

A Wizard's Secret

Chapter 16: Spell Caster II

"It's Mr. Etha. How can it be Mr. Etha?"

It seemed to be rather difficult for Carice to believe that the figure which had appeared outside the small house was, astonishingly, old man Etha who had disappeared for more than ten days and that the evil heretic those Guardian Swordsmen spoke of was old man Etha.

Merlin fixed his eyes stubbornly on old man Etha. Although he knew that old man Etha was very mysterious and seemed to have kept some secrets that no one knew about, he had not realized that old man Etha was such a powerful and strong master.

Those few Elemental Swordsmen had died at old man Etha's hands. Moreover, that pitiful Second-level Light Swordsman had also been defeated by old man Etha.

However, what Merlin was paying even more attention to was the question of what sort of power did old man Etha, who looked extremely ordinary, used to defeat so many masters?

"Shut up, heretic! Your soul has already been completely depraved. If you don't believe in God, then you must receive God's punishment!"

The voice of the white-robed man was very sharp. He waved his hand violently, signaling Swordsman Bogg to go forward.

Swordsman Bogg took a deep breath. He raised his greatsword with both hands and right at that instant, the greatsword emitted an incomparable dazzling light.

"Light Sword!"

Swordsman Bogg brought the blade down. The strong force in the air spread out into the surroundings. Even Merlin could feel the great power as though he was going to be squeezed open.

"Such power and might from a Second-level Swordsman!"

Merlin could not help but feel a chill in his heart. By relying on the mysterious posture of the relief sculpture, the strength of his body had been improved to a state where it could barely rival that of a First-level Elemental Swordsman.

However, if he was to face a Second-level Swordsman, Merlin knew without a doubt that he would not have any chance of winning.

Nevertheless, although he faced an attack as ferocious as Bogg's, old man Etha behaved as though he had not seen it. He even shook his head gently and said, "Still sending a Normie to die. You Church of Light are hypocritical to the extreme!"

All they could see was old man Etha waving his finger around. A cluster of fireballs with the size of a fist each appeared in the direction of his finger. This cluster of fireballs floated in midair and was even spinning around furiously.

"Go!"

The moment old man Etha's voice fell, this cluster of fireballs charged toward Swordsman Bogg and collided brutally against that strong and bright light of his.

Swordsman Bogg was a Light Swordsman, so he could channel and erupt the powerful force of the Light Elements.

Nevertheless, when Swordsman Bogg's greatsword encountered with the fireballs, the solid greatsword was immediately melted by the scorching heat. The fiery flames even continued burning directly toward Swordsman Bogg's body. Swordsman Bogg made a quick decision and threw the greatsword in his hand away promptly. The light on his body flashed once more as his body speedily retreated backward.

The greatsword that had been thrown by Swordsman Bogg onto the ground turned into a clump of metallic liquid in the blink of an eye. It was enough to show how terrible the temperature of the cluster of fireballs earlier had been. The three Guardian Swordsmen who had died previously had probably been burnt to death by them.

Old man Etha's eyes narrowed slightly and shifted his gaze at the white-robed man. In a hoarse voice, he laughed coldly and said, "Hehe, First-level Spell Caster, could it be that you still want these Normies to die in vain?"

Being stared at by old man Etha, the white-robed man's face turned ashen and green. He said, "Evil heretic, you're courting death!"

The voice of the white-robed man was shrill beyond compare, causing a stinging pain in the ears. It was evident that he could not be more furious. He sat on his horse as always, with both hands propped up before his chest as he began chanting in a low and deep voice, "The Lord of mercy, the omnipotent Lord, your faithful believer needs to borrow your strength and eliminate that evil heretic! Holy Light Adjudication!"

For a moment, the sun in the sky dimmed. Beams of gigantic white light condensed above the small wooden house, bringing humongous airwaves and slashing down directly, whistling toward old man Etha's head.

Old man Etha had originally been wearing a black bowler hat but following the spell cast by the white-robed man, the great airwaves that had surged up immediately blew old man Etha's hat away, revealing a head of sparse hair.

Old man Etha's expression slowly became grave and serious. He pointed his skinny hands into the airspace in front of his body. Clusters of fireballs appeared promptly, spinning non-stop.

This time, there were four or five fireballs floating in the empty space. Old man Etha's face had also turned pale. It seemed that four to five fireballs were already his limit.

"A First-level spell, Holy Light Adjudication?"

There were faint traces of craziness in old man Etha's serious expression. Pointing with both hands, the four to five fireballs charged toward the Holy Light in front at a great speed.

"Fizz... Fizz..".

It was as though those four to five fireballs had fallen into the water and they were drowned by the vast Holy Light. All they did was emit some strange noises before they moved no more.

Seeing that his Fireball seemed to be useless, old man Etha hurriedly took a few steps back. However, his feet staggered slightly, causing him to almost fall to the ground. Apparently, he had already retreated until the front steps of the small wooden house. Behind him was the building – there was nowhere else he could retreat to.

"Whirlwind!"

Old man Etha gritted his teeth slightly and waved his hand where a whirlwind appeared in the garden in front of the small wooden house, whistling away and uprooting the plants and trees that had originally been all over the place. Earth was being mixed into the whirlwind endlessly, showing off its tremendous destructive powers.

The gigantic whirlwind whistled as it rushed toward the Holy Light which was closing in quickly. Suddenly, both powerful forces collided and, in that instant, sand and pebbles flew everywhere as the earth shook. The small wooden house seemed to be somewhat unable to withstand such a violent shock and it looked as though it was about to break apart and collapse.

Finally, the Holy Light drowned the whirlwind that old man Etha had cast. The vast light was like a giant web, enveloping old man Etha ferociously.

Old man Etha seemed calm. A hint of a smile slowly appeared at the corners of his lips.

“Boom!”

A cluster of flames appeared above old man Etha's body and swallowed him entirely. In the blink of an eye, old man Etha had been burnt into ashes by the flames. The Holy Light struck the ground brutally, blasting the steps in front of the small wooden house into powder where tiny gravel flew in all directions.

Old man Etha was dead. His body had been instantly turned into cinder by the fire.

The corners of the white-robed man's lips contorted. His expression looked very dark as he stared at the spot where old man Etha had been standing. A long while passed before he gave his instructions to Swordsman Bogg. “The evil heretic has died. Swordsman Bogg, bring your men into the house where the heretic had lived and search it at once. Don't let go of anything inside the house, take them all away.”

Swordsman Bogg nodded. He immediately led the remaining Guardian Swordsmen and dashed into the wooden house.

Having witnessed such a dream-like battle from the sidelines for a long while, everyone's faces had become rather agitated. Perhaps everything that had happened today would become memories they would never forget for the rest of their lives.

“Sir pastor, please pray and bless us. Help us cleanse the filth of the evil heretic!”

The Normies around them bowed slightly toward the white-robed man, expressing their respect for this honorable pastor. They did not know the true identity of the white-robed man. Amongst the people they could see in the church, only the pastor who specialized in leading the people into prayer seemed to fit the identity of the white-robed man.

The thoughts of these people were very simple. Unbeknownst to them, an evil heretic had slipped into their midst. Perhaps their bodies had also been stained with the filth of the evil heretic. This was why they were begging the honorable pastor who had eliminated the evil heretic to cleanse them.

A smile broke out on the face of the white-robed man. The pastor was the most basic clergy member in the church as well as one of the lowest positions. He, on the other hand, was a Wizard in the Inquisition. When it came to the position, his was naturally higher than that of a pastor.

However, at the moment, he was glad to be a pastor. Thus, he said in a high voice, “Don't worry, the evil heretic had used evil magic to hypnotize all of you but if you would only believe in God sincerely, God will not abandon you.”

Then, the white-robed man spread out his arms and chanted loudly. Vaguely, a hint of faint white light enveloped everyone and put their hearts at peace.

Many stayed where they were, praying to the God of Light in low voices. Only Merlin and Carice were somewhat at a loss. Carice's face was turning slightly pale, and her lips had become purplish blue. It was evident that there was utter horror in her heart.

Anyone, as long as they had been living in the Kingdom of Light and had stayed under the influence of the Church of Light for a long time would be horrified at the evil heretics. Carice was not an exception. She was unable to imagine that old man Etha, who had not seemed any different from any ordinary old man who had extensive knowledge, was a terrifying and evil heretic.

Merlin's face looked bad as well but he was much calmer than Carice. Merlin did not feel horrified by old man Etha's identity as an evil heretic. Rather, he felt that this matter might get him into trouble.

"Miss Carice, let's go."

Merlin stretched out his hand to hold Carice's. Her palm was sweaty, showing how nervous and scared she was.

Luckily, many people were still praying. No one really noticed Merlin and Carice so they went into their carriages and left without a sound.

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Back at Wilson Castle, Merlin hurriedly entered his room.

"Hoo..."

It was only after he had returned to his room that Merlin let out a long sigh of relief, feeling much more at ease. Thinking back to everything he had just seen, he still felt it had been rather unimaginable.

The battle between old man Etha and the white-robed man seemed to have opened up an entirely great, new door for him. Previously, he had thought that Elemental Swordsmen were strong and powerful beings in this world. The energy that a First-level Elemental Swordsman could break out into with all his might was downright terrifying.

However, the energy of old man Etha and the white-robed man from the church was completely beyond Merlin's imagination. The usually superior and aloof Elemental Swordsmen did not have the slightest bit of resistance before old man Etha as they were extremely weak.

Old man Etha and the white-robed man were the ones who possessed the truly great and powerful energy!

"Right, old man Etha has given me a ring before."

It was then that Merlin remembered the ring that old man Etha had given him. He had originally thought that it was a normal handicraft but after having discovered how abnormal old man Etha was, naturally, Merlin no longer considered the ring to be an ordinary handicraft.

Thus, Merlin began to search the room in haste.

Chapter 17: The Ring

Merlin finally found the ring in an inconspicuous corner on the writing desk. Back then, Merlin had not taken the ring seriously after old man Etha had given it to him, so he had casually placed it on the writing desk.

Merlin took the ring and lightly rubbed off the dust on it.

The ring was still as black as ink. Holding it in his hand, it seemed to have a cold and gloomy aura. Although Merlin had not given this strange ring much thought before, this ring was not going to be that simple now that he knew old man Etha's true identity.

Merlin carefully recalled old man Etha's every move when he had given him the ring. Old man Etha was pale with a rather exhausted expression. Merlin also did not know what he had gone to do.

"Could Teacher Etha have foreseen that he'll be in danger at the time?"

The more Merlin thought about it, the more suspicious he felt. Otherwise, old man Etha would not have suddenly gifted this ring to him for no reason.

A savage and terrifying monster had been carved on the ring. Using his finger, Merlin lightly caressed every part of the ring, but he did not discover anything out of the ordinary.

Thus, Merlin placed the ring close to his eyes and carefully scrutinized every inch of the ring. He wished to see if there were any prompts in the form of writing on the ring.

Surprisingly, just as he was focusing all of his attention on the ring, there was a spell of trance as though everything around him had darkened in an instant.

Right when Merlin was feeling panicky and confused, he had a strange sensation where it seemed like this darkness was completely unable to block his senses, and he could clearly "see" everything around him.

This was a space about ten square feet wide. There was darkness everywhere and it looked exceptionally empty and vast. Merlin could only see a book with a black cover

that had been placed in the space. In this spacious place, the book looked extremely eye-catching.

“Space?”

A hint of doubt flashed across Merlin’s head. Then, he was awakened in the blink of an eye. Slightly stunned, he looked around to discover that he was still sitting on the wooden chair, holding the ring in his hand. It was as though everything that had happened earlier was merely his illusion.

“No, it isn’t an illusion.”

Merlin pondered deeply for a moment. He could clearly recall everything he had seen in that dark space. He believed that it was definitely not an illusion.

Therefore, he focused his mental energy and stared at the ring once more. After a while, just as he had expected, he was back in the dark space that he had been a while ago.

‘It seems that this ring contains a space.’

Merlin thought in his heart quietly. Old man Etha had given the ring to him, so he had certainly left something behind for him. Merlin wished to see what on earth old man Etha had kept here for him.

The space in the ring was wide and empty. There was only a book with a black cover. Without a doubt, it was this book that old man Etha had left behind.

Thus, Merlin tried to meditate in his heart to get the book out. This method proved to be very useful; the book with a black cover disappeared in the blink of an eye. By the time Merlin came back to his senses, he discovered that the book with a black cover had already appeared on the writing desk.

The book with a black cover was very thick and was divided into a few sections and was bound with black thread.

Merlin flipped to one of the pages lightly, only to see some strange images drawn on it. They looked similar to some mathematical models that belonged to the world in his previous life.

There were densely packed words written under the images. The words were in the Molta language and the handwriting was very familiar. It was old man Etha’s handwriting.

“Molta language?”

Merlin frowned. He had only mastered over two hundred words in the Molta language so far so he could only merely read out some sentences with difficulty.

For example, Merlin could recognize words like “fireball”, “model”, and “magic”. Nevertheless, Merlin could not understand when it came to the majority of the other content.

However, through these simple intermittent words, Merlin had already been able to guess for the most part, that this book was very possibly old man Etha’s handbook or perhaps he recorded some of the experiences he had while practicing magic during his everyday life, into this handbook.

This was a Spell Manual that was true to its name!

Thinking about this, Merlin’s heart was beating excitedly. Ever since he had seen the great powers of old man Etha and the white-robed man, he could never again forget such immense power that was beyond imagination.

Moreover, this Spell Manual of old man Etha had opened up a completely new door for Merlin!

In the end, despite his escalating emotions, Merlin still shook his head helplessly after reading the handbook for a while and closed the handbook.

There were many words in the Molta language on this Spell Manual and many of them were extremely rare words. With only the two hundred or so words that Merlin had mastered so far, he was unable to understand even a complete sentence, let alone understand the content of the handbook.

Thus, if he wished to understand what was written in the handbook, he had to first learn the Molta language. At the very least, he needed to master over a thousand words before he could understand the content in the Spell Manual at a minimal level.

“Dong! Dong! Dong!”

A series of hurried knocks sounded from the door, startling Merlin. Hurriedly, he hid the Spell Manual away properly before opening the door.

“Master Merlin, a few knights from the City Defense Troop have arrived at the castle, saying that there are some matters which Master has to talk to them.”

The butler was standing outside the door. There was a deeply worried expression on his face.

“Knights from the City Defense Troop?”

There was a shock in Merlin's heart. After he had returned to the castle, he had vaguely felt like a premonition that the matter with old man Etha would be made into a huge issue and everyone related with old man Eta would be in trouble.

Only, he had not expected trouble to come so soon.

"Let's go, butler. I'll go and meet with them."

Merlin went downstairs and arrived at the hall.

In the hall, there was a man wearing light silver armor sitting on the chair. Next to him were three knights who were wearing the uniforms of the City Defense Troop.

Merlin merely cast an indifferent glance at the three knights from the City Defense Troops and as for this man in silver armor, Merlin was even more certain in his heart now that this must be related to the matter with old man Etha because the attire of this man was of the Guardian Swordsman from Grand City.

"Are you Wilson Merlin?"

The man in the silver armor asked coldly.

"I'm Wilson Merlin. What are you here for?"

There was no change to Merlin's face as he asked the question calmly.

"We're the Guardian Swordsmen from the church of Grand City. There are some issues we've to investigate. Let's go."

The three knights from the City Defense Troop quickened their steps and went behind Merlin, fixing their eyes on him fiercely.

Merlin frowned slightly. He knew that the power of the church was extremely great and if the knights of the City Defense Troop had been mobilized, then they must have obtained permission from the castellan so he had no choice but to follow them.

"Alright, I'll go with you guys for a while."

Merlin arranged his clothes for a moment before following the silver armored man out of the castle.

The butler hurriedly ran a couple of steps. Next to Merlin, he anxiously asked, "Master Merlin, what's this about? Are there misunderstandings? Shall I go and get sir baron to return?"

Merlin was the only son of the Wilson family and the heir to the title. Thus, it was natural that the butler would be very anxious about such a big incident.

Merlin shook his head. There was a hint of a smile on his face as he spoke, "No need to trouble Father, it'll be fine. I'll be able to settle this matter very quickly. Right, don't tell Macy in case she gets impulsive and does something irrational."

After Merlin had given his instructions, he leisurely sat in the carriage prepared by the City Defense Troop and left the castle slowly.

In the carriage, only a knight from the City Defense Troop and the silver armored Guardian Swordsman watched Merlin. The other two knights were riding the horses and guarding the carriage.

After all, Merlin was different from the others. Merlin was the only heir to the title in the Wilson family. He held a very high position so a Guardian Swordsman had been specially sent forward. Otherwise, there would really be no way to get Merlin out from Wilson Castle by relying on just these City Defense Troop knights.

"Master Merlin, you don't have to be nervous. We're only getting you to accompany us for an investigation. After we've confirmed that there are no relations between you and the evil heretic, we'll let you return."

The person speaking was the knight of the City Defense Troop in the carriage. He was very afraid of the Wilson family as Old Wilson did not have a very good temper. In Blackwater City, there was really no one Old Wilson was afraid of other than the castellan. Now that the men of the City Defense Troop had taken Merlin again, how horrible it would be if Old Wilson knew about it?

Although the knights of the City Defense Troop had to obey orders and have taken Merlin again, they did not dare to treat him harshly.

Merlin nodded slightly and no longer paid attention to this knight from the City Defense Troop. Instead, he fixed his eyes on the Guardian Swordsman who was in the carriage.

This Guardian Swordsman was not very old and was no more than thirty years old but his expression was very cold. After he had sat in the carriage, he had been still. There was no intention of him to pay Merlin any attention.

Merlin still wished to dig out some news from the lips of this Guardian Swordsman. Therefore, he spoke in a soft voice, "I have a friend who went for an exchange in Grand City some days ago and he has become a Guardian Swordsman. I heard that he has even received the blessings of the honorable bishop of Grand City. I don't know whether you'd know him, Guardian Swordsman sir?"

"Are you talking about Cawthon?"

This cold Guardian Swordsman finally opened his eyes wide, speaking in astonishment.

Merlin's heart moved. He hurriedly nodded, saying, "That's right, it's Cawthon."

Seeing Merlin nod, the expression of this Guardian Swordsman finally warmed up. He said, "Now that you've mentioned it, it's quite a coincidence. After Cawthon was blessed by the honorable bishop, he's been sent to our small team but because Cawthon has just become a Guardian Swordsman, he isn't allowed to come this time."

The relationship between Merlin and this Guardian Swordsman had been drawn a lot closer due to Cawthon. Thus, Merlin finally voiced the doubt that had been long hidden in his heart. "The evil heretics are very powerful. According to the legends, all of them possess evil powers and Normies wouldn't be able to fight against these evil heretics at all. However, you guys unexpectedly killed that evil heretic this time. Who on earth is that Sir Jason?"

After Merlin had asked this question, the atmosphere in the carriage became dense immediately. Even the knight from the City Defense Troop looked at the Guardian Swordsman expectantly.

The Guardian Swordsman looked at the hopeful expressions on Merlin and the City Defense Troop knight. He seemed very satisfied as a hint of a smile showed at the corners of his lips before he said in a low voice, "You guys have really asked the right person this time. Anyone else doesn't know Sir Jason's identity at all. Sir Jason is a high-ranking official in the Inquisition. His position is higher than even us Guardian Swordsmen, and he directly reports to the jurisdiction of the headquarters. Even the honorable bishop doesn't have the authority to direct the members of the Inquisition. The Inquisition only sets out to deal with evil heretics and they're usually extremely mysterious so no one knows what they do. However, in the church, it's rumored that the members of the Inquisition are the people who are closest to God where they've even been granted all sorts of mighty powers by God!"

After he finished speaking, a hint of envy showed upon the face of this Guardian Swordsman.

"The Inquisition, huh?"

Merlin etched this place into his mind. That strong, white-robed man came from this Inquisition of Church of Light. Merlin felt even more alert. If he met anyone from the Inquisition in the future, he would need to treat them with care.

The carriage slowly came to a halt. Led by the Guardian Swordsman, Merlin went out of the carriage. He raised his head to see and to his surprise, he had reached the Blackwater City's church.

There were many people same as Merlin but most of them did not have such privilege as him. They were all normal citizens and were brought into the church by the City Defense Troop.

“Let’s go. Tell them everything they need to know. As long as it’s not related to the evil heretic, they’ll let you go soon.”

The Guardian Swordsman said to Merlin with a smile. Due to Merlin’s relationship to Cawthon, he had a good impression of Merlin.

Merlin nodded and entered the church with this Guardian Swordsman.

In the church, there were up to a hundred people. They lined up in a few rows. Some were asking the crowd about matters related to old man Etha. There were also some clerks who were responsible for the records.

Merlin had a good hearing. Listening closely, he heard a few people in front of him interrogating a middle-aged man.

“When have you met the evil heretic?”

“For many years now. I’m a tailor. Whenever there’s a change of season, Mr. Etha will come to my shop for tailored clothes.”

“Except for clothes, have you seen him anywhere else?”

“Except for clothes, I haven’t seen Mr. Etha anywhere. He’s very secretive, always hiding in his wooden house. Usually, he doesn’t even come out. Who would’ve thought that he’s an evil heretic?”

“Good. Next.”

That was the whole process of the questioning. Those who had gone through the process would be brought away swiftly for the next round of interrogation.

“If it was such a simple interrogation, there’s nothing to be afraid of.”

Merlin finally calmed himself.

Soon, it was Merlin’s turn. The clerk standing in front of Merlin seemed neat and tidy. He was responsible for recording the conversation while the one doing the questioning was a Guardian Swordsman.

This Guardian Swordsman only took one boring glance at Merlin before he asked, “What’s your name?”

“Wilson Merlin.”

After hearing Merlin’s name, the Guardian Swordsman’s expression changed slightly. Then, he took a good long look at Merlin and his expression obviously became stern.

“What’s your relationship with the evil heretic?”

Merlin did not hesitate and said directly, “I don’t know Etha’s true identity so I learned antique authentication from him for a while.”

Merlin was also observing this Guardian Swordsman closely. He saw that there were not many changes to his expression and Merlin immediately understood.

These people were clear who old man Etha had contacted with before the interrogation. They had also gotten hold of some information of the people Etha had contact with. Surely, they knew of Merlin’s relationship with old man Etha.

The Guardian Swordsman asked Merlin more questions and Merlin had also answered truthfully except for the ring. Merlin would not hide any fact regarding the old man. Otherwise, the people would doubt him.

After a long while, the Guardian Swordsman had asked all he needed to ask. He raised his head and said to another Guardian Swordsman by his side, “Bring him in. Let Lord Jason do the last bit.”

Hence, another Guardian Swordsman came forward and brought Merlin to a small house in the church.

“Go on in.”

The Guardian Swordsman stopped after he sent Merlin to the door. He said to Merlin without much emotion.

Merlin sighed deeply before he pushed the door open and stepped inside.

The house was a little dark and humid. As soon as Merlin stepped inside, he could feel a few gazes upon him.

“Miss Carice?”

Mersin squinted his eyes. He saw that there was someone he knew in the house. It was Carice. She was brought here too.

Carice also saw Merlin and only nodded her head slightly as an acknowledgment. It seemed that her emotion was much stable and she was not as afraid as she was yesterday.

Other than Carice, there were a few more strangers in the house. A bald old man, a fat madam and the tailor who was questioned by the Guardian Swordsman before.

They stood in the small house feeling unrest. They gazed up to the white-robed man sitting in the chair with fear.

After seeing this white-robed man, Merlin knew that he was the Wizard who killed old man Etha – Wizard Jason of the secretive Inquisition.

Merlin was the same as others, standing idly in the house. Jason did not speak and he was simply waiting silently instead.

After a while, a few people came in. In total, there were eight of them. They were feeling unrest, sometimes a hint of fear escaped their eyes. They did not know what sort of interrogation awaited them here.

There was a large religious mural behind Wizard Jason. It was about God of Light who was punishing a bunch of devils who committed all sort of atrocities. Accompanied by this mural and the indifferent Wizard Jason, it was inevitable to induce fear in the people's heart.

After a long while, Wizard Jason finally stood up. His sharp gaze scanned everyone briefly before saying slowly, "More or less, you're the people who've spent a long time with the evil heretic. That evil heretic is cruel, sly and extremely capable of evil spells. So, I want to test for myself if you've been tainted by the evil heretic."

Upon hearing Wizard Jason, that bald old man and the fat madam were already full of trembles. If there were no one holding them, they would have already passed out.

In Church of Light, those who were related to evil heretic would receive the cruelest punishment. The most serious of all was to be strapped to the stake and be burnt alive. So, the fact that Wizard Jason questioned if they were related to the evil heretic had caused insurmountable fear in them.

Wizard Jason's mouth quirked into a smile. With both of his hands crossed in front of his chest, he spoke in a low pitch, "Don't be afraid. If you're not tainted by the evil heretic, God will definitely forgive you."

After that, Wizard Jason began to murmur. From his body, he began to emit a faint white light that felt holy and noble.

In the blink of an eye, it covered the whole house. Meanwhile, Wizard Jason had already taken off the light armor he wore. Along with the huge white robe and the brightening of the holy light, the mark of a silver cross on his white robe became clearer as well.

The people who were engulfed in the holy light felt as if they were seen through completely. They could not hide even the slightest secret. Merlin took a sideways glance at Carice to see that she was bright red with a slightly awkward expression.

Merlin frowned because he felt it too. Albeit well-dressed, in this holy light, clothes did not seem to have any effect of covering one's body. It was as if they were seen naked by others. He could not blame Carice for being awkward about it.

"Is this the magical spell? Luckily, I didn't bring the ring with me. Or else, there's no way I can escape Jason's investigation."

Merlin became stern and more terrified of the secretive Wizard because the magical yet strong spells were powers that he could not fathom at all.

The others were horrified by the holy light Jason emitted as well, but Merlin remained calm. He even had the energy to observe Wizard Jason. Merlin then noticed that obvious mark of a silver cross on Jason's white robe.

Merlin had only seen such a unique mark on Jason. Even the Guardian Swordsman of Grand City did not have such a mark. Merlin guessed that this mark represented Jason's status and identity in the Inquisition.

The holy light continued for a while and then dissipated slowly. Then, Wizard Jason showed a slight cheerful smile and said in a high voice, "Good. I've completed my investigation. You're all loyal believers and haven't been tainted by the evil heretic."

Upon hearing Jason's words, everyone heaved a sigh of relief. Some even prayed silently.

"Ee-yah."

The door to the house opened wide and Jason waved his hands, "You all can leave."

Thus, everyone bowed slightly to Wizard Jason, then left the house hurriedly. After experiencing that scene just now, no one would like to stay any longer with Jason.

Swordsman Bogg who was outside walked into the room. With a hint of uncertainty, he asked, "Lord Jason, did you find anything else?"

Jason shook his head, "Nothing. I investigated with Magic-detection. These people don't have any magic power, not to mention anything that has the aura of that evil heretic. It seems that evil heretic came to Blackwater City by himself."

Swordsman Bogg nodded and continued, "The things in that evil heretic's home. How should we deal with them?"

“Put them in the carriage and bring them back to Grand City. Let the bishop deal with them. Maybe from his things, we’ll be able to find other heretics.”

Wizard Jason said to Swordsman Bogg.

Walking out of the church, the wind was chilly. Merlin could not resist the urge to pull up his shirt to his neck. However, he was fiery hot within. He had finally overcome the hurdles with the church. Following that, he could properly plan to study old man Etha’s Spell Manual in secret.

“Miss Carice are you alright?”

Merlin asked out of courtesy as he saw Carice who was behind him.

“I’m fine...”

Carice pulled a forced smile. He could see that she was still exhausted. Surely the matter with old man Etha had pulled a great deal on her.

“Miss Carice, you should go back and rest for a few days.” Merlin consoled Carice while the latter nodded. She then bid Merlin goodbye, entered her carriage hurriedly and left.

Ensuring that Carice’s carriage had left his view, Merlin looked at the church. He knew the butler would definitely come.

As expected, Merlin saw the familiar figure of the butler and Moss. However, beside Moss, in this chilly weather, there was yet another familiar figure.

“Macy?”

Merlin frowned as he shot a questioning glare at the butler.

The butler shook his head with a bitter smile and said, “Young Master Merlin, Young Lady Macy got hold of the news herself.”

Macy had a dark expression on her as she shot deathly glare at Merlin. Merlin was extremely troubled by his sister Macy because in Macy’s eyes, Merlin always seemed to be the rich kid who needed to be restricted.

When Macy was about to speak, Merlin quickly held Macy’s hand and lowered his tone, “Don’t say anything. Say it when we get home. Let’s enter the carriage first. Let’s go.”

Macy was pulled by Merlin into the carriage. The butler and Moss were sitting in front of the carriage. It then slowly left the church.

In the carriage, there was no chilly wind so it seemed a little warmer. However, the air in the carriage seemed stagnant. Macy was gawking at Merlin as she tried to say something while Merlin seemed calm.

After a long while, Merlin raised his head and looked at Macy. "Ask away. What do you want to know about?"

Macy frowned and had a complicated look on her. She only spoke after a long pause, "Is there any trouble?"

"Most of them have been dealt with. After some time, the people from the church should be back in Grand City. There won't be anything more."

Merlin stated the facts as calmly as he could be.

"That's good, then. This matter involves the church. It isn't anything big and father is away. So, from now on, you shouldn't go out too often. I'll ask for leave for you from Swordsman Pero. I'll say that you're ill."

Macy said in a serious note. She knew it clearly that once things had involved the church, even the smallest matter could become detrimental. She was not clear with the whole matter but restricting Merlin from going out could at least save him from some troubles. This was the best solution Macy could think of.

Merlin nodded in agreement. "Yeah. I'll stay in the castle for the meantime and not go out."

He had the thought of studying old man Etha's Spell Manual wholeheartedly anyway. Now that Macy was able to explain the situation to Swordsman Pero, he could save some trouble for himself.

The carriage slowly came to a halt in front of Wilson Castle. After they had entered the castle, Merlin ordered the old butler to tell anyone who came for him lately that he was not home.

After he had given that instruction, Merlin returned to his room upstairs.

After a short rest, Merlin carefully took out the well-hidden ring from under his bed. Upon seeing this ring, Merlin felt a warm sensation drawing into his heart.

He recalled how small he seemed in front of Jason at the church. Once Jason decided that Merlin was acting odd, he would've died in that place.

Wizards. Wizards who had gotten hold of strong spells were the true powerful people!

Merlin sent his Mind Power into the ring. With a thought, that thick Spell Manual in the ring appeared in Merlin's hands but he was not rushing to flip it open. He placed the manual lightly on the study table and studied the ring instead.

"If he can store the Spell Manual in the ring, then I should be able to store other things in the ring as well."

Merlin guessed in his heart. He intended to test it so he took the mysterious relief sculpture out. According to the method provided in the manual, he had to use his Mind Power and touch the ring at once.

"Swoosh."

It disappeared in the blink of an eye. Merlin squinted his eyes slightly to check the ring with his Mind Power. As expected, the relief sculpture lied quietly in the ring.

Knowing that the ring could store other things as well, a weight was lifted off Merlin's chest. This relief sculpture was extremely mysterious and unfathomable. Putting it in the ring would be safer.

After that, Merlin grabbed the Spell Manual and flipped it open lightly. Even though he had seen it before, he was simply surprised by it and did not have a good look. Now, Merlin would like to study the content in the manual.

However, Merlin only tried a few sentences before giving up helplessly. Even if he had the information from old man Etha as reference and he could understand it word by word but doing this was nearly ineffective. He was extremely slow and he could not attain the effect he wanted.

Thus, the most urgent thing was to have a grasp of Molta language. At least, he needed a strong foundation in it. This required Merlin to grasp hold of more than one thousand vocabulary in the following days to at least try to understand the content of the Spell Manual.

So, Merlin directly placed the manual back into the ring. As long as he could not grasp hold of more than one thousand Molta words, he would never retrieve the Spell Manual.

The butler entered the hall of Wilson Castle hurriedly.

"Young Master Merlin, the Guardian Swordsman from Grand City had left Blackwater City this morning."

The butler flashed a smile. He was ordered by Merlin to observe the Guardian Swordsman of Grand City. Once they had left, he needed to report it to Merlin.

Merlin stood up suddenly and said in a low voice, "Butler, are they all gone? Is there anyone who stays behind? What about the leader, Wizard Jason? Has he left?"

The butler answered, "They've all left. Led by Lord Jason, the Guardian Swordsman brought three carriages of things away. I heard they're all things moved from the evil heretic's home. Their pace is slow but they've left Blackwater City this morning. I only returned after confirming it repeatedly."

"Butler, you've done well."

Merlin was relieved. Even though he had not left home for a while lately, he was still taking note of the movement of the Guardian Swordsman who came from Grand City closely.

Only after making sure that they had already left, he felt truly relaxed.

"Right, did anyone find me lately?"

Merlin asked the butler.

The butler hesitated for a while and said, "Yesterday, Young Master Anson and Young Master Gutt came for you but they were chased away by Young Lady Macy."

Merlin shook his head with a bitter smile and let the butler leave first.

However, Merlin did not take this to heart. Anson and Gutt should not have any urgent matter. They were better off chased away by Macy. That way, he could learn the Molta language at peace.

Without other disturbances, Merlin's pace of learning Molta language was quick. In just a few days, he had grasp hold of more than a hundred words. Now, he had the vocabulary of about three hundred words. As the number of words increased, the speed to learn Molta language would increase significantly as well.

Since these Molta words were highly correlated, the few first hundreds of Molta words were the hardest to learn. However, as time passed by and when he had understood Molta words enough, he was able to correlate the words and learn new vocabulary in a much higher speed.

"With my current speed, I'll be able to understand more than a thousand words and at most, a month. At that time, I can read the content of that Spell Manual."

Merlin was looking forward to that day.

The heat from the burning furnace warmed the entire hall. Now that it was October, the weather had become even colder. The ground outside was already faintly frosted and

extremely slippery. The servants of the castle were also bearing the freezing wind as they rid the ground of the frost with shovel as quickly as possible.

In the hall, Merlin and Macy were dining. There were butter bread, wheat porridge and a glass of milk prepared on the table. Macy took a glance at Merlin who was gobbling up food. She seemed to have something to say to her brother hesitantly.

“Macy, I’ve finished.”

Merlin used his white handkerchief to wipe away the food on his mouth. Then, he stood up and was about to leave when Macy stopped him.

Macy frowned and said, “Merlin, wait a minute.”

“Anything wrong?” Merlin turned and looked at Macy.

Macy put down her fork and knife and wiped her mouth. She said softly, “Merlin, yesterday Gutt and Anson came to look for you. Why didn’t you go out with them?”

Merlin showed an odd expression. Macy had not liked seeing fatty Gutt and Anson before and said they were Merlin’s bad influence. Once she met them, she would not show any good expression.

However, Macy’s attitude today was a little strange but Merlin did not think too much about it. He said nonchalantly, “Anson and Gutt didn’t have any urgent business with me. The weather’s so cold. It’s better staying in the castle.”

“Merlin, you’ve been staying in the castle these days. It’s been more than a month. It’s better to go out for a walk some days.”

Macy’s gaze showed a hint of worry.

Right now, Merlin also realized that his lack of socialization these days was too abnormal as compared to his previous behavior and had caused Macy to worry about him. She probably still thought the incident with the church had caused some effect on Merlin somehow.

Thinking about that, Merlin smiled and nodded. “I will when I have time.”

After saying that, Merlin turned around and went upstairs. Meanwhile, Macy was still frowning. She was worried about Merlin’s current condition. Usually, Merlin would not stay at home even for a day.

The butler hesitated for a while before saying with a smile, “Young Lady Macy, even though Young Master Merlin did not go out much during this period, he was energetic and cheerful all this while. There shouldn’t be any problem.”

After hearing what the butler said, Macy finally relaxed her eyebrows. She wore a thick coat and left the castle in a hurry.

Merlin returned to his room quickly. He did not take Macy's words by heart. If there was no important matter to attend to, he would not leave the castle during this time.

This was because he had understood more Molta vocabulary. Until now, he had grasped hold of one thousand and one hundred Molta words. He could be deemed as he understood the basic Molta language.

Thus, Merlin was prepared to retrieve old man Etha's Spell Manual today and study its content.

Taking the ring he hid under his bed, Merlin's Mind Power reached into the ring quickly. With a thought, a thick Spell Manual appeared in Merlin's hands.

Merlin only briefly flipped through this Spell Manual the previous time. Since his Molta vocabulary was limited, he did not understand its context at all.

Now, Merlin flipped the Spell Manual open once more.

Chapter 20: Spell Model

The manual was basically written in the format of diary and notes. Many were comprehensive thoughts of old man Etha toward spells. Even if Merlin had grasped hold of more than one thousand Molta words, reading and understanding the content of the manual was still difficult for him.

However, this was also partly due to the manual where it consisted of many technical terms about spells and Spell Caster so Merlin could not understand those parts easily. As for other content in the manual, Merlin could read them in a breeze.

Soon, Merlin found some descriptive text about spells where it discussed the methods to become a Spell Caster.

"To be a Spell Caster, the most basic thing to have is Mind Power! Only those with a strong Mind Power can simulate the Spell Model. It was only then that they etch it in their mind where it eventually becomes the source of Spell Strength!"

Merlin pondered about these words over and over again. Even if he did not understand what a Spell Model really was, he could understand most of what these words were saying.

Mind Power was the foundation to become a Spell Caster!

Maybe old man Etha had realized Merlin's extraordinary Mind Power in the first place. That was why he had given the ring that hid the Spell Manual to Merlin.

As to why Merlin's Mind Power was different than others, that was easy to explain since he was reborn into this world.

Since he knew he possessed the condition to become a Spell Caster, Merlin was exalted. Thus, he continued to read the text to find the way to become a Spell Caster.

Soon, Merlin found old man Etha's words on the third page of the manual. "Mind Power is the basis of a Spell Caster while the build-up of a Spell Model determines the strength of the Spell Caster."

The words "Spell Model" had appeared in the manual quite frequently, but even after searching for a long time, Merlin could not find any Spell Model.

Merlin now knew most of the steps required to be a Spell Caster. Firstly, one must have extraordinary Mind Power. Next, it was to construct a Spell Model and imprint the Spell Model into one's mind using Mind Power. This was the same as simulating a Spell Model in the mind using Mind Power.

If everything went well, then one could become a Spell Caster.

Old man Etha's Spell Manual had many volumes. Merlin read through the first volume and saw that it was all about old man Etha's experiences when he cultivated spells. It did not record about any Spell Model that was the key to become a Spell Caster.

Then, Merlin picked up the second volume. As soon as he flipped it open, he saw an extremely complicated drawing. Under the drawing, there were some explanatory notes from old man Etha.

"Zero-level spell – Fireball's Spell Model. I have improved this Spell Model several times. Its specialty is its stability. Although it may come off a little weaker than other Fireball in power, its forte lies in its stability. Once this Spell Model is used, beginner Spell Casters don't need to worry about the issue of Spell Model falling apart in their minds."

This complicated drawing of Zero-level spell – Fireball's Spell Model was the Spell Model Merlin was searching for.

Other than this Spell Model that was more stable, there were other models of Fireball that were stronger. However, old man Etha had made his notes under these models. If these Spell Models were exceptionally strong in power, then one must always take note of the possible issue of the Spell Model falling apart.

These strong Spell Models did not have a stable construction. Once these were used by force and fell apart in one's mind, this could cause detrimental effects on the Spell Caster and even jeopardize his life.

Therefore, for a Spell Caster, the most important thing was to construct a Spell Model that suit himself.

Merlin did not pause long at the Spell Model of Fireball. He flipped the pages and found that the manual also had the Spell Model of Whirlwind.

Same as the Fireball, the Whirlwind was also a Zero-level spell.

There were two Zero-level spells in total and these were all the spells recorded in old man Etha's manual. Merlin was slightly disappointed as these were only two Zero-level spells that could be considered as the most basic spells.

However, when Merlin began to further study the important detail to become a Spell Caster, he did not dare to look down on these two Zero-level spells anymore.

Take Fireball as an example, though it was simply a Zero-level spell, the complexity of its Spell Model was unfathomable to Merlin. This Spell Model resembled some complicated mathematical model during Merlin's last life.

To completely imprint such complex Spell Model into his mind in addition to Mind Power without a single mistake was very difficult. It brought upon a heavy burden on his Mind Power.

No wonder the basic criteria for one to become a Spell Caster was to have strong Mind Power. If a person's Mind Power was simply passable, he could never be able to simulate such complicated Spell Model in his mind using Mind Power.

Without considering the complexity of the Spell Model, the Spell Caster needed to choose which Spell Model to use – a stable Spell Model or a stronger Spell Model.

Like the Fireball, old man Etha had built more than ten Spell Models for himself, all of which were extremely complex. Merlin only looked at it briefly and he had already felt dizzy and exhausted.

The other spell, Whirlwind, was the same. Its Spell Model was complicated. Two Spell Models had been expanded into many different types and all of these had been written in the manual in more than thirty pages. The second volume of the manual was mostly Spell Models for these two spells.

Merlin sat on his chair and placed the Spell Manual on the study table. He rubbed his forehead lightly. He was not relaxing but was thinking about these two spells in silence instead. He was considering which Spell Model he should adopt.

“In comparison, the power of Fireball is slightly stronger than the Whirlwind. Moreover, it’s the spell Teacher Etha is most familiar with. My first spell should be Fireball!”

After comparing the pros and cons of both Fireball and Whirlwind, Merlin finally chose the Zero-level spell – Fireball.

Of course, there were no limitations to Zero-level spell. Normally, a Spell Caster would possess at least three Zero-level spells because only with three Zero-level spells the mind would be in a more stable state so it would not collapse easily this way. In the future, he would be able to upgrade the level of his Spell Model to become an even stronger Spell Caster.

Three Spell Models were the basic but there were some strong Spell Casters who could possess four or five or six or even more Zero-level spells. However, the prerequisite for that was to have enough Mind Power to support all spells. Otherwise, it would be impossible for them to construct more Spell Models in their minds.

Entrance-level Spell Caster like Merlin had Mind Power that could support only one Spell Model at his best.

Having decided on the spell, Merlin would have to face old man Etha’s Spell Models again. There were all sorts of Fireball’s Spell Model and this was the part that gave him a headache the most.

Although Fireball was simply a Zero-level spell, old man Etha had created thirteen different Spell Models according to his understanding all these years.

Some were stable, some were explosive. However, each of them had their own unique traits.

Merlin read old man Etha’s Spell Manual again. In it, he found that some basic Spell Model had to be modified according to personal needs.

The overall structure of Fireball was this way but if the Spell Caster wished to have stronger power and make his Fireball explode when he cast the spell, he would only need to make a slight modification to the Spell Model.

Some Spell Casters wanted to have a more stable Spell Model to support his upgrade in the future to become a First-level, a Second-level and even a higher-level Spell Caster. Therefore, he needed to modify his Spell Model a little to make it more stable.

Merlin was troubled facing these Spell Models. Old man Etha had mentioned in his manual that it was best for him to modify the Spell Model to suit his needs.

However, Merlin was only a beginner. How would he be able to modify these Spell Models left by old man Etha?

Although there were only these few dozens of Spell Models in Etha's Spell Manual, in reality, the calculation and simulation involved in producing these Spell Models surely took old man Etha a long time to complete. Merlin had no time to slowly study these Spell Models at all.

"It'll be much easier if I have The Matrix."

Merlin could not help but sigh. "The Matrix" was a quantum calculator. As a super calculator, the most basic function of matrix calculation, function drawing, and data analysis could be considered as a top notch in the industry. Moreover, the most important aspect was its intelligent core. According to the user's needs, it could construct the perfect model for mathematical or physics purposes.

If he had "The Matrix", Merlin would be able to find the most suitable Spell Model without much effort no matter how complicated these Spell Models were.

"Will you like to initiate the Matrix?"

Merlin was stunned for a minute. He seemed to hear a weak sound, a notification to initiate "The Matrix".

After a while, there seemed to be no change. Merlin could only shake his head helplessly as he mumbled to himself, "It seems these that Spell Models are definitely too complex for me that I even hallucinated. How can I possibly have The Matrix here?"

Merlin thought the voice earlier as a hallucination that appeared out of exhaustion.

Just when Merlin continued to think about the Spell Models, suddenly a crisp voice rang in his mind. "Will you like to initiate The Matrix?"

The voice this time was extremely clear and kept echoing in his mind. Merlin was stunned for real but soon he was elated. He could not believe this.

"Could it be 'The Matrix' followed me here?"

Though full of doubt, Merlin said in a deep voice, "Initiate The Matrix!"

The order had been placed. Merlin was filled with anticipation as he waited.