with the help from the Matrix, a minor mistake could result in failure.

“I’ll start over!”

Merlin took a deep breath, and once again, threw himself into the process of formulating potion.

One time, two times, three times...

Beyond Merlin’s expectation, after spending two days in the room making potions, he failed to produce it three times in a row.

There were three consecutive failures in two days! Merlin even began to suspect if it was useful to have the Matrix strictly controlling the potion-making process.

However, in the end, in his fourth try, Merlin finally succeeded in formulating Magic Monster Potion, as verified by the Matrix.

“Phew...”

Merlin heaved a sigh of relief and his tensed body relaxed immediately. Only until then he felt exhausted, hence he quickly began to meditate.

After the meditation process, Merlin realized that his Mind Power seemed to have increased. Although it was not obvious and it felt slightly different from his usual meditation, he felt that his Mind Power had definitely increased significantly.

“I didn’t expect that the act of formulating potion will help increase Mind Power.”

Merlin grinned in delight, then took the successful Magic Monster Potion in his hand. The dark green potion looked strange and peculiar in the transparent glassware.

“It took four times to make a successful potion... But this is already considered a very high probability!”

Merlin stared hard at the Magic Monster Potion in the glassware. According to the silver-haired old man's animal skin roll, Magic Monster Potion was extremely difficult to formulate successfully.

The exact probability for success was not stated in the animal skin roll, but Merlin found some of the silver-haired old man's transcripts inside the ring, in which he devoted a lot of space to describe the distress of preparing this Magic Monster Potion.

The silver-haired old man once collected more than ten portions of ingredients after a painstaking process. He spent about a month's time in a secret place formulating Magic Monster Potion and without exception, all his efforts ended up in vain.

After all, Magic Monster Potion was a very complicated potion. Even if it was prepared by Wizard Howl, the success rate would not exceed ten percent. Hence, Merlin's chance was unusually high.

"Magic Monster Potion needs to be consumed in a stable state of Mind Power."

Merlin remembered some taboos about consuming Magic Monster Potion – those with unstable Mind Power were not encouraged to consume it. Therefore, Merlin had no choice but to take a few days off ready himself for consumption of Magic Monster Potion.

...

Five days later, Merlin felt that his Mind Power had reached its peak and he was ready to consume Magic Monster Potion.

Magic Monster Potion enabled the silver-haired old man of poor qualifications to acquire the Mind Power of a Third-level Spell Caster. This alone was enough to prove the extraordinary strength of Magic Monster Potion.

However, these kinds of potions could have strong effects on Mind Power. One careless move and it could be counterproductive. Therefore, there was still risk in consuming Magic Monster Potion, and one would need to practice caution while doing so.

Soon, Merlin adjusted his state and consumed Magic Monster Potion. Suddenly, he felt his entire body floating in the air. It was as if there was a gush of heat that flowed through his mind. The rapid expansion was making him extremely uncomfortable.

This feeling lasted for a few hours. Even meditation was not able to calm it down, hence Merlin had no choice but to endure it silently.

A few hours later, the discomfort in Merlin's body disappeared. He took a quick check at his Mind Power. The observation put Merlin in a great shock as his Mind Power had increased by almost thirty percent!

A thirty percent growth in Mind Power was almost equivalent to the result Merlin would acquire after meditating for half a year.

“Wow!”

Merlin could not help but be surprised. He tried hard to suppress the excitement surging in his body. If he was able to formulate more Magic Monster Potion, then he would yield an effective result than an Intermediate-level Meditation spell.

Unfortunately, there were only two portions of ingredients left for Magic Monster Potion in the silver-haired old man's ring. Merlin did not dare to use it simply, fearing that he might waste these precious potion ingredients.

Seeing as his Mind Power had increased by thirty percent, the idea of constructing a First-level spell rose in Merlin's mind again. In fact, this thought had long been in the back of his mind, but it had not been carried out because his Mind Power was not strong enough.

Now, with Magic Monster Potion, Merlin's Mind Power was almost infinitely close to a Second-level Spell Caster's. With such an expansive Mind Power, there would not be a big issue even if his attempt to construct a First-level spell ended up in a failure.

There were only about ten days left to the Dark Magic Region conference, and Merlin was eager to improve his strength!

At the thought of this, Merlin immediately activated the Matrix.

“Matrix, start analyzing the Spell Model of First-level Furious Flame!”

First-level Furious Flame was the Spell Model selected by Merlin to construct based on Fireball.

During his time in the Dark Magic Region, Merlin gradually learned more about Spell Models. Choosing the right spell was essential, especially in the time of an upgrade.

For example, one would have to construct a First-level spell based on a Zero-level spell in addition to constructing a First-level spell Model which was the most suitable for the Spell Caster. It was also necessary to look at the compatibility between this specific Spell Model with the Zero-level spell which had been simulated in the Awareness.

The concept of compatibility between spells was another complicated issue. It required complex calculations and long-term derivation to determine the compatibility rate between two Spell Models.

Due to this reason, numerous Entrance-level Spell Casters were not able to level up as First-level Spell Casters. Without a certain compatibility, the conflicts between spells would eventually lead to instability of the Spell Model even after a successful construction.

It was exactly because the Zero-level spells in Laurinka's Awareness were incompatible with the Furious Flame's Spell Model that she kept failing to construct it. That eventually left her no choice but to leave the Dark Magic Region.

However, Merlin never had to worry about the compatibility between Spell Models. He knew that the Matrix was the best at various calculations. As long as it was among Spell Models, anything could be calculated and analyzed, before acquiring a compatibility rate.

Merlin only needed to choose a spell with the highest degree of compatibility and ensure it was within the absolute safe category.

"Beep. The analysis is over. A total of 113,650 Spell Models have been reconstructed!"

The voice of the Matrix sounded again. Based on the original Furious Flame's Spell Model, it had reconstructed more than eleven thousand Spell Models for Merlin to choose from.

This time, Merlin exercised more caution in his selection. In addition to the stability of Spell Model, he had to select a Spell Model which had a higher compatibility with Fireball's Spell Model, so the process to construct a First-level spell would go smoothly.

Chapter 135: The Eve

“Matrix, analyze the compatibility between Furious Flame’s Spell Models and Fireball’s Spell Models!”

Immediately, Merlin gave the Matrix such a command. The compatibility had to do with whether a First-level Spell Model could be successfully constructed, so naturally, Merlin took it very seriously.

“Beep. Analysis complete. There are thirteen thousand, six hundred and twenty-eight Spell Models that do not clash with the Fireball’s Spell Model.”

The Matrix completed its analysis in a jiffy. In total, there were more than ten thousand Spell Models that did not clash with Fireball. In other words, it was theoretically possible to simulate the over ten thousand Spell Models in his Awareness.

However, Merlin was very clear that this was merely theoretical. He was afraid that the Spell Models with low compatibility levels would still be unstable even if, by some good luck, they were built successfully.

Thus, Merlin had a careful observation. He discovered that the Spell Model with the highest level of compatibility was 91% with Fireball.

As recognized by Spell Casters, if the compatibility between two Spell Models was able to surpass 60%, it would be considered a very safe Spell Model which they could boldly construct it with a peace of mind.

Therefore, 91% was already an extremely high level of compatibility attained for Merlin’s Spell Model. However, such a high compatibility level was only positioned at the three hundredth or so in terms of stability amongst one hundred and ten thousand Spell Models.

There were three aspects that needed to be considered before constructing Spell Models, especially those above the First-level. It was necessary for the three aspects – stability, power, and compatibility – to achieve a certain benchmark.

It was only now that Merlin truly knew why the Entrance-level Spell Casters, who clearly had enough Mind Power and possessed suitable First-level Spell Models, were simply unable to level up and become a First-level Spell Caster.

The true reason was that the construction of Spell Models was just too difficult; merely the aspect of stability was enough to stump a huge batch of high caliber Spell Casters. When one also took the even more complicated compatibility level into account, it became an even more difficult task. Unsurprisingly, Spell Casters of Four-Elements and above were so rare in the Dark Magic Region.

Therefore, the most difficult thing to do for an average Spell Caster was to construct a Spell Model where it had nothing to do with their Mind Power!

With the Matrix in his possession, Merlin was able to use it to help him build Spell Models by going through oceans of calculations, and it could even analyze the compatibility level between Spell Models, thus helping Merlin to solve the most difficult problem for a Spell Caster.

This was the real reason why Merlin could break the norm and construct a Six-Elemental spell with one more!

Merlin thought about it carefully again. He could not choose the Spell Model that possessed the highest level of compatibility with Fireball. Although the compatibility was rather good, its stability was just too low. He needed to choose a Spell Model that would have an excellent composite of stability, compatibility, and power.

Finally, Merlin chose a Spell Model which achieved an 81% compatibility level with Fireball. The stability of this Spell Model was encouraging and was listed in the top twenty amongst ten thousand and more Spell Models. Its power was not bad too. It could be regarded as one of the best Spell Models from the aspect of the composite.

After deciding on a Spell Model, Merlin eagerly prepared the final step – simulating the First-level Spell Model in his Awareness.

Merlin closed his eyes gently and started to shift his Mind Power, simulating Furious Flame's Spell Model with all his might.

...

"I've failed..."

After a few hours, Merlin opened his eyes. There was a look of helplessness over his face.

This time, his construction had failed because it had been too forceful. Although his Mind Power was already sufficiently great, nearing that of a Second-level Spell Caster's, his Spell Models were still double of an average Spell Caster.

It was natural, then, that a lot more Mind Power was required to sustain so many Spell Models. Therefore, Merlin had already felt very forceful while exerting his best effort to simulate Furious Flame's Spell Model. As a result, he gave up halfway through the simulation.

Merlin did not suffer any injuries because he had not gone through the simulation in his Awareness – all he felt was some resentment.

“Looks like I've to continue strengthening my Mind Power.”

Merlin's failure this time was not directly caused by the weakness of his Mind Power. Originally, he could have formulated a magic potion, but the one he formulated previously had used up four portions of potion materials. Now, there were only two portions of potion materials left inside the ring. Without great certainty, Merlin would not formulate another magic potion.

Moreover, there were only ten or so days left until the conference. There was not much time left to formulate a magic potion so it would be better for him to relax and cultivate the intermediate Meditation Spell.

...

After more than ten days, densely packed runes appeared inside Merlin's house once more. In the midst of the Runic Magic Circle, a half-translucent human face formed gradually.

“Merlin, make a trip to where I am, here...”

Wizard Leo's raspy voice sounded. Merlin thought for a moment and realized that it could be concerns about the conference. He counted the days and tomorrow was the Dark Magic Region's triennial conference.

After ten days of meditation, Merlin's Mind Power had merely increased a little. The Mind Power of a Spell Caster required long periods of meditation before one could see significant improvement.

Previously, the black-robed old man had painstakingly meditated for over ten years for his Mind Power to merely reach the level of a First-level Spell Caster. Merlin's current Mind Power had long surpassed that of the black-robed old man's, so his speed could already be considered extremely fast.

After the meditation had ended, Merlin immediately left the room and arrived outside Wizard Leo's house.

"Come in."

Wizard Leo said coldly from inside the house. Merlin pushed the door open and entered the house.

The bloodshot, vertical eye on Wizard Leo's forehead blinked gently. Merlin then felt a hint of peculiarity. Merlin knew very little about Wizard Leo's Darkness Eye, only that it possessed very mystical powers. He was not clear, however, on exactly what powers it had.

Then, the vertical eye on Wizard Leo's forehead slowly closed. Wizard Leo spoke in a cold tone, "The conference takes place tomorrow. Be here earlier, I shall bring all the temporary members of the Wizard Tower to join the conference."

Merlin nodded, before listening carefully to Wizard Leo as he gave an account of some rules at the conference. One that caught Merlin's attention was that they were not restricted from using casting tools at the conference.

This was extremely disadvantageous to Merlin. If some Spell Caster from a wealthy background brought some Second or even Third-level casting tools, then would there be anything left to anticipate at all?

As though he knew the thoughts in Merlin's mind, Wizard Leo waved his hand and said, "There's no need to talk about what's fair and what's not. The world is unfair in the first place. Compare yourself with the roaming Wizards outside; is it fair for them? To own a casting tool is part of one's capability. Just do your best not to be at the bottom this time and it'll be alright."

After a pause, Wizard Leo continued, “As for whether you’re selected by some other Wizards who excel at teaching, this will depend on your own performance. The Spell Casters who rely on casting tools but possesses bad quality, naturally do not have this opportunity. Therefore, all you have to do is to present your strength.”

Merlin nodded. Wizard Leo’s words had helped him gain a deeper understanding of the Spell Casters’ world. The roaming Wizards and the Wizards in the spell casters’ organization were already an expression of unfairness in the first place, but what was required in the world of Spell Casters was not fairness, but great power!

There were various objectives for the conference of the Dark Magic Region; the selection of talents was merely one of them. Powerful Wizards who truly wanted to select excellent Spell Casters were not idiots. Naturally, they could tell the inferior and the superior apart. It was not necessary for Merlin to worry about this.

After understanding some of the details concerning the conference, Merlin bade goodbye to Wizard Leo and returned to his room.

...

Under the dusky yellow lamplight, Merlin spread open a piece of white paper on the wooden table. He held a feather pen in his hand, looking out into the pitch black night sky outside the Wizard Tower as he delved into his memories.

He had just counted the days, only to realize that almost a year had passed since he quietly left Prakash City back then.

Celia and Conxion would already be starting to learn how to walk. However, as their father, Merlin was unable to be there with his children as they grew up.

He could write letters in the Dark Magic Region, but it was extremely costly to send the letters out. It required 5 contribution points, and it was impossible to receive letters as no one knew the actual location of the Dark Magic Region.

Five contribution points would be fifty thousand gold coins after conversion. To write a letter costing fifty thousand gold coins would make it the world’s most expensive letter.

Merlin did not have any contribution points in the past, so naturally, he would not lavishly spend five contribution points to write a letter. However, he had now obtained one hundred and twenty contribution points gifted to him by Laurinka. In addition to his own thirty contribution points, he had altogether one hundred and fifty contribution points.

One hundred and fifty contribution points would be able to support Merlin's wish to act lavishly for once. After all, his loved ones far away still held a very important position in Merlin's heart.

Merlin was in a deep thought for a long time. Then, he began to write on the clean, white paper.

"Dearest Charise, Avril, please send my regards to Father! Forgive me for not writing to you for so long. There have been some special circumstances in the Dark Magic Region, and sending a letter is also very extravagant here. It's almost a year now, I wonder how Celia and Conxion are.

"I'm living very well in the Dark Magic Region. You don't have to worry about me. Before I left, I've requested Count Selin and Wizard Hill to take care of the Wilson family and our territory. I think there should not be any huge problems there.

"I might return after two years. Please pass on the message to Wizard Hill that there is, indeed, a Spell Model-stabilizing Potion in the Dark Magic Region. I'll think of a way to obtain this potion and will bring it back for him after two years."

Having written thus far, Merlin suddenly felt that there was nothing more for him to write. After some warm words of greeting, he signed his name at the end of the paper.

Under the dim, yellow lamplight, Merlin read through it repeatedly. There was a vaguely warm feeling in his heart, as though he had grown utterly confident about the conference in the Dark Magic Region tomorrow.

Chapter 136: Birds of A Feather Flock Together

Merlin woke up very early in the morning and meditated for a while. Although he had come to the Dark Magic Region and possessed the assistance of the Matrix, Merlin was still as diligent as he had been.

Merlin went straight to the top floor of the Wizard Tower, only to discover that nine Spell Casters had already gathered outside of Wizard Leo's house.

Like Merlin, these nine Spell Casters had been chosen by Wizard Leo to join the triennial conference of the Dark Magic Region.

These Spell Casters were minding their own businesses respectively. Some would be completing missions, or meditating in their rooms, or building spells. Therefore, although Merlin had already been in the Dark Magic Region for almost a year, he did not recognize these Spell Casters.

Merlin's arrival did not attract much attention. These Spell Casters merely smiled at Merlin out of politeness before turning away, quietly standing in front of the house as they waited.

Very soon, Wizard Leo came out. Today, Wizard Leo wore a white robe trimmed with golden edges. If one did not look at those empty eye sockets and the terrible, bloodshot vertical eye, Wizard Leo would still look rather decent in this outfit, accentuating his nobility and power.

Nevertheless, Wizard Leo's two empty eye sockets and the bloody vertical eye on his forehead were simply too horrifying. Even the faces of these Spell Casters, who had seen Wizard Leo before, turned slightly ashen. Only a few Spell Casters could be regarded as having normal expressions.

Wizard Leo did not mind it, and said mildly, "As everyone is here, let's go! Merlin, lead the way this time!"

Wizard Leo spoke to Merlin in a calm voice. Immediately, Merlin could feel that a few pairs of eyes were fixed on him.

Merlin gave a cold glance at the other nine Spell Casters. He knew that Wizard Leo's intention was to give him an identity and a position. Merlin was to be the leader for this conference; the other nine were only going to put on an act, as a mere formality.

Thus, led by Wizard Leo and Merlin, they left the Wizard Tower.

Soon, they arrived at a vast square. There were dozens of high platforms with some mysterious runes carved on them in the square. It was a rather spectacular sight to behold to see a few dozen high platforms set adjacent to each other.

The Dark Magic Region was extremely large, taking over the space of an island in the sea by itself hence it was very easy and convenient to open up an empty space as the venue for the conference.

There were throngs of people moving about in the square. Spell Casters, dressed in all sorts of garments, were standing in an orderly manner in the square. At the very front of the square were rows of stone chairs. These had been prepared for the powerful Spell Casters who were Fourth-level or above, who joined the conference with their students.

“Merlin, lead them and wait here for the drawing of lots.”

Wizard Leo immediately passed the responsibility for the nine Spell Casters over to Merlin. He did not have the least bit of self-awareness as a tutor.

Seeing Wizard Leo’s back as he left, Merlin felt rather helpless. He was afraid that it was an absolute mistake for the Dark Magic Region to allow Wizard Leo to teach students.

“Wizard Merlin.”

Suddenly, a female Wizard next to Merlin called out softly. She was one of the nine Spell Casters and seemed rather gentle and frail. Her long, brown hair was heaped upon her shoulders, and she wore a few tiny golden bells on her fair wrists.

Seeing that Merlin now was responsible for them, the female Wizard spoke in a mysterious, soft voice. “Wizard Merlin, Teacher Leo really does think highly of you! We’ve all heard about how Teacher Leo had never appeared during the last few conferences. All he did was allow one person to lead the team here. This time, however, Teacher Leo has personally brought the team here. The few of us know clearly in our hearts that we aren’t worth Teacher Leo’s high regard at all, and we’ve come this time just for the sake of formalities, that’s all.

“So perhaps only Wizard Merlin could enable Teacher Leo to have such a high regard for you.”

The female Wizard’s looks could only be considered typical, but at the moment, as she softly batted her big eyes, she seemed to possess an additional different kind of charm.

Merlin did not give an explanation. He smiled and asked, “What’s your name?”

“You may call me Elena.”

Merlin nodded before asking, “Elena, who, amongst Teacher Leo’s students, has achieved good battle records during the previous few conferences in the Dark Magic Region?”

After thinking for a moment, Elena replied, “That should be Wizard Sauron. Twelve years ago, he represented the Wizard Tower in a battle and had won three times consecutively. Following that, Wizard Sauron had also been successfully promoted to a First-level Spell Caster, becoming an official member of the Dark Magic Region.”

Merlin nodded. Wizard Sauron would have been extremely outstanding. Although he did not know what had caused him to be assigned to Wizard Leo’s Wizard Tower, the fact that he could become a First-level Spell Caster was enough to show that he was indeed talented.

In the Dark Magic Region, the Entrance-level Spell Casters were the most abundant, but not more than thirty percent of them could be promoted without a hitch to First-level Spell Casters. Even so, this figure was already considered extremely low.

Moreover, only ten percent of Wizard Leo’s students could achieve successful promotion to First-level Spell Casters. This was even lower than the average standard of the Dark Magic Region.

There was still some time before the conference began. Merlin was seated with the other nine Spell Casters, but they were rather quiet and reserved. They were unlike the Spell Casters from other Wizard Towers, who were jubilantly discussing the matter of who would be more likely to make a splash during this conference.

“I heard that Wizard Dewey’s student, Cecil, has successfully built a First-level Earth-type spell this time. I’m afraid that he’ll be able to shine and show off his talents during this conference. Who knows, that powerful Wizard might take a fancy to him. After all, Cecil’s tutor, Wizard Dewey, is only a Fourth-level Spell Caster...”

“Indeed, to be able to successfully build a First-level spell within a year, such a speed is extremely terrifying! Nevertheless, if we’re talking about making a splash, I’m afraid it won’t be Cecil, but Loan!”

“Are you talking about Loan who is just one final First-level spell away from leveling up to a First-level Spell Caster? He’s very powerful, indeed, but his tutor is a mighty Sixth-level Spell Caster who values him very much. I’m afraid Loan wouldn’t leave even if other Wizards set their sights on him.”

These Spell Casters were in a high-spirited discussion but Wizard Leo’s students – the nine Spell Casters – were looking downcast. Not a single word escaped their lips as they kept quiet throughout.

As though she had seen through Merlin’s doubts, Elena lowered her voice and said, “Wizard Merlin, perhaps you still don’t understand. We’re Wizard Leo’s students, yes, so everything we do must be done in a low profile. Low profile, do you understand?”

Elena’s expression seemed to be somewhat awkward and unnatural. However, Merlin had already understood what she had meant to say. It was as though Wizard Leo’s students were born to be subpar to everyone else in the Dark Magic Region. The Spell Casters from other Wizard Towers seemed to have more confidence than Wizard Leo’s students, even the students of Fourth-level Wizards.

It was noted that Wizard Leo was the strongest Spell Caster at the peak of the Sixth-level. Nevertheless, his students had sunk so low that they did not even dare to speak aloud. However, Rome wasn’t built in a day hence such situation was caused by a series of accumulated events in the past 1 . Nonetheless, during the past few years, there were many talents who had appeared amongst Wizard Leo’s students but it had been difficult for even a First-level Spell Caster to show up. This had caused all the students who had been assigned to Wizard Leo’s Wizard Tower to lack confidence in themselves.

“Eh? Wizard Merlin, you’ve come to join the conference as well?”

Right then, Merlin heard a familiar voice behind his back. He turned around and discovered that it was the female Spell Caster, Ryllis, whom he had embarked on a mission to Donglin City a few days ago.

Next to Ryllis were Holmes, as well as a huge and tall man who was wearing a strange earring on his ear that looked as delicate as a snake.

“Wizard Ryllis, Wizard Holmes!”

Merlin stood up and greeted them.

Wizard Holmes' facial expression seemed extremely composed. After all, many days had passed, and he had calmed down.

“Wizard Merlin, you’ve come to join the conference too?”

Holmes glanced at the other nine Spell Casters next to Merlin and asked him coldly.

Merlin nodded and said, “We’re the team led by Wizard Leo to join the conference. Why? Hasn’t Wizard Gretel brought you all here?”

Holmes shook his head and said, “Teacher Gretel has a very important experiment, so he’s let us come ourselves.”

As the two of them engaged in a casual conversation, the strangely dressed man next to Holmes seemed to have a vaguely gloomy expression.

“This is...?”

Merlin realized that this man had a very ugly expression. Thus, he directed his question at Holmes.

Holmes merely smiled without any indication that he would give him an introduction. The big, tall and strange man suddenly sneered. “Hehe, Holmes, I’ve never imagined that you’d be able to make friends with Wizard Leo’s student. Birds of a feather really do flock together. It looks like it wasn’t a coincidence that the First-level spell you’ve constructed previously failed. You can just wait through the three years slowly before being sent out from the Dark Magic Region, haha!”

Then, the strange man guffawed, turned around and left.

Merlin’s expression remained unchanged. He had gathered some useful information from the words of that strange man. It seemed that Wizard Holmes had begun attempts to build a First-level Spell Model after the mission at Donglin City but failed.

It was also obvious that there was a rift between the man and Holmes, such that the man would not give up any opportunity to deride him.

Wizard Holmes' face had turned black and his mood had gone sour. After exchanging a few more words with Merlin, he turned and left too.

“So birds of a feather do flock together?”

Merlin glanced at the back of the strange man, who was leaving. However, a strange look flashed across his eyes. Even an unfamiliar Spell Caster had become disdainful the moment he heard that he was Wizard Leo's student. Even Wizard Holmes, who had merely engaged in a small conversation with Merlin, was scoffed at by this person.

Although Merlin was unconcerned about such things, he still felt rather annoyed.

Wizard Elena seemed to have already gotten used to this a long time ago. She shrugged and said with a smile, “Wizard Merlin, you don't have to bother yourself with such things. You'll slowly get used to it in the future. Moreover, there are also some Spell Casters who are above the First-level amongst Teacher Leo's students.”

Elena was just casually tossing out a few words to comfort Merlin.

“Alright, let's go up and draw lots.”

Merlin quickly stood up. He saw that there were already some gray-robed Wizards on a few high grounds in the square who had begun calling for people to draw lots to determine their opponents in the conference.

Chapter 137: The Conference

There were many people crowding at the high platforms; every one of them drew a number plate. Merlin waited until Elena and the others had all drawn theirs before going forward to casually receive a number plate from the hands of a gray-robed Wizard.

Elena was curious so she asked, “Wizard Merlin, what number did you draw?”

“Sixteen.”

Merlin waved the number plate in his hand, revealing the number on it.

Elena nodded and said, “Mine is twenty-six. I don’t know whom I’ll be facing.”

After waiting for approximately another half an hour, the gray-robed Wizards on the high platforms recorded the number plates of every Spell Caster who joined the conference. Thus, the matches began on four platforms concurrently.

“The first match – Wizard Gera against Wizard Behrendt!”

After the gray-robed Wizard announced the names, two Spell Casters immediately walked forward from amongst the crowd. The gray-robed Wizard retreated from the high platform only after they had taken their positions.

“Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!”

The mysterious runes all around the high platform flashed with lights, forming a gigantic protective shroud which covered the entire high platform. These Runic Magic Circles were used to protect the crowds below so that they would not be hit by the impact of the spells. The protective cover formed by these mysterious Runic Magic Circles seemed capable of withstanding the attacks of Fourth-level spells.

Therefore, as long as the Runic Magic Circle had been activated, it was absolutely unnecessary to worry about the two men in the match affecting the crowds beneath them.

“Gera!”

“Behrendt!”

The two participants exchanged their names, observing the most basic form of formalities. Then, in a dash, Wizard Gera’s figure appeared in front of Behrendt like a ghost.

“Wind Blade!”

Wizard Gera did not hesitate. He released a Wind-type Offensive spell. Suddenly, there were hundreds and thousands of swift and fierce Wind Blades all over the sky, drawing toward Wizard Behrendt in an overwhelming way.

Wizard Behrendt did not even have time to react when he saw Wind Blades filling the skies and the earth. He was so shocked that his footsteps staggered and he almost fell. He did not seem to have any Defensive spells. Thus, faced with Wizard Gera, who had struck pre-emptively and moved at such a high speed, there was no prospect of victory for him at all.

Thus, Behrendt yelled hastily, “I admit defeat!”

“Bang! Bang! Bang!”

All the hundreds and thousands of Wind Blades hit Wizard Behrendt’s body brutally. Nevertheless, the moment Wizard Behrendt uttered the two words, “admit defeat”, the Runic Magic Circle which covered the high platform immediately flashed with a beam of light and enveloped Behrendt. No matter how the Wind Blades attacked him, they were unable to harm him in the least.

This was also another safety measure taken by the Dark Magic Region to prevent casualties. As long as a Spell Caster surrendered, he would receive immediate protection.

Merlin shook his head slightly. Both these Spell Casters could not be considered really powerful. As a matter of fact, he was able to see that there was no difference between their respective true strengths; both were about the same. However, Wizard Gera had gained the pre-emptive advantage in addition to the fact that Behrendt had been somewhat restricted due to the nature of his spells. These were the only reasons why he had won so easily.

Apart from these, the battles on the other high platforms were also coming to an end quickly. Most of these Spell Casters were Three-Elemental Wizards, and the spells they had built were not strong ones.

Merlin had even hoped to learn some techniques from the battles amongst these Spell Casters. However, from the looks of it, they seemed to be too weak. He no longer had the desire to watch them attentively.

“Next round – Wizard Merlin against Wizard Ida!”

Just as Merlin was beginning to feel somewhat bored, the gray-robed Wizard announced his name.

“Oh? Is it my turn now?”

Merlin stood up and looked around. Elena and the rest of the nine Spell Casters had not gone onstage. However, there were three of them whose names had been announced this time. Like Merlin, they would be going onstage to face their respective opponents.

“Wizard Merlin, you must defeat him!”

Elena was brandishing her small fists; she seemed to be even more excited about this than about going up onstage herself.

Merlin walked to the high platform. Standing opposite him was a burly man who had an imposing and stocky build, with both sides of his jowls covered in an abundance of thick and black hair. He looked just like a barbarian, and a strong and vigorous barbarian at that.

“I’m called Ida!”

“Merlin!”

After they exchanged their names, the gray-robed Wizard immediately left the high platform. The Runic Magic Circle covered the high platform and the match officially began.

“Huuu...”

A gentle breeze blew. Merlin did not make his move immediately as he wished to wait for his opponent to strike first. However, Wizard Ida, whose physique seemed to contain much oppressive force, was very careful and diligent. He did not release any spells as well.

Merlin frowned. Deciding not to wait any longer, he stretched his hand out and pointed with his finger. A cluster of dense fog immediately appeared.

“Dark Mist!”

This was merely a typical Dark Mist but it shrouded nearly half of the high platform. A wave of dizziness swept over Wizard Ida’s mind and his expression immediately became sluggish. It was obvious that he had already been plunged into an illusion.

“Frost!”

Seeing that Wizard Ida had clearly fallen into a state of illusion, Merlin cast Frost as well, freezing the completely vulnerable Wizard Ida with ease.

Following that, Merlin did not launch any other attacks. He dispersed Dark Mist and watched Wizard Ida with slightly narrowed eyes as Wizard Ida slowly came to his senses.

Realizing the situation he was in, Wizard Ida felt very embarrassed. As his face turned red, he could only say in a low voice, “I admit defeat!”

Merlin smiled at him and walked off the high platform immediately to wait for the next match.

“Wizard Merlin, the spell that you’ve just released – was it Dark Mist?”

Merlin had just reached the area off the platform when he saw Elena blinking her huge eyes continuously, asking him the question in surprise and delight.

“It really is Dark Mist!”

There was nothing to hide concerning this, so Merlin nodded in admittance.

Elena immediately spoke in an envious tone, “To think that you’re able to construct Dark Mist’s Spell Model, that’s not easy at all. It looks like those gray-robed Wizards made a mistake when they assigned you to Wizard Leo’s tower!”

“Oh? Is there anything special about Dark Mist?”

Merlin's expression changed. He lowered his voice and asked.

“Dark Mist is a quite powerful Zero-level spell but its Spell Model is extremely complicated. Actually, many Spell Casters wish to build this spell, but none of them have any confidence because the Spell Model is simply too difficult, so they give up. You're able to build Dark Mist's Spell Model so I really don't know why those gray-robed Wizards assigned you to Wizard Leo's tower.”

Elena explained the reason in detail to Merlin and it turned out that the construction of Dark Mist was not so easy. It made sense now as Merlin felt it was strange to have so few Spell Casters who had built Dark Mist, which was such a useful Zero-level spell.

Merlin could not fully understand the fact that the Spell Model was too complicated. Furthermore, the amount of Mind Power exhausted by Dark Mist was far more than what was required for any typical Zero-level spells.

A short while later, Merlin saw that the other three Spell Casters had also returned from their matches. Nevertheless, he knew for sure that they had lost judging by their dejected and abnormally beaten-up looks.

Out of the four of them, Merlin was the only one who had won with ease during this round.

Subsequently, the remaining few took part in their first matches as well. However, none of them could pass the first match, including Elena. She had been a little better off than the others as she possessed a Spell Scroll. Hence, her situation had appeared to be slightly better and she took the initiative to surrender.

Except for Merlin, Wizard Leo's students had been eliminated after the first match of the conference. If Merlin had not been there, Wizard Leo's students would have probably been completely stricken out 2 during the first match.

Merlin could only shake his head helplessly as it was no surprise that the Spell Casters from other Wizard Towers felt overconfident at the mention of those who came from Wizard Leo's tower.

Merlin saw Wizard Leo, who was sitting on the high stone chair at the front of the square. There was nothing out of the ordinary about his expression. In fact, he looked calm.

“The second round – Wizard Merlin against Wizard Warren!”

Merlin heard the gray-robed Wizard call out his name once more; this was his second round of competition.

“It’s him, Wizard Merlin. My opponent earlier was him. You must teach him a severe lesson!”

Elena had become somewhat agitated upon seeing the Spell Caster who had appeared on the high platform. It turned out that Wizard Warren was the Spell Caster who had defeated Elena earlier.

“Don’t worry.”

Merlin smiled. A confident grin revealed on his face. He immediately walked up onto the high platform.

“Merlin!”

“Warren!”

After both men had announced their names, the entire high platform was instantaneously protected by the Runic Magic Circle. This time, Merlin did not wait and struck first.

“Dark Mist!”

Merlin’s attack was still Dark Mist. A vast fog immediately appeared, and although Warren had already prepared himself, his Mind Power was still unable to reach a level where he could break Dark Mist apart.

Therefore, Warren was inescapably plunged into an illusion as his expression became blank and sluggish.

“Crack!”

Just like Wizard Ida from the previous match, Wizard Warren was also rapidly frozen by ice crystals. Thus, the battle ended quickly.

It felt as though that it had just been a blink of an eye from the moment Merlin first struck until the end of the battle. Moreover, the spells Merlin had cast were identical to those from his previous match.

“Who’s this man? Both matches were the same – all he did was cast two spells and the battle was over.”

“That’s Dark Mist. All Spell Casters who’re able to construct Dark Mist’s Spell Model aren’t simple fellows. This Wizard Merlin, I wonder which Wizard Tower does he belong to?”

“Eh? Come, look quickly, he’s walking toward the Spell Casters from Wizard Leo’s tower. Could it be that he’s Wizard Leo’s student?”

Perhaps the first round, in which Merlin had defeated Ida without breaking a sweat, had not attracted much attention. This second round, however, Merlin had done the exact same thing by using the same two spells to defeat his second opponent. This had caught the eyes of some people.

However, there were odd expressions on many people’s faces after they discovered that Merlin was Wizard Leo’s student.

Merlin returned to the area beneath the platform once more. Elena could not contain her exhilaration – not only Merlin had helped her but also Merlin had won the second round. After so many years, this was the best battle result during a conference they had amongst Wizard Leo’s students, after Sauron.

“Wizard Merlin, vindicate us, you must charge through the third round!”

All of a sudden, the few Spell Casters, who had already been eliminated during the first matches and had not even dared to speak loudly, were clenching their fists tightly. They looked at Merlin with excitement on their faces. A sliver of anticipation seemed to flash through their eyes.

Chapter 138: Three Wins In A Row

“The third round!”

Merlin threw a glance at the people next to him. They were the nine other Spell Casters who had also been assigned to Wizard Leo’s tower. Perhaps, in the beginning, some of them were confident that they could become First-level Spell Casters. However, as time passed, these Spell Casters were filled with grievances due to long-term restriction to resources and indifference from Wizard Leo.

Merlin’s emergence seemed to have ignited a glimmer of hope in them. He who did not seem inferior to Spell Casters from other Wizard Towers had won two rounds of matches until then, so they placed all their hopes on Merlin.

“The third round – Wizard Merlin versus Wizard Glyman!”

Finally, the gray-robed Wizard called out Merlin’s name again, to officiate the beginning of the third round.

When Merlin rose to his feet, he felt countless gaze fixed on him. This was in stark contrast to when he left for the first two rounds.

After the previous two rounds of competition, finally, the crowd began to notice Merlin.

“The third round – the best part has finally begun!”

Many Spell Casters who, due to boredom, had their eyes almost drawn together, was slightly more enthusiastic watching this round. There were too many Spell Casters who participated in this conference. In the first two rounds, even Wizard Leo’s tower sent out ten Spell Casters as participants.

As a result, the standard of the previous two rounds of competition was not commendable. Hence, the audience had lost their spirit and were getting sleepy.

However, after the first two rounds, this third round that accumulated only the Spell Casters of certain strength was definitely going to be more exciting to watch.

Merlin reached the high platform quickly. He was facing a man with long auburn hair and dressed in a black robe. Both of them inspected each other in silence.

“Merlin!”

“Glyman!”

After the basic etiquette, the Runic Magic Circle established on the high platform shrouded the entire platform.

The third round had officially begun!

“Boom!”

Wizard Glyman struck almost as soon as the competition began. At the lift of his hand, a flame rose up and almost half of the high platform was engulfed in fire.

There were scorching flames everywhere. This was a Fire-type spell with a wide range of lethality. It seemed that Glyman had observed Merlin’s battle style earlier and figured that Merlin had dominated his opponent by striking first. He would cover the opponent with Dark Mist, let them fall into an illusion, and end the battle by freezing the other party.

However, Glyman had already fired the first shot. To create a chance for himself, he cast a wide range Offensive spell which completely suppressed Merlin from releasing Dark Mist.

“You can’t cast Dark Mist now. Surrender, or you’ll be burned to ashes by the flames.”

Glyman’s voice sounded very calm. Although the power of his wide range Offensive spell was not strong, it was enough to deal with a Spell Caster whose physical attribute was only slightly better than a Normie.

One of the established rules of the conference was that the competition would continue if no one surrendered, and eventually lasted until the other party died!

A look of disappointment washed over Merlin's face as he shook his head slightly. He thought that he would encounter some powerful Spell Casters at the third round, but Glyman had been a great let down.

"Gale!"

Merlin released Gale in an instant. The silhouette of his body shook slightly before disappearing to the back, avoiding the violent flames. Simultaneously, he also cast Dark Mist which enveloped Glyman.

"I surrender!"

Glyman knew that he had lost after seeing Merlin's release of Gale and successful escape from the Fire-type spell that he had cast. Hence, before waiting to be enveloped by Dark Mist, he called out to surrender.

"You're really strong. It's not a surprise to be defeated by your hands!"

Glyman took a deep look at Merlin before leaving the stage. Just like this, Merlin had successfully passed the third round!

Later, Merlin was greeted by Elena, who expressed extreme excitement when he left the stage. She clenched her fist and spoke in an incoherent manner, "Merlin, three rounds, you've actually won three rounds! This is the record established by Wizard Sauron when he was still around!"

Wizard Sauron, who created a three-round winning streak twelve years ago, helped gain some face for Wizard Leo. However, in every conference since then, not one of Wizard Leo's students had achieved this record. Even winning one round was a rare occurrence, let alone winning three rounds in a row.

Merlin just smiled and did not say anything to Elena who seemed to be carried away by his success. Although Elena was not considered pretty, she was still adorable as the girl next door. She was different from those solemn-looking Spell Casters.

Numerous powerful Spell Casters of Fourth-level or higher sat on the stone benches in front of the stage. The first two rounds were just a screening, hence they were not paying much attention as it was only a means to eliminate those who were obviously underpowered.

However, they started to keep an eye out starting from the third round. Many Spell Casters had noticed the battle between Merlin and Glyman. Wizard Nasha, who had just leveled up as a Fourth-level Spell Caster, smiled at Wizard Leo after seeing Merlin had once again defeated his opponent effortlessly. “Wizard Leo, those gray-robed Wizards have given you a great gift. I remember this young man, Merlin, who came to the Dark Magic Region less than a year ago. In such a short period of time, he has already constructed three spells, including the very complicated Dark Mist. That’s really commendable. Perhaps Merlin can be the next Wizard Sauron?”

Wizard Nasha seemed to have a friendly relationship with Wizard Leo and spoke freely as she was quite familiar with Wizard Leo’s students.

Wizard Leo turned around but shook his head slightly. He replied in a calm voice, “The next Sauron? That may not be it!”

“Well? Wizard Leo, do you think Merlin will win the fourth round?”

From his tone, Wizard Nasha gathered that Wizard Leo had high expectations for Merlin, but the fourth round would be different from the third.

Particularly now that the matches in several other high platforms had also come to an end, Merlin’s opponent in the fourth round had already been decided – it was Wizard Varadi.

Wizard Nasha had watched Wizard Varadi in his previous rounds. He was good at attacking and possessed a strong Mind Power, one which was approaching that of a Second-level Spell Caster.

Acquiring Mind Power close to the level of a Second-level Spell Caster meant that Merlin’s Dark Mist was unable to lure Varadi into the illusion. Besides, Wizard Varadi also possessed several First-level Defensive Spell Scrolls. He was one of the participants who could potentially advance into the quarterfinals.

Nasha did not believe that Merlin had a chance in defeating Varadi.

Wizard Leo did not explain himself but revealed a smile that looked uglier than a cry. He said faintly, “Wait and see, the fourth round is about to begin!”

Wizard Nasha had gotten more confused after sensing the strong confidence in Wizard Leo's tone. Did Merlin possess a powerful Spell Scroll too?

"The fourth round – Wizard Merlin versus Wizard Varadi!"

As soon as the voice fell, everyone in the audience became quiet instantaneously. The fourth round finally began. Even Wizard Nasha dismissed the doubts in her heart and focused her gaze at the stage.

"Wizard Merlin, surrender if you really can't do it!"

Elena said weakly. She had watched Wizard Varadi fight and felt that he was unusually strong. She could not think of any way that Merlin could defeat Varadi.

"Surrender?"

Merlin's gaze was focused on Wizard Varadi who had already stood on the stage. The corner of his mouth curled into a smile as he whispered in a low voice, "It's only interesting when you encounter a strong opponent. Varadi, let me see how strong the genius Spell Caster of the Dark Magic Region really is."

Confidence glimmered in Merlin's eyes. He had only been in the Dark Magic Region for less than a year but he had already transformed from having to rely on the Bell Pendant to defeat a Wizard like Merilung and to battle opponents way better than Merilung. However, he was not getting too thrilled.

"Swoosh!"

Merlin moved quickly to the stage, and then examined Wizard Varadi from top to bottom.

Varadi had a slightly dark skin tone. He was dressed in a short-sleeve, tight-fitting garment with two massive hoop earrings hanging from his ears. His outfit looked rather peculiar and perhaps a little wild.

"Merlin!"

“Varadi.”

Both parties acknowledged each other after the Runic Magic Circle shrouded the entire high platform.

“Dark Mist!”

Merlin took the lead and directly enveloped Varadi in the mist. Since Merlin’s successful construction of Dark Mist, it had been greatly effective in dealing with general Entrance-level Spell Casters who had no ways of resisting it.

Perhaps this was one of the important reasons why Merilung dared to seek revenge alone in Count Selin’s castle.

Dark Mist spread into a wide range and surrounded Varadi completely.

“Frost!”

Merlin did not hesitate to release Frost immediately. A chilly sensation filled the heavy mist.

“Dark Mist is really strong, but not enough to lure me into the illusion!”

A cold voice sounded from somewhere in the mist, and Merlin soon felt a strong fluctuation of Mind Power. This fluctuation had reached the peak of a First-level Spell Caster, which was infinitely close to that of a Second-level Spell Caster, almost the same as Merlin’s current Mind Power.

Merlin’s Zero-level Dark Mist was unable to lure Varadi, who possessed a stronger Mind Power, into the illusion.

Merlin used his Mind Power to monitor the entire match. When he released Frost, Varadi, who did not fall into the illusion, immediately noticed the danger. Strong fluctuation of Wind Elements suddenly appeared around his body, which showed that he had cast a Wind-type spell. Therefore, he escaped from Frost cast by Merlin easily.

“Swoosh!”

When Varadi’s voice fell, he immediately cast a Wind-type spell which greatly increased his speed so he could quickly rush out of the heavy mist. At the same time, a sneer appeared on his face, and the fluctuation of Earth Elements suddenly became strong around his body.

“Sinkhole!”

This was an Earth-type Binding spell. Evidently, Varadi knew that Merlin possessed Gale which gave him an enhanced speed almost equal to him. Therefore, he quickly cast a Binding spell to bind down Merlin.

Merlin was indeed bound to the ground. Several khaki tentacles composed entirely of Earth Elements sprawled up on Merlin’s legs like vines.

Simultaneously, Varadi waved his hand in the air, and a dazzling light flashed across his eyes. Merlin immediately felt a huge threat. This was a powerful Thunder-type Offensive spell of super high speed. In the blink of an eye, the lighting seemed to be rushing toward Merlin.

“It’s over!”

A smile crept across Varadi’s face. At a time like this, Merlin had no choice but to surrender. Otherwise, a powerful Thunder-type Offensive spell would send Merlin into a dead end.

Chapter 139: Irresistible Force I

“Bang!”

The smile on Varadi’s face froze. The loud explosion would not occur if Merlin was struck by a Thunder-type spell. Thereafter, earthy yellow rocks and specks of dust scattered in the air.

As smoke and dust fell from the air, Merlin was seen standing tall on the high platform. Surrounding him were hard, sturdy walls made from earth. At the last second, Merlin had cast three Earth Guards to withstand the Thunder-type spell.

“Four-Elemental Spell Caster?”

Not only Wizard Varadi was shocked but even the superior Fourth-level Spell Casters could not suppress the surprise which washed over their faces. A Four-Elemental Spell Caster was completely different from a Three-Elemental Spell Caster. Once determined to become a Four-Elemental Spell Caster, both energy and resources required instantly multiplied several folds.

However, once one successfully became a Four-Elemental Spell Caster, one’s strength would improve tremendously and become superior to their peers. If Merlin’s previous performance was enough to make these powerful Spell Casters noticed the potential in him, what more now? Not only had he managed to construct the complex Dark Mist, but he was also a powerful Four-Elemental Spell Caster. The Spell Casters of Fourth-level or above could not help but began inquiring Wizard Leo about the man.

A faint smile washed over Wizard Nasha’s face. “Congratulations Wizard Leo for acquiring a genius.”

Anyone who was able to construct Four-Elemental spells with stable Spell Models was an absolute genius that any spell casters’ organization would seriously value.

No one had expected to see such a “freak” student, coming from Wizard Leo’s tower.

“Although Wizard Varadi has no way to take down Merlin, I’m afraid Merlin can’t beat Varadi either. In addition to his advanced speed, Varadi possesses some Defensive Spell Scrolls that are able to defend against powerful attacks. The two of them could only exhaust each other’s Magic Power. Merlin, who has only entered the Dark Magic Region less than a year ago, probably accumulated lesser Magic Power than Varadi.”

Nasha took a turn in her view and explained the situation. Most of the Spell Casters of Fourth-level or above also nodded in agreement. They all figured that although Merlin was, out of everyone’s expectation, a Four-Elemental Spell Caster, with Merlin’s current spells, namely Gale, Frost, Dark Mist, and Earth Guard, he would still unable to defeat Varadi.

“Just keep watching.”

Wizard Leo did not sound worried at all. The bloody vertical eye on his forehead which was blinking silently appeared extremely daunting.

“Alright, let’s just keep watching!”

Wizard Nasha immediately shifted her attention back to the stage.

On the stage, Merlin and Varadi stood facing each other. Merlin’s previous releases of Earth Guard made Varadi realized that he was a Four-Elemental Spell Caster.

Although Wizard Varadi was shocked by this new discovery, he quickly adjusted his mentality, and a slight smile appeared on the corner of his mouth. “It turns out that you’re a Four-Elemental Spell Caster. It’s no surprise that you’ve such confidence! However, if you’re relying on these spells to defeat me, let’s see who’s going to get their Magic Power exhausted first!”

Varadi also quickly got hold of the situation. He felt that the only way to defeat Merlin was to exhaust the other party’s Magic Power. In this way, this round would last for a long time and no one could expect what might happen next.

“Exhausting the Magic Power?”

Merlin’s mouth curled up into a smile. He took a deep breath, and that powerful Mind Power of his suddenly fluctuated violently. Simultaneously, a hint of fierceness flashed across his eyes.

“Thunderbolt Net!”

A huge Thunderbolt Net suddenly fell from the sky, covering most of the high platform. There was a terrifying power enveloping between the strands of the net, which was as thin as a hair.

“Five-Elemental Spell Caster?”

Varadi’s expression changed quickly as he felt terribly threatened, but he never forgot that he was currently confronting Merlin. Therefore, a light flashed, and a Spell Scroll glowing with green light appeared in his hand.

“Storm Strangle!”

The Spell Scroll, as well as the spell released, were of a First-level. Although the name sounded like an Offensive spell, in fact, this was a very powerful Defensive spell.

“Huuu...”

A gust of wind appeared out of thin air and shrouded Varadi’s body. Merlin’s Thunderbolt Net fell from above, but that flashing lightning was unable to go near Wizard Varadi.

All the thunder and lightning that came close to it were smashed by the squally wind. This was the powerful trait of Storm Strangle. Even if it was only a First-level spell, it was able to completely smash anything that entered its defensive range.

“A Spell Scroll?”

Merlin narrowed his eyes slightly. He thought of Wizard Jason from Blackwater City, who had also used a Spell Scroll, albeit of a Second-level.

In the end, Wizard Jason was blown up by Merlin’s Large Fireball which was accumulated in the Bell Pendant.

“It’s just a First-level spell!”

The fluctuation of Elements around Merlin became stronger. Thunderbolt Net was still being cast one after another at an insane speed. Simultaneously, a chilly sensation also engulfed Varadi from all directions.

“Crack! Crack!”

The high platform on Varadi’s side had been completely frozen, and the chill was still spreading in his direction – all of these were the effects of Merlin’s spells.

After Merlin's long-term accumulation, he was able to cast both his Fireball and Frost more than six times at once. The maximum limit of Zero-level spells constructed by general Spell Casters was only thirty to forty times but Merlin's Spell Models could withhold twice the limit of general Spell Models.

Moreover, Merlin felt that this was not the limit of the Spell Models in his Awareness. He knew that he could afford to accumulate more Magic Power.

Therefore, to release a dozen Frosts simultaneously was not a bother to him at all.

Wizard Varadi's face turned pale as a sheet of paper. Countless lightning flashed above his head, which might easily strike him if he did not pay close attention. He knew that this was Thunderbolt Net which had a paralyzing effect. Once struck by it, the entire body would paralyze, and by then, he would not be able to release any Spell Scroll.

On the other hand, on the ground, there was a chill, trying to break through the defense of Storm Strangle. The violent Storm Strangle had kept smashing the ground where fine layers of ice crystals gathered at the bottom of his feet.

"Crack!"

Finally, a chilly sensation invaded Varadi's body. Immediately, Varadi felt a tremor, but soon he dispelled the chill out of his body.

However, this already showed that the position he was in was not ideal. Even First-level Storm Strangle was unable to withstand Merlin's crazy releases of Thunderbolt Net and Frosts.

Evidently, without the protection of Storm Strangle, Varadi could no longer manage the situation.

"Alright, stop! I surrender!"

Wizard Varadi appeared dejected and disappointed. He took a deep look at Merlin and said in a low voice, "I didn't expect to encounter a Five-Elemental Spell Caster this time. Although I'm not satisfied, this is the difference in strength! Good luck, Wizard Merlin!"

Then, Wizard Varadi left the high platform. Without lingering any further, he left the square immediately.

Merlin nodded in silence as he looked at Varadi's receding silhouette. Varadi was straightforward and acquired tremendous strength. Even without a Spell Scroll, he was also stronger than Merilung, perhaps even on par with Wizard Holmes. He was certainly a vigorous opponent.

After Merlin won the fourth round, naturally, he was qualified as one of the top sixteen participants in the Dark Magic Region conference. Any Spell Caster who was able to proceed this far normally possessed an exceedingly unique talent and strong financial support.

However, until now, there were only five or six Spell Casters out of the sixteen participants who had not used any casting tool and fought only with their own strength. Among them, Merlin's performance had been the most outstanding.

A Five-Elemental Spell Caster was indeed very rare in the Dark Magic Region!

"What about now, Wizard Nasha? Varadi has lost!"

Wizard Leo turned his head around and looked at Wizard Nasha with a smile on his face, but Wizard Nasha replied the mock with a sigh of emotion. "Five-Elemental Spell Caster... How long has it been since we have a Five-Elemental Spell Caster in the Dark Magic Region? There hasn't been any more Five-Elemental Spell Caster in the Dark Magic Region since Kleis..."

"Kleis?"

Wizard Leo suddenly turned solemn and praised in admiration, "Kleis is indeed the first genius of the Dark Magic Region. Even I'm inferior to him. He has leveled up to a First-level Spell Caster from being a Five-Elemental Spell Caster. Then, in the next twenty years, he became a Third-level Spell Caster. Perhaps he's already now working toward becoming a Fourth-level Spell Caster. Once he's at it, his strength will almost immediately rival those Spell Casters who had reached the peak of Sixth-level!"

Wizard Leo seemed to admire Kleis, even addressing him the title of the first genius of the Dark Magic Region. A person as arrogant as Wizard Leo was genuinely praising a Third-level Spell Caster. He would have been someone extraordinary.

Wizard Nasha grinned softly. “Wizard Leo, maybe Merlin can follow Kleis’ footsteps, and become another official member of the Dark Magic Region as a Five-Elemental Spell Caster!”

“Merlin?”

Wizard Leo looked at Merlin who stood in the distant. He knew Merlin the best. Merlin was not just a Five-Elemental, but a Six-Elemental Spell Caster!

It was already exceedingly difficult for a Five-Elemental Spell Caster to level up to a First-level Spell Caster or an official member of the Dark Magic Region, and few people had the courage to construct five Spell Models.

A Six-Elemental Spell Caster had never appeared in the history of the Dark Magic Region. Correspondingly, it was unimaginably difficult for Merlin, a Six-Elemental Spell Caster, to level up to a First-level Spell Caster!

Moreover, Merlin only had two years left in the Dark Magic Region!

Chapter 140: Irresistible Force II

When Merlin left the high platform, Elena and others were already displaying excitement all over their face. Even those Spell Casters who had not dared to speak loudly before greeted him with smiling faces.

Elena seemed to want to speak her mind again but Merlin was feeling a slight headache. It would be no end to it when Elena began to speak, so before she had the chance to open her mouth, Merlin said hurriedly, “I just exhausted most of my Magic Power, and I need time to recover.”

After that, he closed his eyes, took out a few elemental crystal stones from the ring, and commenced restoring the Magic Power that he had just exhausted.

In the past, Merlin would not dare to squander away elemental crystal stones to restore his Magic Power. However, after acquiring the full wealth of silver-haired old man, Merlin became slightly more generous with his resources. At the very least, he would not have to worry about not having

enough elemental crystal stones in the near future. Now, he could afford a good “luxury” and utilized elemental crystal stones to restore his Magic Power.

“Bang.”

On another high platform, Wizard Holmes’s face was turning as pale as a sheet. He had exhausted almost all his might and even utilized a Spell Scroll in the end to defeat his opponent.

Although he had defeated his opponent, without the Spell Scroll, he would have been the one that was being knocked down.

“Hey, Holmes, you’re such a disgrace to Teacher Gretel. I can’t believe you actually wasted your Spell Scroll on a Three-Elemental Spell Caster.”

It was again the tall man who had bad blood with Holmes that was doing the ridicule.

“That’s enough!”

Holmes could not take it any longer. He glared at the man in front of him and sneered, “Neil, you haven’t become a First-level spell Caster yourself. It’s too early to get your hopes up!”

Holmes’ patience has been taxed to the limit. Wizard Neil, like him, was a student of Wizard Gretel, but Neil hated him because of some trivial matters.

Although Wizard Gretel had high expectations on the both of them, it was obvious that Holmes was the favorite. Neil, on the other hand, was a man of extreme pettiness. He had long been dissatisfied with Holmes, but Holmes’s capability had always been far superior to him, so Neil did not dare to be too unbridled.

However, Holmes’ attempt to construct First-level spell had failed after returning from the Donglin City mission, but Neil managed to succeed in doing so, as such, he had become greater than Holmes in terms of strength.

Ever since then, Neil did not miss any chance to ridicule Holmes, and he did so to the best of his ability. All this while Holmes endured without tackling back.

Seeing Holmes' gloomy face, Neil continued the mocking. "First-level Spell Caster? A slow beginning slows you down in the race, haven't you heard of it? Holmes, you're destined not to receive any attention from the more powerful Spell Casters during this conference, while I have the chance for a Seventh-level Spell Casters to notice me!"

Neil looked like he had been filled with madness. He turned his gaze toward several wizard towers that evidently stood out much taller than the other towers in the Dark Magic Region.

These wizard towers were built by Spell Casters of Seventh-level or higher in the Dark Magic Region. In there, lived several Seventh-level Spell Casters unknown to others.

Only during the conference that happened once every three years that these Spell Casters of Seventh-level or higher would occasionally shift their attention here, and Neil's goal was to get attention from those Spell Casters of Seventh-level or higher!

Being accepted as a student by Spell Caster of Seventh-level or higher would even make one of poor strength an official Spell Caster. Moreover, with this identity, the person could acquire a loftier position in the Dark Magic Region.

These were all that Neil dreamed of having.

Holmes' expression turned more rejected. He stared blankly at the towers in the sky. Seventh-level Spell Casters, the real core members of the Dark Magic Region. Initially, he also planned to make himself shine at this conference to get the attention of those Seventh-level Spell Casters.

However, the construction of his First-level spell unexpectedly failed, and now everything had become a distant dream!

"The fifth round, Wizard Merlin versus Wizard Holmes!"

Suddenly, the gray-robed Wizard called out Wizard Holmes's opponent for the fifth round.

"Merlin?"

Wizard Holmes was slightly surprised. Then he lifted his head and looked at the familiar figure in the distance...

“Wizard Holmes?”

Merlin also heard the gray-robed Wizard. His opponent in the fifth round was Wizard Holmes. Merlin also lifted his head and happened to meet the eyes of Wizard Holmes.

The two of them exchanged smiles as they went up to the high platform.

“Wizard Merlin, I didn’t expect to meet you here.”

Wizard Holmes said calmly.

Merlin also nodded. When he was about to say something, he suddenly felt immense Mind Power swept over him.

Not only Merlin, but Wizard Holmes standing on the opposite side also appeared shocked. Soon after, more of the other Spell Casters felt this tremendous Mind Power.

“Swoosh.”

The bloody vertical eye on Wizard Leo’s forehead blinked faintly. Then, he sighed softly and said rather playfully, “Seventh-level Spell Casters, they finally notice us at last!”

Wizard Neil in the audience was brimming with excitement. An eager look came over his face as he stared into the tall towers in the distance, and whispered to himself, “Seventh-level Spell Casters, you’re finally paying us some attention. I must seize this opportunity. Whoever that stops me must die!”

Neil’s features were distorted hideously and ferociously.

Like Wizard Neil, many more Spell Casters in the audience also noticed this immense Mind Power, hence they all looked toward the tallest towers in the distance. They knew that only Seventh-level Spell Casters could possess such immense Mind Power.

In other words, the core members of the Dark Magic Region, those Seventh-level Spell Casters, were finally setting their sights on this conference. Perhaps some lucky ones would be dotted on and be taken in as their students. That would be reaching heaven in a single bound!

On the high platform, Wizard Holmes heaved a long sigh and looked at Merlin with an indecipherable expression. “Those Seventh-level Spell Casters have finally set their sights here. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Wizard Merlin, I wish you good luck!”

Merlin frowned as he did not quite understand Wizard Holmes, but the answer to his confusion had already come out of other party’s mouth loud and clear. “I surrender!”

Wizard Holmes surrendered. He knew Merlin’s strength well. He would not be Merlin’s opponent even if he used Spell Scroll. Holmes turned his head to the direction of another high platform and noticed that Wizard Neil seemed to be in the upper hand. Without surprise, Wizard Neil would win and compete against Merlin on the sixth round.

A smile came over Holmes’s face at the thought of this, and he whispered softly, “Right, Wizard Merlin, in the next round, don’t forget to teach Neil a lesson on my behalf!”

After that, Wizard Holmes left the high platform. Since his opponent had surrendered before fighting, again, Merlin attained victory at the fifth round!

Merlin who stood on the high platform also looked toward the few tallest towers in the Dark Magic Region. There must be several Seventh-level Spell Casters currently paying attention to this conference.

Perhaps there was a chance to be taken in by those Seventh-level Spell Casters if he performed well. Naturally, Merlin did not want to give up such an opportunity and was ready to perform his best.

“Wizard Neil?”

Merlin narrowed his eyes and looked at Wizard Neil who was on another high platform. He recognized the man, that was the Spell Caster who had sneered at Wizard Holmes previously.

Merlin did not do anything nor exhaust himself in this match so he could not be bothered to leave the high platform. Instead, he sat on the high platform and waited quietly for the match on the other side of the high platform to end.

Half an hour later, Wizard Neil won as expected. After a short break, Wizard Neil also returned to the high platform.

“The sixth round, Wizard Merlin versus Wizard Neil!”

As the voice of the gray-robed Wizard fell, the entire stage was immediately enclosed by Runic Magic Circle. This was the sixth round, and there were only eight more Spell Casters left as participants.

Wizard Neil looked at Merlin with a hint of dread in his eyes. He also knew the identity of Merlin as a Five-Elemental Spell Caster. However, he still did not change his usual mocking tone. “Holmes is an idiot and is as timid as a mouse. I can’t believe he surrendered without fighting! He really doesn’t deserve to be Teacher Gretel’s student. He’s not worthy of Teacher Gretel’s attention!”

Merlin looked at Wizard Neil calmly and noticed a certain threatening aura coming from him.

Perhaps, that was the threat of First-level spell. Merlin knew that Wizard Neil had successfully constructed First-level Defensive spell, and it was with this First-level Defensive spell that brought him victories after victories even though he seemed to struggle a little through each round.

“Wizard Neil, earlier, Wizard Holmes had asked me to teach you a lesson.”

After a pause, Merlin shook his head slightly. “So, Wizard Neil, you’re really down on your luck this time!”

“Teach me a lesson? With you? Haha, Holmes is such an idiot, he...”

Wizard Neil wanted to swear at Wizard Holmes again, but he immediately discovered that a variation of elementals fluctuated violently around Merlin. These aggressive elemental fluctuations frightened him.

Before figuring out what was wrong, Merlin struck.

“Boom boom boom.”

Thunderbolt Net appeared in an instant and covered the entire area. Bursts of lightning like thin strands of hair enveloped Wizard Neil wholly.

At the same time, Merlin’s figure, like a ghost, appeared right in front of Wizard Neil in the blink of an eye. Merlin had just released Gale.

“Frost!”

As Merlin’s voice fell, the coldness froze half of the high platform. Merlin had released dozens of Frosts at once so that Wizard Neil could not escape.

Not only that, but dozens of fist-sized fireballs emitting horrible temperatures also hovered in front of Merlin.

“Go!”

These little fireballs in the air instantly flew toward Wizard Neil like little rain droplets.

All at once, Merlin’s Fireball, Frost, and Thunderbolt Net were released simultaneously, attacking Wizard Neil from all directions.

An attack so violent and fierce immediately stunned all the Spell Casters. With their mouths opened, they stared at Merlin who was standing tall on the stage.

Let alone Wizard Neil who had only constructed one First-level spell, even with two or three of them, or someone that was already a First-level Spell Caster, it was impossible to defend such a terrifying attack.

Since Merlin constructed Thunderbolt Net, together with Frost, Fireball, and Dark Mist, any general First-level Spell Caster could no longer be his opponent!

“Surrender, surrender, I surrender!”

Wizard Neil felt that he was greatly threatened. He did not even have a chance to release any spells. He screamed at the top of his lungs to surrender as if doing that one second later would let him drown in Merlin’s overwhelming spells attack. The Runic Magic Circle on the high platform instantaneously protected him the moment Wizard Neil called out his surrender, leaving Merlin’s Frosts and Fireballs blasting in the air.

Merlin’s violent attack would definitely break through First-level spells, but they were not able to break through the Runic Magic Circle.

The Spell Casters who originally wanted to watch a wonderful battle between two evenly matched opponents never expected to have witnessed such an ending. Wizard Neil was suppressed by Merlin and was defeated without any chance to release any spells. The match shocked the heart of the people, a display of Merlin’s tremendous force!

“With an addition of Fireball, that makes him a Six-Elemental Spell Caster...”

After a long time, someone from the crowd shouted. Suddenly, everyone turned and focused their gaze on Merlin who was standing quietly on the stage...