

W. Secret 321

Chapter 321: The Process of Data Integration I

“Charise.”

Merlin returned to his room and saw that Charise was still waiting up for him. Although she forced a smile, she seemed to have a load on her mind.

“Celia’s sleeping now, Merlin...”

Charise wanted to say more but did not say anything else ultimately. Merlin had a vague idea of what she wanted to say. It was likely that when they were in the hall, Celia’s naïve dream of becoming a Spell Caster had stirred up her worries.

Merlin came before Charise, his sharp eyes fixing upon her as he said softly, “Charise, you worry too much about things. So, what if Celia has no way of becoming a Spell Caster? When she grows up, she’ll have children – perhaps her descendants will have Spell Caster Quality. What’s more, I’m a powerful Spell Caster now. Barring anything unexpected, I shall be able to protect the Wilson clan for hundreds of years. With me around, Celia can live a good life in her short, decades-long lifespan!”

Charise could sense how caring Merlin was from his manner of speaking. She gently grasped his large hand and felt her heart settled down quietly. It was true – Merlin was now a powerful Spell Caster and could live for hundreds of years. Even when Celia or Conxion’s children had passed away, Merlin would still be alive.

With Merlin around, the Wilson clan would have enough time to expand slowly. Nevertheless, Charise was just a Normie woman, so her child was still her priority.

Seeing that Charise did not utter a word and remained reticent, Merlin felt rather helpless. He was no longer a Normie, so he had no way of understanding Charise’s way of thinking. It could be said that Merlin’s thinking was now worlds apart from the mindsets of Charise, Avril, and Old Wilson.

Merlin could take more than a century to think deeply about a matter, but Normies were unlikely to live over a hundred years.

After a moment of thinking, Merlin shook his head powerlessly, and lightly stroked Charise's long soft hair. He said softly, "We still have a long time together. Haven't you always wanted another child?"

Charise's breathing became heavy, and their figures quickly rolled over and became entangled. There was no sound save for their intermittent moans and pants...

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The next day, Merlin asked around and discovered that Felinda had been sent to Wilson Castle two days ago. At the moment, she was staying alone in a guest room.

"Felinda!"

Merlin had found her. Gone were the sorrows that had haunted this pretty female guard back when she was in Guinomi City. Now, she seemed to burst with vigor.

It looked like she was suited for life in Wilson Castle.

"Oh? It's Sir Viscount!"

Felinda had a book in her hand and was reading with keen interest. Upon seeing that it was Merlin, she stood up hurriedly and bowed respectfully. By now, she had learned of Merlin's identity as the viscount of Prakash City.

"No need to be nervous. I've come today to see how you find life in Wilson Castle. Have you gotten used to it?"

Upon seeing Felinda's stiff movements, Merlin broke out into a knowing smile.

"Sir Viscount, life in Wilson Castle is good, and there's nothing that I can't get used to. Still, Sir Viscount, I would like to learn some Spell Caster knowledge as soon as I can."

After Felinda finished speaking, she looked at Merlin, full of hope and expectation.

From the corner of his eye, Merlin saw that the book which Felinda was so engrossed in was an introductory book on Spell Casters. He did not know where she found it. In the Kingdom of Blackmoon, Spell Casters were many and commonly seen, but books on Spell Casters were relatively rare.

He saw that Felinda could wait no longer to become a Spell Caster. However, her Spell Caster Quality and even her Mind Power were lacking, being even less than Merlin's Mind Power when he was starting out.

Furthermore, creating a Spell Model was not something that could be done in a short time. Felinda did not have the knowledge of Spell Casters, and it would take a long time to impart knowledge about creating spells to her.

"You can construct a Spell Model for now. It's not realistic for you to become a Spell Caster yet, but you can start learning some Spell Caster knowledge. How's this? I'll ask Wizard Bammou to teach you."

Merlin thought of Wizard Bammou. Most spell casters' organizations would not be so "extravagant" as to send a magnificent and powerful Seventh-level Spell Caster to teach the basic knowledge of Spell Casters. However, to Merlin, Wizard Bammou was the best candidate. Moreover, as of now, Wizard Bammou was the only Spell Caster in the Wilson clan besides Merlin.

"Swish!"

Soon enough, Wizard Bammou arrived at Merlin's side, asking respectfully, "Master, what are your orders?"

Merlin pointed at Felinda. "Bammou, Felinda has Spell Caster Quality. Although she can't construct spells for now, you can teach her some Spell Caster knowledge so that she has a foundation."

Bammou's face shifted slightly, and he felt unwilling. Although it was rather dismal that a Seventh-level Spell Caster had to do something like this, Wizard Bammou was now Merlin's slave. Even if he was unwilling, he could only agree.

“Master, I shall devote myself to teaching Felinda. What field of knowledge should I start with?”

It seemed like Wizard Bammou had never had a student before. Although he had deep and extensive knowledge, he did not know where to begin to teach. After all, Spell Casters had inherited a large amount of knowledge which encompassed all the fields. Constructing spells was only a small part of it.

“Teach Felinda the fundamentals first, then you may explain to her using your own judgment, some knowledge on runology, potions, or alchemy. See which field she has an affinity for, after which we can focus on that in her learning.”

Merlin thought about it for a moment before deciding to see which field Felinda was skilled at.

With Felinda’s Spell Caster Quality, it was difficult for her to become a First-level Spell Caster. However, if she had a gift in some other field, like runology, potions, or alchemy, then they could prioritize that in her education.

The Wilson clan was just starting out and would need all sorts of Spell Casters. For instance, in runology – Merlin had just obtained Wizard Finello’s Runic Magic Disc in Taran City, which only a Spell Caster who was proficient in runology could use. Neither Merlin nor Wizard Bammou was proficient in runology.

Thus, even if he had the Runic Magic Disc, he had no way of using it.

Thus, a Spell Caster clan should expand in a comprehensive manner, with Spell Casters in all fields. Letting Wizard Bammou teach Felinda was merely the first step. Bammou knew a little of runology and potions, so teaching an Entrance-level Spell Caster was not a problem. If they were to go deeper, they would need someone with a systematic knowledge of the field.

The Wilson clan had just started out, yet it was already so challenging. At times, Merlin felt like he did not have enough energy. Would it not be even more taxing on him in the future?

As he thought about this, Merlin left Felinda to Wizard Bammou and went to find a quiet room. He began to sort out his harvest from his period of repeated massacres.

First, it was the rings. Merlin had obtained too many rings that might serve as the Wilson clan’s reserves. Merlin had not meticulously looked through the contents of all the rings.

The owners of these rings were mostly roaming Wizards who were not wealthy. Thus, there were not many elemental crystal stones in the rings. Mostly, there were only Zero-level and First-level spells, with the occasional Second-level and Third-level spells.

As for spells above the Fourth-level, there were far too few of those.

Merlin did not care much for these spells. The complete spells passed on to him in the Dark Magic Region, and even the spells within the Neverending Book were far superior to the spells of these roaming Wizards.

Merlin even decided not to keep these spells in the Wilson clan. Spells were a fundamental aspect. However, some of the roaming Wizards' spells were totally flawed, created through the careless derivations and repeated repairs of these roaming Wizards. In truth, these spells harbored great defects within them, and if one constructed them by force, one would end up like the black-robed old man. Even if the spells were successfully constructed, it would cause the Spell Models to be destabilized, and one would have to suffer from an unstable Spell Model for the rest of their lives.

Therefore, Merlin had decided on a few first-rate spells. Although certain spells of the Dark Magic Region must not be divulged so easily, the spells in the Neverending Book were relatively decent and could be used as the Wilson clan's reserve of spells.

As for the many Spells belonging to these roaming Wizards, Merlin did not plan on wasting them. For Merlin, all these numerous spells only had one function, which was to populate the Matrix's database.

"Matrix, record all these Spell Models!"

Merlin immediately started up the Matrix. Instantly, the Matrix began to scan and record each of the Spell Models. The high number of spells was enough to populate the Matrix's database.

Merlin had always had a plan for when the Matrix's database was populated. When the number and types of spells were sufficient, he would use the Matrix's process of data integration in hopes that it would be able to derive new spells, just like those Seventh-level Spell Casters who derived new spells which were suitable for Spell Casters.

Once a Spell Caster reached the Seventh-level, they would need to derive and construct a new Spell Model themselves, one that no one had ever used before. Only by doing so could they become a Seventh-level Spell Caster!

Wizard Leo was hindered at this step, thus he was unable to become a Seventh-level Spell Caster no matter what.

However, it was not just Seventh-level Spell Casters who were able to derive new spells. During the Spell Casters' most glorious era, a few genuinely genius Spell Casters were already using spells they constructed themselves as they constructed Fourth-level spells.

That was what true genius was – to be able to shine brightly even in the golden age of Spell Casters. It was just like the master of the Flame Maxim that Merlin had obtained, the Legend Nikola. When he was a Fourth-level Spell Caster, he was able to kill a Seventh-level Spell Caster. Merlin suspected that it might be possible that the Legend Nikola was long able to derive his own spells.

Thus, Merlin had in fact been hard at work, trying to populate the Matrix's database. It was only a shame that, after so many years, the database was still lacking.

Perhaps to most Spell Casters, this number of spells was already a considerable harvest. However, if he wanted to carry out the process of data integration, he would need thousands or even tens of thousands of data to act as the foundation, and in order to carry out the most basic functions of operation and derivation.

At the moment, the database of the Matrix consisted of not more than two hundred spells, and most of these were Zero-level spells. These were the many spells that Merlin had obtained after he had killed innumerable Spell Casters.

“Actually, I could give it a shot and see if the Matrix is able to carry out the process of data integration and derive a new spell?”

After Merlin had populated the Matrix's database with all the spells, he felt some anticipation. Although a few hundred spells were still a long way from thousands of spells, perhaps he might gain something unexpected?

Trying his luck, Merlin gave the order to the Matrix. Following that, he stayed in the room, silently waiting for the results from the Matrix.

Chapter 322: Data Integration Process II

The data integration process was an extremely complex operation. With the computing power of the Matrix, it would be able to complete even the most complex operations in an instant.

However, besides calculation, the data integration process included the derivation of new spells. Even with the foundation of a large database, a long time was required to complete the process.

One hour, two hours...

Merlin had been looking out for any changes in the Matrix. However, a few hours had passed, yet the Matrix did not change in the slightest. This meant that the data integration process was still ongoing.

“Beep. Task failed. The data in the database is severely lacking. Please continue after the database is populated!”

At last, after five hours, the Matrix produced a result. However, it was a failure. A mere two hundred or so spells were far too few to act as a database.

“It has failed again...”

Merlin shook his head forlornly. Even if he had been expecting this, he was still feeling sorry that it had failed. The Matrix needed its database to be populated with a minimum of more than a thousand spells in order to derive new spells.

Furthermore, this was merely a possibility. At that point, the outcome would differ significantly based on the level, type, and so on, of the newly derived spells. The more powerful a spell was, the larger the database that was needed.

Merlin had come into this world for so long and had used various methods to obtain the spells of roaming Wizards, and some from the Dark Magic Region, in addition to the spells from the Neverending Book. Yet, in total, he had only two hundred or so spells.

It was far too difficult to obtain over a thousand spells. The Resource Tower must have countless spells but it would need to be exchanged with contribution points. Even if Merlin had over ten thousand contribution points each year, using them solely to exchange for spells would be far too costly and extravagant. He would need to stick to beginner spells in order to save on the cost.

Besides, the ability of the Matrix to derive new spells through the data integration process was merely Merlin's assumption. Whether or not it would succeed or could derive new spells, and what would those spells be – questions like these, and more, were still unresolved. As long as the database was not populated, not even Merlin would know the answers.

Merlin did not want to think about the problem of populating the Matrix's database. It was impossible to complete it in a short time. He would slowly accumulate spells, and if there was no other way, Merlin could use his contribution points to exchange for spells in the Resource Tower. This was the worst-case scenario, used only as a last resort. Merlin did not want to use his precious contribution points to exchange for some spells just to populate the Matrix's database.

After he shut down the Matrix, Merlin began to examine his own condition.

The Flame Maxim in his Awareness was still unchanged as it continued to suppress Fiery Collapse.

As for Fiery Collapse, although it was forcibly combined with spells, as of now no aberrations had occurred yet. Conversely, Merlin was very satisfied with its strength.

As he slaughtered his way from Taran City to Fanya City, he was nearly invincible. Even the strongest of them, Wizard Finello, was no match for Merlin.

Merlin's strongest spell was Darkness Heart merged with a Darkness-type spell. However, if his opponent had powerful Mind Power and avoided being caught in the illusion of the Darkness-type spell, he would still need to attack with his formidable Pandora Demon Ability.

Fiery Collapse, when forcibly combined with spells using the Flame Maxim, rapidly grew in might, and was comparable to a powerful Fifth-level spell.

At the moment, Merlin's greatest strength was the spells which had been merged with Fiery Collapse and Darkness Heart. They were almost a match for a powerful Spell Caster at the Fifth-level. If his opponent did not have powerful Mind Power, Merlin would be able to easily kill off a Fifth-level Spell Caster.

This was the unique advantage of Darkness-type Spell Casters. As long as one had insufficient Mind Power, one should never battle with a Darkness-type Spell Caster. Otherwise, one would essentially have no chance of victory.

Of course, each type of Spell Caster had their own unique advantages. For instance, a Spell Caster complemented by a powerful Pandora Demon Ability with an affinity for Earth-type spells would come to no harm even if the Spell Caster was a few levels above them.

Merlin possessed Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth which had been combined with his Earth-type spells. It was difficult for Fifth-level spells to injure Merlin anymore.

This was the aggregate of Merlin's abilities, which was comparable to a Fifth-level Spell Caster. For now, this was Merlin's limit. Lately, he felt that his powers had reached a bottleneck. Without any significant breakthrough, it would be difficult for him to grow stronger.

Regardless of whether it was Fiery Collapse or other Pandora Demon Abilities, Merlin would need to become a Fourth-level Spell Caster to undergo a substantial boost. If Merlin became a Fourth-level Spell Caster, his powers would grow by leaps and bounds.

However, Merlin was only a Second-level Spell Caster now. He was not even a Third-level Spell Caster and had not constructed any Third-level spells. Even if he became a Third-level Spell Caster and merged Darkness Heart with a Third-level spell, his powers would only increase moderately. Perhaps the other spells that could be combined with a Pandora Demon Ability would also be slightly improved.

Still, Merlin had essentially reached a limit. As of now, all he could do was to improve his Mind Power and become a Third-level Spell Caster, preparing for the eventual day he would become a Fourth-level Spell Caster.

The Fourth-level was a watershed level. In the Dark Magic Region, only Fourth-level Spell Casters were able to build their individual towers. Only then were they considered masters.

Furthermore, only Fourth-level spells would allow the cultivation of various Pandora Demon Abilities to their second stage. At that point, a Spell Caster's abilities would undergo an all-around upgrade.

Merlin was somewhat looking forward to the moment he became a Fourth-level Spell Caster and his many Pandora Demon Abilities could be cultivated to the second stage. How terrifying would his powers be?

“It’s a shame that Glacial Finger couldn’t be merged with any spells. Even if it was cultivated to the second stage, it would be far inferior to Darkness Heart and Fiery Collapse. It can’t even compare to Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth!”

Presently, Merlin would rarely make use of Glacial Finger in general. Glacial Finger could not combine with a spell, and its might was not that strong. It could only compare to a Fourth-level spell, which was of not much use to Merlin at the moment.

In the beginning, Glacial Finger had been Merlin’s first Pandora Demon Ability and had helped Merlin tremendously. Still, it was innately lacking after all, since it was not very powerful and could not be merged with spells. Now, it was good for nothing.

Unfortunately, Merlin did not know how to get rid of Glacial Finger. Moreover, he did not have a better Pandora Demon Ability that could replace it. Otherwise, he would have removed it long ago.

Currently, Merlin had Fiery Collapse, Darkness Heart, Flash Wind, Fuse Earth, and Glacial Finger – five types of Pandora Demon Abilities. He was only missing one Thunder-type Pandora Demon Ability. Still, Merlin would not force it. The strength of Fiery Collapse was great enough, and it had three stages, meaning it had sufficient attack power.

Among the five types of Pandora Demon Abilities, all of them, besides Glacial Finger, could be merged with spells. This was rather terrifying. In the past, amongst the Spell Casters who had made it to the third obstacle on the Ship of Nikola, there was a Spell Caster who possessed five Pandora Demon Abilities, all of which could be combined with spells.

A Spell Caster like that was known as a freak Wizard and was very powerful. Even the spirit of the Flame Maxim had nothing but praise for him.

Now, Merlin had five Pandora Demon Abilities, four of which could be combined with spells. He would be relatively powerful even if he was in the Spell Casters’ most glorious era.

Pandora Demon Abilities that could be merged with spells were not easy to find. In order to have four such Pandora Demon Abilities, Merlin had to go through countless chance encounters and even risk his life just to obtain them.

“Glacial Finger... If I become a Fourth-level Spell Caster, I can hold off cultivating the second stage of Glacial Finger.”

Innumerable thoughts flashed across Merlin's mind. The power of Glacial Finger could no longer keep up with Merlin's increase in strength. He could not remove Glacial Finger, but if he was able to find another Pandora Demon Ability which required only a Fourth-level spell for its cultivation, Merlin might even consider cultivating it right away at that point.

As for Glacial Finger, he would not cultivate its second stage. Otherwise, it would take up the space of a precious Fourth-level Ice-type spell, resulting in him being unable to cultivate another Pandora Demon Ability.

However, all of these were still far away in the future. First of all, it was difficult enough to find an Ice-type Pandora Demon Ability which would only need a Fourth-level spell for its cultivation. One that could be merged with spells would be even more difficult to find. As of now, these were all just Merlin's ideas.

He needed to sort out the spells and Pandora Demon Abilities that he had. Merlin had many spells because he was a Six-Elemental Spell Caster. When all this was added to his various types of Pandora Demon Abilities, Merlin was somewhat confused about his own abilities.

Now, having carefully analyze and organize his powers, he had a clear and definite goal in order to improve his capabilities. His current focus was on boosting his Mind Power and constructing a Third-level spell as soon as he could so that he might become a Third-level Spell Caster.

After becoming a Third-level Spell Caster, he would need to prepare to become a Fourth-level Spell Caster. For instance, some Pandora Demon Abilities required some mystical treasures for the cultivation of the second stage. He would need to be ready with these treasures.

Moreover, there was Darkness Eye promised by Wizard Leo. After Merlin had become a Fourth-level Spell Caster, Wizard Leo would consider passing on the cultivation method of Darkness Eye to Merlin.

Although Merlin had learned of the various marvelous traits of Darkness Eye from Wizard Bammou, he would still need to ponder the matter seriously before deciding to cultivate it or not.

After this bout of consideration, Merlin let out a long sigh. With a definite goal in his mind, things were much more manageable.

Improving his Mind Power was Merlin's utmost priority. The Mind Power duplicate within the Bell Space was meditating automatically, so his Mind Power was increasing all the time. Thus, Merlin did not need to worry about that.

What Merlin had to do now was to start preparing the Mokra Potion, given to him by Wizard Howl. He had obtained just enough materials for a hundred sets of Mokra Potion in the Resource Tower, only he did not have time to make it so far.

Now that he was back in Wilson Castle, it was time for him to prepare the Mokra Potion!

Chapter 323: Visitors from the Imperial City

It was Merlin's first time preparing Mokra Potion. There was a wide variety of potion materials required, and the process was extremely complicated. However, with the help of the Matrix, the portions could be controlled precisely, so his efficiency in the preparation of the Mokra Potion would not be any less compared to Wizard Hall's.

"If the success rate can be maintained at more than 30 percent, then I can yield at least 30 portions of Mokra Potions!"

Merlin thought as he looked at the Mokra Potion in front of him. He was not worried about not being able to prepare Mokra Potion, but about the success rate of the potion.

By relying on the Matrix, Merlin could achieve a success rate of more than 30 percent in preparing any ordinary potions. However, it was his first preparation of Mokra Potion, so he had to wait until he actually made it before the approximate success rate could be known.

"Matrix, start preparing the Mokra Potion!"

"Beep. Checking potion materials..."

Merlin was already familiar with potion-making, so he quickly started indulging in the preparation, precisely controlling each step of the process according to the instructions from the Matrix.

As the potion materials were too many, and the process was too complicated, even the preparation of a single potion would not be completed in a short time.

One hour, two hours... Finally, after eight hours when the sky had completely darkened, Merlin completed the final step of making the potion.

“Tss... Tss...”

Suddenly, black smoke started emerging from the transparent glassware, which was a change that occurred after Merlin added the final potion material called the “Black Stone”.

In the end, as the black smoke grew thicker, Merlin saw that there was only a black scum of potion residue in the transparent glassware. It did not produce any effect at all.

Merlin had failed in making the Mokra Potion on his first try!

Looking at the failed Mokra Potion, Merlin shook his head helplessly and whispered, “Forget it, I’ll get back to rest first. Otherwise, Charise will come here and look for me again.”

If it was the past, Merlin would stay in the house until he had successfully prepared the Mokra Potion before he would leave the house. This time back at Wilson Castle, it obviously could not be done as the past as Merlin had to take care of his clan’s affairs too.

This is especially so in the “baby-making” process with Charise. Merlin would feel very helpless when he thought of “baby-making” every night. He did not expect that after becoming a prestigious Spell Caster and a genius of the Dark Magic Region, especially after having made a notorious reputation among the roaming Wizards currently, he still had to be dragged back every day for “baby-making”.

Yet, this was the life of ordinary people. Sometimes, Merlin wondered too that if he had not become a Spell Caster, he could not imagine how many kids he would have had by now.

The lives of ordinary people were both helpless and peaceful. However, when he thought about how short his time back at Wilson Castle would be in the future, Merlin gave in to Charise’s “torture”. Whatever his clan needed, he would try his best to satisfy them.

Time passed by day by day. In Wilson Castle, Merlin had a regular everyday life. During the day, he would prepare Mokra Potions, while during the night, he would try to spend time with his family.

Occasionally, he would also go and watch Bammou teach Felinda. Recently, there were many tasks for Bammou including teaching little Cole, who possessed Spell Caster Quality, as requested by Merlin.

In this regard, Wizard Bammou wore a bitter expression every day, resenting his troubles deep down. However, as Merlin's slave, he did not dare to have any complaints.

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"Tss... Tss..."

In the room laid with simple deco, a puff of black smoke started billowing from the transparent glassware again. However, this time, the black smoke only persisted for a short time. Then, it gradually disappeared and was replaced with a translucent white mist.

"Success!"

Merlin looked at the white mist floating from the glassware, and a smile finally appeared on his face. For five consecutive days, he could only prepare a Mokra Potion each day.

However, as for the previous four days, the Mokra Potion that he made had failed. It took him five tries this time, and after mastering the control of heat of the various preparation processes, he had finally made a successful potion.

Merlin gently picked up the glassware and looked at the Mokra Potion with a tranquil gaze. There was only such a small amount of potion. Who would know that it had such a huge effect of enhancing one's Mind Power?

Although the potion was successful, Merlin was still somewhat dissatisfied as the success rate of the potion was much lower than he had previously anticipated. Merlin had predicted a success rate of thirty percent so that at least thirty portions of Mokra Potions could be prepared from the one hundred portions of potion ingredients.

Now, five sets of potion materials could only successfully produce one portion, and the success rate could only reach a mere twenty percent. It also meant that if the success rate of twenty percent was maintained, Merlin could only obtain twenty or more Mokra potions when he finally used all one hundred portions of potion materials. This amount was more than ten portions less compared to his original expectation.

“It seems that in the future, I can only carefully grasp the heat-handling and hope to improve the success rate.”

Merlin also seemed very helpless. He had already executed the steps of potion-making accurately by relying on the Matrix, but it could only yield a success rate of twenty percent. It was because he had not mastered the handling of the fire, so the success rate was too low.

After obtaining his first Mokra Potion, Merlin did not consume it immediately as once taken, he would fall into a deep slumber. Hence, Merlin must have gotten everything prepared before he could consume the Mokra Potion.

As time went by, Merlin concentrated his energy in preparing the potion in an effort to grasp the heat-handling, and to improve the success rate of the Mokra Potion.

During this period, Wizard Bammou also brought some good news. Although Felinda’s and little Cole’s Spell Caster Qualities were ordinary, Felinda had developed a fondness for runology, and also had a certain talent in it.

Therefore, Wizard Bammou focused on passing some of his runology wisdom to Felinda.

This was indeed good news. Even if Felinda was only an Entrance-level Spell Caster, by studying runology, Merlin would perhaps even let her use the Runic Magic Disc that he had gotten in the future. By that time, the Wilson clan could also set up Runic Magic Circles to safeguard the entire Wilson Castle.

In order to let Felinda study runology better, Merlin also pulled out some runology books that he unexpectedly found from his ring for Felinda so she could focus her energy in her study.

Besides Felinda’s matters, there was another thing that Merlin also put to heart in order for the Wilson clan to become a Spell Caster clan. Hence, he went to look for the black-robed old man and

requested his help to look for some people who possess Spell Caster Quality in Prakash City, and recruit them into the Wilson clan.

The black-robed old man eagerly agreed. Moreover, the black-robed old man was very efficient. In just over a month, he found more than a dozen children with Spell Caster Quality.

These children were all no more than ten years old, which was the exact age at which they could be trained greatly. Merlin recruited these dozen children into the Wilson clan and had granted them the Wilson name, cutting off any relationship with their former family and relatives.

The basic teachings of these children were directly handed by Merlin to Wizard Bammou, which made Wizard Bammou extremely miserable. At first, he thought that he could have some time to replenish his depleted Magic Power in his Awareness after arriving at Wilson Castle. However, it seemed that he was obviously used by Merlin as a “labor”.

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“That’s the final portion of potion material for Mokra Potion. I can’t believe I’ve made it successfully!”

Merlin held a freshly-made Mokra Potion in his hand. This was already the final portion of potion material. After more than three months, he had only prepared a potion every day and had finally exhausted the hundred portions of Mokra Potion materials that he exchanged from the Resource Tower.

Moreover, along with his proficiency in heat-handling, the success rate of Merlin’s Mokra Potion potion-making had also significantly improved. During the final few potions, he could even achieve a success rate of forty percent.

After exhausting the potion materials, Merlin began counting the number of Mokra Potions that he had successfully prepared.

“Twenty-eight portions of Mokra Potions. Not bad, more than twenty percent success rate, almost reaching thirty percent.”

Merlin had counted twenty-eight portions of Mokra Potions, which was close to thirty percent success rate. If it was not for the wastage of potion materials in the beginning stages of his potion-making, Merlin may even reach a success rate of more than thirty percent.

Just like in the preparation of the final few portions, Merlin's success rate had reached a frightening forty percent!

"Phew..."

Merlin breathed a long sigh of relief. He had finally completed preparing the Mokra Potions. Next, he would start to consume these potions, but taking the Mokra Potions would induce deep sleep. Hence, during this period, Merlin would be put in a very dangerous position, so he had to be thoroughly prepared for anything.

Fortunately, both Charise and Avril had good news. A month ago, they had announced their pregnancy, so Merlin could safely take the Mokra Potions.

"Bammou!"

Merlin contacted Wizard Bammou in an instant through the slave contract.

After a moment, Wizard Bammou's figure appeared in front of Merlin. As Bammou was used as a "labor" by Merlin, he always had a bitter expression on his face.

"Master, is there any order for me?"

Although his face expressed bitterness, Bammou did not dare to be disrespectful to Merlin.

Merlin glanced at Bammou, then said in a deep voice, "This time, you can be at peace for a long while. I need to take some potions, and I'll fall into a deep slumber so you'll need to stay around and be responsible for my safety! Remember, no one can get close to this room."

When he heard that Merlin needed protection, and it was an inseparable kind of protection, Wizard Bammou was overjoyed. During this period of time, he could finally recover some Magic Power quietly.

“Master, be rest assured that I’ll not let anyone come close to this room to disturb you.”

Merlin nodded. Bammou was a Seventh-level Spell Caster, and he was not any ordinary Seventh-level Spell Caster. He possessed Mind Power comparable to a Great Wizard, and he had also constructed an Eighth-level Fire-type spell. This Eighth-level spell was able to withstand the Flame Prison’s scorching flames, which were embedded with a slight force of the Flame Maxim.

Therefore, even Merlin was not entirely clear of Wizard Bammou’s strength, it was surely not comparable to any average Seventh-level Spell Caster. With Bammou’s protection by his side, Merlin would be at ease.

After he finished speaking, Merlin closed the door with a peace of mind, leaving only Wizard Bammou hiding in the surrounding to safeguard the room.

...

“Creak...”

In Wilson Castle, the plain wooden door of Snake Elder’s room was suddenly pushed open, and two unfamiliar figures appeared in the room.

“Hmm?”

Snake Elder lifted his head abruptly, his eyes turned infinitely sharp. Surprisingly, he did not realize that these two unfamiliar figures had approached his room earlier.

“Snake Elder, we’re sent by the eighth prince!”

These two figures had their entire bodies covered in wide Wizard robes, their looks could not be seen clearly.

There was a hint of astonishment on Snake Elder’s face, but there were more elements of doubts in his expression. He was indeed too familiar with these two Spell Casters. They were the closest

confidants by the side of His Royal Highness the eighth prince. Their strengths were also comparable to him, as Fifth-level Spell Casters.

“Wizard Hasbro, Wizard Sacra, what’s the instruction of His Royal Highness the eighth prince?”

Snake Elder was somewhat jealous of these two Spell Casters. Although they were all Spell Casters serving under His Majesty the eighth prince, they personally belonged to different divisions and would sometimes compete with each other to gain the eighth prince’s trust.

“This is the order of His Royal Highness. You can see it for yourself.”

The slightly larger built, Wizard Hasbro, pulled out a white letter and handed it to the Snake Elder.

Snake Elder looked at the eighth prince’s letter carefully, and his expression turned grim. Then, he said with a deep voice, “His Royal Highness the eighth prince was delayed by several other Highnesses, so he can’t personally come to Wilson Castle. I’m afraid the situation isn’t really optimistic.”

“That’s right, precisely because the situation is unsatisfactory, His Royal Highness can’t wait to ask Merlin to the Imperial City. By that time, His Royal Highness will naturally have a way to recruit Wizard Leo of the Dark Magic Region. These things aren’t what we should be concerned about. Our mission is to safely escort Merlin to the Imperial City.”

“Escort Merlin?”

Snake Elder shook his head helplessly as the Imperial City was too far away from Wilson Castle. It was too inconvenient to exchange messages, so he did not report the recent incidents in the city-states of Taran, Guinomi, and Fanya to His Royal Highness the eighth prince. He planned to inform the eighth prince in person when he returned to the Imperial City himself.

However, the eighth prince sent Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra to escort Merlin, which also reflected the importance that the eighth prince had put on Merlin, or rather, the importance of Wizard Leo.

“Why, what’s the problem?”

Wizard Hasbro noticed the strange look on Snake Elder, so he asked softly.

Snake Elder shook his head and said, “There’s not really a problem. Since the situation of His Royal Highness the eighth prince in the Imperial City wasn’t optimistic, let’s not delay anymore then. I’ll take you two to Merlin!”

Thereafter, Snake Elder led the two unfamiliar Spell Casters and headed towards the place where Merlin was.

Chapter 324: The Departure I

“Eh? Someone’s here!”

Wizard Bammou, who was quietly absorbing elements and transforming them into Magic Power in his Spell Models, abruptly opened his eyes. He had already noticed that there were three figures in front, moving quickly toward where Merlin was.

“Hmph, Master ordered that nobody can bother him!”

Wizard Bammou stood up, a bright flash glinted across his eyes. Then, his figure disappeared from where he was.

...

“Merlin is just up front.”

There were two unfamiliar Spell Casters with Snake Elder behind him, hurrying to the place where Merlin was. However, they did not seem to notice that a figure had appeared silently in front of them.

“Stop!”

A cold voice rang out. Snake Elder and the others were slightly shocked. They hastily looked in front and found a strange Spell Caster who was blocking them.

Snake Elder shuddered. He knew this person – he was Merlin’s aide, Wizard Bammou. As he had always been acting mysteriously, Snake Elder was still not used to Wizard Bammou. Therefore, even the snakes on Snake Elder’s head do not know the strength of Wizard Bammou.

Now, Wizard Bammou had emerged silently in front of the few of them. Even though all three of them were comparable to Fifth-level Spell Casters and had powerful senses, they could not sense Wizard Bammou who had appeared out of the blue. This made them feel a little confused about Wizard Bammou’s strength.

“Wizard Bammou, these two are Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra from the Imperial City. They’ve been sent by the orders of His Royal Highness the eighth prince. We have something urgent to notify Wizard Merlin!”

Snake Elder gave a brief explanation to Wizard Bammou.

However, Wizard Bammou remained expressionless and said coldly, “No matter what important things that you have, Wizard Merlin has instructed that no one is allowed to disturb him. You guys should go back. Come back again in a few days, perhaps Wizard Merlin will meet you then.”

Bammou did not care about what important things that Snake Elder had. Merlin’s prudent command before this must be very important, and he could not be disturbed. Bammou did not dare to disobey Merlin’s orders and allow Snake Elder and the others enter.

“Hmph, he’s merely a viscount, and he dares to do this? Snake Elder, we’re going in. What can he do about it?”

Wizard Hasbro who was behind Snake Elder spoke with a hint of anger in his tone. He had decided to force his way into the house.

“Hehe, you can try!”

An intense elemental fluctuation suddenly emerged on Wizard Bammou’s body. It formed a powerful force, pressing violently against Snake Elder and the others.

As a Seventh-level Spell Caster, especially when his Mind Power had reached the level of a Great Wizard, Wizard Bammou had not revealed his Mind Power before because it was far too strong.

Now that Snake Elder's people wanted to force their way in, Wizard Bammou would naturally not show any mercy. Nevertheless, Snake Elder and Merlin knew each other, so Bammou only pressed with his life force to scare them off and let them retreat.

Facts had proven that the terrifying Mind Power that Wizard Bammou suddenly broke out was indeed very effective. Wizard Hasbro, who wanted to force his way in just moments earlier, changed his facial expression and his footsteps stiffened. He did not continue moving forward.

Snake Elder's expression changed drastically too as he hurried a step forward and said to Wizard Bammou, "Since Wizard Merlin is indeed not available, then we shall wait a few more days."

As soon as he finished, under the Snake Elder's lead, Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra turned around and walked away.

There was a sneer between the lips of Wizard Bammou, and then he disappeared again, just like a ghost.

...

"Snake Elder, who's that Spell Caster earlier? How is the life force on his body so petrifying?"

"You're right, at that moment, I couldn't even muster any thoughts of resisting it. It's shocking that there's such a terrifying Spell Caster hiding in a small place like Wilson Castle."

Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra were powerful Wizards who could match Fifth-level Spell Casters, so they naturally knew how powerful the terrifying Mind Power on Wizard Bammou was. If they dared to go any further earlier, it was feared that what awaited them would be an unstoppable spell attack.

Snake Elder's expression looked shaken too. He had seen Wizard Bammou previously. He had always been alongside Merlin and had always been respectful toward Merlin. Although he felt that Wizard Bammou may possibly not be ordinary too, he did not give him high regard because after all, he was just Merlin's aide.

However, it seemed that Wizard Bammou was far from being as simple as he imagined. Bammou's body seemed to be shrouded by a mist, making it impossible for people to uncover his mystery.

“It seems that we're too ignorant of Wizard Merlin. There're still some other things that I've not told you before. Although Merlin is merely a Second-level Spell Caster, his strength is in fact comparable to a powerful Fifth-level Spell Caster!”

Shortly after, Snake Elder resumed his explanation in detail to Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra about how Merlin shuffled between three cities, killed countless Spell Casters, and gave the eighth prince three big gifts.

“It seems that Wizard Merlin is really not simple! Before coming here, His Royal Highness the eighth prince had told us that we must invite Wizard Merlin cordially. His Royal Highness the eighth prince also seemed to highly respect Wizard Leo. We don't understand. Regardless of how strong Leo is, he's still only a Sixth-level Spell Caster. Is it really necessary to garner him so much attention? Now that we've seen Merlin and his aide, who are both not simple at all, it would explain the attention His Royal Highness the eighth prince has for Wizard Leo. It certainly contains hidden secrets that are difficult for us to fathom...”

From Wizard Merlin and Wizard Bammou's powers, these two Spell Casters could associate it with Wizard Leo. From their viewpoint, no matter how strong Wizard Leo was, he was only a Sixth-level Spell Caster. So, how can he be worthy of this much attention from His Royal Highness the eighth prince?

Now, it seemed that Wizard Leo was not as simple as it looked on the surface. There must be a reason why the eighth prince regarded him so highly.

Snake Elder only resumed his speech after a long moment. “The situation of His Royal Highness the eighth prince isn't really optimistic, but Wizard Merlin doesn't allow anyone to disturb him now. So, we can only wait!”

Snake Elder and the others could not come up with any ideas, hence they could only wait silently.

...

“Phew...”

Merlin slowly opened his eyes. A beam of sunlight seeped through from outside the house, filling the room with warmth.

“It’s been three days. Tsk tsk, this Mokra Potion’s effects are really good!”

Merlin just woke up from a deep slumber. Three days ago, he consumed the first portion of Mokra Potion, and he immediately fell into a deep sleep.

Within these three days, Merlin’s Mind Power had also improved significantly, and it was even more than the Mind Power increase from the integration of several Mind Power duplicates in the Bell Space.

In the past, Merlin had consumed Mokra Potion before, and the additional Mind Power was quite similar to this time. That was to say, the effect of the Mokra Potion was still not reduced, which was very rare. Whether it was Phantasmal Magic Potion or Blueberry Potion, as long as you took a few more portions, the effect would be reduced.

“Bammou!”

Merlin immediately called out to Wizard Bammou.

“My honorable Master, what order do you have for me?”

Wizard Bammou’s figure swiftly appeared at Merlin’s side. He could not help but check on Merlin too, only to find that there was not really any change on Merlin. He had no idea what Merlin was doing in the house for these past few days.

“Is there anyone who came to look for me in these past few days?”

After Merlin took the Mokra Potion, he had been asleep all the time, and he had lost any sense of the outside world. So, he naturally would not be clear of what had happened in these past few days.

Wizard Bammou thought of Snake Elder three days ago and replied, “Master, three days ago, Snake Elder came with two unfamiliar Spell Casters, claiming that they were sent by His Royal Highness the eighth prince. They said they had something very important, but I’ve stopped them. They should still be waiting for your reply, Master.”

“Oh, did the eighth prince finally send someone?”

In Wilson Castle, in addition to being busy with turning the Wilson clan into a Spell Caster clan, Merlin was actually waiting for news from the eighth prince.

Unexpectedly, it took so long for the eighth prince to reply.

“Master, do you want to see them now?”

Wizard Bammou asked softly.

Merlin pondered for a moment, but shook his head instead and said, “Since they’ve waited for so many days, I’m sure they won’t mind waiting a few more days. You should go out first, don’t let anyone bother me!”

Wizard Bammou nodded, and then his figure disappeared from the house like a ghost.

Merlin only started mumbling when Wizard Bammou had left. “It could be something troublesome again. I’ll put you guys on hold then...”

There were some speculations in Merlin’s mind. The eighth prince had sent people again, so it should not be a simple matter. He decided that he should seize this period of time to consume more Mokra Potions to increase his Mind Power. Then, he could strive to construct a Third-level Darkness-type spell in order to improve his strength. Otherwise, in the distant future, there would no longer be such a safe place for Merlin to consume the Mokra Potions.

Thus, Merlin decided not to meet Snake Elder and the others first but continued to consume the Mokra Potions.

Every time he took a Mokra Potion, Merlin would need to sleep for at least three days, and his Mind Power would also grow wildly. Each time he took a Mokra Potion, Merlin’s Mind Power would almost double from its original state.

Hence, after a month's time, Merlin consumed another ten portions of Mokra Potions, making it a total of eleven portions of Mokra Potions. For an entire month, the eleven portions of potions had enhanced Merlin's Mind Power by three folds!

Merlin's Mind Power had already reached the level of a Fourth-level Spell Caster. It had tripled in just one month – this kind of speed was quite scary.

The effects of the Mokra Potions seemed to have really surpassed Merlin's expectations. Even with the addition of such huge Mind Power, the effect of the Mokra Potion had not diminished one bit.

If he continued taking it, Merlin had the confidence that his Mind Power would even surpass that of a Fifth-level Spell Caster.

During this period, Merlin knew that Snake Elder and the others had come back to look for him several times. Each time they came, they looked anxious but they were blocked by Wizard Bammou every time.

It seemed that they were really worried to death throughout the month.

However, Merlin still had no plans to see them. Now that his Mind Power had increased immensely, there were still seventeen potions left. Merlin did not continue taking them, only because the time needed was too long. Instead, he decided to construct a Third-level spell.

With Merlin's current situation, the growth of his Mind Power had reached a bottleneck state. The only thing that could increase some of his strength was undoubtedly the construction of new Darkness-type spells.

Once the construction was successful, and with some enhancement from Darkness Heart, it was likely that even a Sixth-level Spell Caster would be plunged into a temporary realm of illusion.

“Matrix, analyze the Spell Model of the Third-level Darkness-type spell, Darkness Vortex!”

Merlin quickly launched the Matrix and began constructing the Spell Model.

Chapter 325: The Departure II

Darkness Vortex was said to be able to devour all Mind Power including a Spell Caster with strong Mind Power. Once caught in Darkness Vortex, one's Mind Power would be engulfed, thus falling into an illusion.

This was only a Third-level Darkness-type spell, and its main role was to induce hallucinations. There was also the Fourth-level Darkness-type spell – Darkness Nightmare – known as the ultimate Hallucinating spell, capable of making people delirious, plunging them into an incomparably realistic fantasy realm. In addition, the multiple layers of illusions would cause opponents to be unable to distinguish between reality and imagination, just like a nightmare, frightening people out of their wits.

Whether it was a Third-level Darkness-type spell or a Fourth-level Darkness-type spell, both worked to induce hallucinations. However, Merlin knew that even if he constructed the Third-level spell, Darkness Vortex, with the enhancement from Darkness Heart, it could perhaps drag any ordinary Sixth-level Spell Caster into an illusion.

However, for Seventh-level Spell Casters, it was impossible to make them fall into the illusion. The Mind Power of a Seventh-level Spell Caster was leaps and bounds ahead of a Sixth-level Spell Casting, so it was no surprise that they'd be able to resist the illusion effect.

Therefore, Third-level spell, Darkness Vortex was basically the limit of illusions. In the future, if Merlin wanted to construct Fourth-level spell, Darkness Nightmare, there would not be much improvement anyway.

This was what Merlin was concerned about. If the Matrix was not able to deduce a new spell in time, he would be forced to choose the Fourth-level spell Darkness Nightmare. Even if there was the fusion with Darkness Heart, it could not affect a Seventh-level Spell Casters because of its hallucination limits. By then, the construction of the Fourth-level Darkness-type spell did not really have that much of a use for Merlin.

“Beep. A total of one hundred and twenty-eight thousand six hundred and forty-five spells have been analyzed!”

After just a brief moment, the Matrix had reconstructed over one hundred and twenty thousand Darkness Vortex's Spell Models.

Based on stability, compatibility, and power, Merlin combined the data of these three aspects and finally selected the most fitting Spell Model. This Spell Model was complex, but Merlin's Mind Power had far exceeded the standard for constructing Darkness Vortex. Therefore, it was not difficult to simulate Darkness Vortex's Spell Model.

The immense Mind Power was mobilized by Merlin and he began to slowly simulate Darkness Vortex's Spell Model.

One hour, two hours...

For six hours, Merlin had fully concentrated on simulating the Darkness Vortex's Spell Model with his Mind Power. When darkness almost descended, Merlin's entire body shuddered, and traces of ominous Darkness Elements rapidly converged toward him, just like a storm.

"I've finally succeeded!"

Merlin opened his eyes and breathed a long sigh of relief. In his Awareness, Darkness Vortex's Spell Model was constantly absorbing and transforming the Darkness Elements of the outside world.

However, by solely depending on the Mind Power that was transformed by the Spell Model itself, the process was indeed too slow. Merlin saw that the sky was starting to get dark outside, so he took out some Darkness-type elemental crystal stones from the ring to quickly increase the Mind Power within the Darkness Vortex's Spell Model.

Since Darkness Vortex had been condensed, Merlin seemed to have felt some changes in his Darkness Heart. However, these changes were not obvious. Darkness Heart must be incorporated into Fourth-level spells in order to unleash its full potential.

Merlin's Darkness Heart was of the third type. If it was integrated into a Fourth-level spell, it could increase the power of the spell by five to ten times. This increase was absolutely frightening, and it was larger than the increase garnered by the Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth.

However, it was a pity that the Fourth-level spell, Darkness Nightmare, was a Hallucinating spell. Though it was powerful enough to make any Sixth-level Spell Caster fall into an illusion, there was already a qualitative leap of change for the Mind Power of Seventh-level Spell Casters. Hence, illusions were no longer an issue for Seventh-level Spell Casters because even a stronger spell would not be able to plunge them into illusion.

After Merlin had successfully constructed Darkness Vortex, he kept thinking about the problem of the Fourth-level Darkness-type spell, but he could never figure a solution.

Perhaps there was a way, which was to quickly enrich the database of the Matrix, so he could perhaps derive new spells.

...

The night passed by quickly. When the first ray of daylight cracked through the clouds, Merlin had already woken. After a night of transforming Mind Power with elemental crystal stones, it was already enough to release Darkness Vortex for quite some time.

“It’s time to go meet Snake Elder.”

Merlin stood up and thought about how Snake Elder had waited for a month. It was about time to know what message had the eighth prince sent.

“Bammou.”

“Master, is there anything I can do for you?”

“Go and inform Snake Elder that I’ll meet him now.”

Wizard Bammou nodded, but his gaze stayed on Merlin for a brief moment. His eyes glimpsed. With the Mind Power of a Great Wizard in addition to his unique vision, how could he not realize the changes in Merlin?

In a short period of time, Merlin had reconstructed another Third-level Darkness-type spell. Wizard Bammou, who knew everything about Merlin, was also shocked.

Regardless of how shocked Wizard Bammou was, he would not inquire further either, and soon, he followed Merlin’s instructions and went to inform Snake Elder.

...

“Snake Elder, it’s been a month, and Merlin hasn’t shown up yet. We can’t just go back like this and return to His Royal Highness the eighth prince.”

There was a hint of anger in Wizard Hasbro’s voice. They had always been treated generously all the while they had been following the eighth prince. Any Spell Caster would act respectfully when they saw them, so they did not expect to be ignored by Merlin for an entire month in Wilson Castle.

Moreover, there was also that annoying Wizard Bammou who liked to appear and disappear out of nowhere, not to mention his unfathomable power. Even if they wanted to force a way in, they must also carefully consider the consequences.

Snake Elder’s expression was extremely gloomy too. When he was about to say something, a faint voice suddenly came from outside the door. “Snake Elder, Wizard Merlin wants to see you.”

“Swoosh!”

Snake Elder and the others immediately stood up and pushed the door open. It was Wizard Bammou who stood outside the door.

“Wizard Merlin wants to see us?”

Bammou nodded with an emotionless face and answered, “Yes, come with me.”

As the voice landed, Wizard Bammou abruptly turned around and left.

Snake Elder and the others looked at each other and nodded too, then swiftly followed behind Wizard Bammou.

...

In the small house, Merlin’s eyes were constantly scrutinizing Snake Elder, Wizard Hasbro, and Wizard Sacra. Both parties did not speak, and the atmosphere seemed tense.

After a long moment, Snake Elder could not help but speak, “Wizard Merlin, you’ve let us wait for a good whole month.”

“I’m truly sorry. I was preparing a potion. It was very important, so I’ve delayed some time. By the way, these two Wizards must be sent by His Royal Highness the eighth prince, so is there any news from His Royal Highness?”

Merlin half-heartedly brushed aside the part where he had made Snake Elder and the others waited for an entire month. Although Snake Elder and the others held some grudges about it in their hearts, the mission that the eighth prince had asked them to accomplish still required Merlin’s cooperation, so they could only endure it without further complaints.

Snake Elder took in a deep breath and then muttered, “Wizard Merlin, His Royal Highness the eighth prince originally intended to personally come to Wilson Castle. However, he was riddled with something at the Imperial City hence he couldn’t show up in person. Thus, we’d like to ask Wizard Merlin to pay a visit to His Royal Highness the eighth prince at the Imperial City as he has an urgent matter to discuss with Wizard Merlin.”

“Go to the Imperial City? Do you know what’s this matter that His Royal Highness the eighth prince speaks of, Snake Elder?”

Merlin’s expression did not change at all as he continued asking in a calm manner.

Snake Elder shook his head and replied, “His Royal Highness the eighth prince had only invited Wizard Merlin to the Imperial City. We’re not aware of the specific reason why.”

Although Snake Elder refused to reveal the reason, Merlin could have guessed that it should be related to Wizard Leo.

Merlin started pondering while Snake Elder and the others stared at him anxiously. Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra were both arrogant Spell Casters, so before this, they did not think that they would face any difficulty “convincing” Merlin. With the prestige of His Royal Highness the eighth prince, and with the personal escort of two Spell Casters comparable to Fifth-level Spell Casters like them, no one would refuse such an invitation.

However, after the previous warning from Wizard Bammou, and the fact that Snake Elder had told them that Merlin was not any ordinary Spell Caster, it made Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra perturbed.

If Merlin had indeed refused to go to the Imperial City, they would not know what to do either. However, one thing they surely could not do was to go back to the eighth prince empty-handed.

On the thought of this, Wizard Hasbro took a step forward and said sincerely, “Wizard Merlin, His Royal Highness the eighth prince values you greatly. Before this, he specifically sent Snake Elder and the others here to protect the safety of the Wilson clan. Now, he has again sent us to personally escort you, Wizard Merlin. Once you arrive at the Imperial City, His Royal Highness the eighth prince will personally give Wizard Merlin a grand welcome...”

Suddenly, Merlin looked up and asked Wizard Hasbro, “I’ve heard that the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon owns a Spell Library that was deemed the most complete. I wonder if it’s true?”

Snake Elder and the others were slightly stunned, not knowing why Merlin would ask this question.

Nonetheless, Wizard Hasbro still nodded and answered, “That’s right, the royal family has one of the largest spell libraries. The many different types of spells curated there are the most complete, which no other spell casters’ organization could compare.”

Merlin continued to ask, “Then, does the eighth prince have the right to enter the Spell Library?”

“His Royal Highness the eighth prince certainly has the right to enter the Spell Library. It’s possible that Wizard Merlin may not be aware, but His Royal Highness the eighth prince has the utmost trust of His Majesty the King. He’s in charge of half of the Imperial City royal guards, and he holds great position and power. He’s the most hopeful candidate for becoming the new Blackmoon King in the future...”

Merlin had no interest in listening to the rest of what Wizard Hasbro had to say. He was only most concerned about the spell collection of the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon, which had a variety of spells that were far more complete than that of the Dark Magic Region.

After all, the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon was very different from the Kingdom of Light. The royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon itself was equivalent to a large spell casters’ organization, and could even be the most powerful force among large spell casters’ organizations.

If you add some factions which were loyal to the royal family, it would be even more terrifying. Precisely because of this that although the Kingdom of Blackmoon was composed of individual city-states, which seemed to be disintegrated, no city-state dared to defy the royal family's orders.

Moreover, the royal family was also inextricably linked with some large spell casters' organizations, so there were no spell casters' organizations which dared to provoke the royal family.

Which was exactly why the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon still looked rather formidable as it was able to control the situation in the kingdom and maintain basic stability.

"Alright, I agree to go to the Imperial City."

Merlin accepted it straightforwardly. A large part of the reason was the topic he had mentioned earlier – the royal family held the most complete and largest number of spells in the Spell Library.

In addition to meeting with the eighth prince, the reason that Merlin promised to go to the Imperial City was also to personally thank the eighth prince for protecting the Wilson clan. The more important reason was to rely on the eighth prince to enter the royal family's Spell Library in order to enrich the database of the Matrix.

Merlin did not worry about the database of the Matrix but as his strength became stronger, he would soon consider building a Fourth-level spell. By that time, if he continued constructing common spells step by step, there would not be a big improvement to his strength.

Therefore, it was necessary to augment the database of the Matrix as soon as possible and then integrate the data to derive new spells – the earlier the better.

This was Merlin's real goal!

When Snake Elder and the others saw that Merlin had agreed, they were naturally delighted, so they hurriedly asked, "When will Wizard Merlin be ready to leave then?"

"This shan't be delayed any further. I think the sooner the better. After I'm done informing the necessary people of the clan, I'll leave immediately!"

Snake Elder and the others nodded too. They began to prepare themselves while they silently waited for Merlin to complete his clan's affairs.

Chapter 326: The Departure III

Merlin first explained it briefly to Old Wilson. On hearing that Merlin was going to the Imperial City, Old Wilson did not inquire further, only exhorting him to stay safe in the Imperial City.

Thereafter, Merlin went to see Charise and Avril. They had only been pregnant for more than a month hence no baby bumps were visible yet. However, they had already paid extra attention as both were wearing loose clothing.

Unlike Old Wilson, after hearing that Merlin had to leave Wilson Castle, Avril was extremely upset, so she pouted her mouth and sulked, while Charise was silent. Perhaps, with Merlin's departure this time, he would not be able to see the birth of the children in their wombs.

In this regard, Merlin also felt very helpless. He could only assure them again and again that he would try to return to Wilson Castle after a few months.

After comforting Avril and Charise, Merlin called Wizard Bammou to the room and explained some things to him carefully.

"Bammou, you don't have to go to the Imperial City with me this time. You'll settle down in Wilson Castle instead. Give no mercy to anyone who dares to threaten the Wilson clan and kill them!"

A hint of coldness flashed across Merlin's eyes. Wizard Bammou was delighted but at the same time, he could not help but feel a little shudder. It seemed that the Wilson clan was of the utmost importance to Merlin. He must ensure that nothing happened to the Wilson clan.

"Master, please be rest assured that with me, the Wilson clan's safety won't be jeopardized in any way."

Wizard Bammou also had absolute confidence in his strength.

“However, Master, Felinda’s understanding of runology is extremely good. With my shallow understanding of runology, I’m afraid that it’ll soon be evident that I’m not able to teach her more knowledge about runology.”

Wizard Bammou appeared to be a bit sullen. He acted that way because as a Seventh-level Spell Caster himself, he was not capable of teaching Felinda, someone who could not even be considered as an Entrance-level Spell Caster.

However, runology, potion brewing, and alchemy were all comparable to spell construction. Without adequate study, any typical Spell Caster would not be able to comprehend them.

This issue did not actually cross Merlin’s mind. After all, runology was a complex, profound field of study. It was simply not possible to teach Felinda by relying on Wizard Bammou alone.

It seemed that he could only exchange some systematic knowledge of runology from the Dark Magic Region, then hand them over to Felinda for her studies. This would still fare better than Wizard Bammou’s teaching.

Thinking of the exchange of runology knowledge, Merlin thought of the children who had Spell Caster Qualities, whom the black-robed old man had recruited. To ensure that they would not betray the Wilson clan, they had to be constrained using contract papers. He needed to redeem some contract papers from the Dark Magic Region.

“I’ll put this matter to heart. This time, after I come back from the Imperial City, I’ll return to the Dark Magic Region and exchange for some runology knowledge.”

Wizard Bammou nodded.

Merlin thought carefully, and there was nothing to explain anymore. With Wizard Bammou in Wilson Castle, he was also very relieved. Thus, he headed directly to Snake Elder’s house.

“Wizard Merlin, have you arranged everything?”

Snake Elder was already ready. Following behind him were the two ugly Wizards in addition to Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra, who were sent by the eighth prince. All five of them were waiting for Merlin.

Seeing that Snake Elder was all ready, Merlin also nodded. “Yes, all has been arranged. Let’s go now.”

Hence, the group of six went into three carriages and slowly departed from Prakash City.

...

It was a quiet night. Only the sizzling sound of the bonfire could be heard.

The summer nights were very cooling. On a spacious rocky field, several Spell Casters were lying on the ground casually, enjoying the hard-won moment of silence.

“Snake Elder, how far are we from the Imperial City?”

Merlin, who leaned on a boulder, asked with a slight squint. He had already rushed for ten consecutive days with Snake Elder and the others, yet it still seemed far away from the Imperial City.

Snake Elder gently moved a few dry firewood into the bonfire and responded softly, “Approximately ten or more days of journey. The Imperial City is too far away from Prakash City. Even by rushing all day and night, it’ll still take a long time.”

Merlin, Snake Elder, and the others had been rushing all day and night for the past ten days. Only today had they taken a night’s rest, and would resume the journey tomorrow.

Merlin glanced at Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra. Both of them were silent on the road, not uttering a single word. Only Snake Elder occasionally answered Merlin’s questions, otherwise, he too was also very silent.

However, Merlin wanted to know more about the current situation of the eighth prince, so he could only beat around the bush.

“Snake Elder, are there many princes in the royal family?”

Snake Elder stared at Merlin. Firelight glinted on Snake Elder's face, especially the greenish scales on his neck, which made Snake Elder's appearance a little terrifying.

Snake Elder replied, "There are many princes in the royal family, but only a few princes can compete for the throne. His Royal Highness the eighth prince is one of the most qualified princes!"

In these few days, Merlin had learned that in the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon, only those with Spell Caster Quality can qualify to inherit the throne.

After one was crowned the king, one could only remain on the throne for thirty years before one had to be abdicated. The elders in the royal family would choose the best from the many princes to become the new king.

The purpose of this was to prevent power corruption so the king would not consider himself a world above others due to the accumulation of power and resources.

It should be known that the Blackmoon King himself was a powerful Spell Caster. If he was given infinite resources and power, he would then be even stronger. Without additional control and restriction, even a powerful Spell Caster may lose oneself and indulge in the great power, which would then lead to the decline of the entire kingdom.

Hence, the rule for changing the throne every thirty years was established.

As for the selection of the best prince among the many princes, there were no fixed perfect standards. However, most of the time, princes who were strong in their own strengths and held great forces would eventually inherit the throne.

As for the eighth prince, he was obviously contending for the throne as it was less than five years before the abdication of the incumbent king. It was not surprising that all the princes were expanding their forces wildly. The eighth prince had even conscripted the alpine Snake People to his services.

"So, which other prince is the most threatening competitor to the eighth prince now?"

Merlin simply asked directly. He knew that the eighth prince must also have other threats. Otherwise, it was impossible to pay so much attention to Wizard Leo, seeking his allegiance so anxiously.

Merlin even guessed that the situation of the eighth prince was not very optimistic. Surely, there must be no Spell Casters who can help him in suppressing his worries and turn the tide by his side! Thus, the eighth prince secretly hoped that Wizard Leo could become the powerful Spell Caster by his side who could turn the tide and suppress everything!

Snake Elder pondered for a moment, then said with a low voice, “By the time we arrive at the Imperial City, Merlin’s questions would naturally be answered. Hence, there is nothing to hide. At present, there are only three princes who pose the most threat to His Royal Highness the eighth prince. Namely the fourth prince, the ninth prince, and the thirteenth prince.”

Merlin secretly memorized this information in his mind. When he reached the Imperial City, this information could prove to be useful.

“Swish...”

A cool breeze blew past, dissipating the bonfire. Some grasses on the ground also gave out a rustling sound.

“Who is it?”

Suddenly, a loud yell broke the silence of the night. It was the sound of the two ugly Wizards, Snake Elder’s subordinates. Throughout the night, they had been hiding in a secluded place, keeping a watchful eye over the rest of the camp.

Upon hearing the voices of the ugly Wizards, Snake Elder and the others immediately became vigilant. Merlin also narrowed his eyes and silently released his Mind Power.

“Thud! Thud!”

Two muffled sounds, followed by two bodies landing heavily in front of Merlin and the others. Shockingly, it was the two ugly subordinates of Snake Elder.

The facial expressions of the two ugly Wizards were extremely astonished. Even the reason for their deaths was obvious – they were killed by a pure force that shattered their internal organs, not hurt by a spell.

Merlin and the others immediately went on alert. The two ugly Wizards were not powerful Spell Casters. At best, they were only Third-level Wizards, but they were stealthily killed by a powerful force. It was indeed a puzzling incident.

“Be careful, we don’t know who it is.”

Snake Elder immediately shouted loudly, reminding Merlin and the others. Thus, the four of them immediately huddled into a circle, watching the surrounding vigilantly. Mind Power was scanning the area the whole time. Not a single movement could escape their senses.

“Swish...”

Another breeze blew, and the branches and leaves on the tree pranced constantly, letting out a soft noise.

At this moment, Merlin’s eyes suddenly widened as he muttered, “Someone’s here!”

“Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!”

When Merlin’s voice fell, four figures fiercely emerged from the darkness of the night. The four figures were three males and one female. The three men were tall with grim expressions and wore gray Wizard robes.

The female looked rather strange. Her appearance looked immature, just like an eleven or twelve-year-old girl. Her body was petite too, and she was wearing a red tight-fitting leather outfit, looking very adorable and likable.

However, Merlin felt a fierce and dangerous aura from this cute little girl who had been smiling all the time – especially her eyes which flashed an occasional hint of coldness which made Merlin all the more vigilant.

“Hehe, it’s not easy to find you but I’ve finally found you!”

In the hands of the cute little girl, there was a huge hammer that did not match her figure, and it looked extremely comical. Looking at the hammer, Merlin glanced at the two ugly Wizards on the ground with slightly sunken chests. Suddenly, things had become clear in his mind.

“Did you kill them?”

Merlin squinted and asked calmly.

“Swoosh!”

The little girl’s gaze instantly turned to Merlin.

“Hehe, indeed, it is I who killed them. The two of them were too feeble. I only touched them a little and they’re dead. How weak!”

The little girl looked at Merlin innocently, pouted her lips, and cocked her head slightly. If not for the two dead bodies on the ground, no one would believe that this lovely little girl would be so cruel and dangerous.

Chapter 327: The Ninth Wizard

“Wolf Girl Jelena, you’re the fourth prince’s people!”

Snake Elder’s expression was gloomy. He was giving the petite little girl a death stare, which looked extremely hateful.

“Is the fourth prince so desperate, brazenly acting upon the eighth prince’s people?”

Snake Elder’s eyes scanned the surrounding behind Wolf Girl Jelena as though there was still someone hiding in the darkness of the night.

“Hehe, Snake Elder, you’re the tribe leader of the alpine Snake People. Unfortunately, you seem to have chosen the wrong side when you decided to align with the eighth prince. This time, I’m afraid it’d only be a matter of time before the extinction of your alpine Snake People tribe. What a shame.”

Wolf Girl Jelena kept laughing. She had an innocent look but the words that came from her mouth was truly astonishing.

Although Wolf Girl Jelena did not directly admit that she was sent by the fourth prince, from the way she acted and expressed her thoughts, it could also be considered a silent admission. Now, the battle within the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon had actually escalated.

Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra's faces turned pale. They each looked at Snake Elder, and said with a low voice, "Snake Elder, there's also four of us. It's not necessary that they can hold us here!"

Indeed, there were also four of them on the other side. Though Jelena may be a bit eerie, at best, she should only be comparable to a Fifth-level Spell Caster. Snake Elder and the others were not weak Spell Casters either, so they would not be afraid of them.

However, Snake Elder shook his head gently and said with a heavy tone, "Since the fourth prince sent his people, then he must have absolute confidence to have us all killed. This is the real style of the fourth prince. He'll never do anything that he's unsure of! In addition to these four here, there must be another powerful Spell Caster hidden in the dark, and you can guess who that is."

Upon hearing what Snake Elder had said, the faces of Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra changed altogether, and they turned around abruptly, looking at the darkness of the night.

"Ninth Wizard Oden, show yourself!"

Snake Elder's hoarse voice called out, his gaze transfixed towards the darkness.

"Rustle..."

As Snake Elder's voice fell, a soft noise was heard from the silent night. Then, a tall and slender figure gradually walked out from the darkness.

The fiery red bonfire reflected on the face of this slender figure, making the original white face glimmer with a shade of red.

The slender figure had long purple hair, gently tied behind his head. A loose fur coat wrapped his entire body, and a pair of long black leather boots covered his feet. His appearance looked rather devilish.

“Snake Elder, before this, I personally advised you to let your Snake People tribe align with the fourth prince. Unfortunately, it’s a pity that you insisted on following the eighth prince. No one can save you now, and even your Snake People tribe will be implicated. From now on, there’ll be no more Snake People in the alpine Beast People race!”

This slender figure was ninth Wizard Oden. Snake Elder was very clear that there were nine most trusted Wizards under the fourth prince. From the first to the ninth Wizard, every Wizard was powerful with unique abilities. They were all outstanding Wizards of their respective ranks.

Ninth Wizard Oden, although ranked ninth, was exceptionally powerful, and had once defeated three Sixth-level Spell Casters.

This time, the fact that the fourth prince sent ninth Wizard Oden here meant that he had made up his mind to kill Snake Elder and the rest.

Snake Elder reddened and muttered, “Oden, is the fourth prince really planning to strike the eighth prince?”

“Strike? Snake Elder, you’re such a fool. Originally, among all alpine Beast People, your Snake People may not be the strongest, but they aren’t dumb. Unfortunately, you’ve made the wrong choice. You’ve actually become so dumb…”

“Of course His Royal Highness the fourth prince would not strike in the Imperial City. The battles between the princes are all carried out in private, especially in the fight for the support of the city-states. At present, the fourth prince is miles ahead! However, in recent times, your eighth prince has become way too anxious, expanding his power way too fast. If we don’t cut off some of his influence, I’m afraid he’d really pose a threat to the fourth prince.

“Unfortunately, you guys left the Imperial City alone. Tsk tsk, right here, we have Snake Elder, Wizard Hasbro, and Wizard Sacra – in total three powerful Wizards who can match Fifth-level Spell Casters. All of you are powerful Spell Casters under the command of His Royal Highness the eighth prince, so killing all of you will also be a major blow to the eighth prince! With such a good opportunity presented to the fourth prince, do you think His Highness will let it pass?

A cold flash glinted in ninth Wizard Oden's eyes. Suddenly, intense Fire-type elemental fluctuations emerged on his body.

"Forbidden Fire!"

A cloud of fire rose among the dark night ferociously. It seemed like it was burning, then fell from the sky, illuminating the surrounding with a blinding light as bright as daylight.

This was a Sixth-level spell. Oden's first strike was his most powerful attack, which shrouded Snake Elder, Wizard Hasbro, and Wizard Sacra.

"Whoosh!"

Yet, it missed one person. A gust of Wind Elements gently fluctuated, and immediately after, Merlin's figure appeared in the distance in the blink of an eye.

Merlin looked indifferent, watching Oden releasing his spell from afar. He could still feel the horrific suppressing-force of the spell, even when he had moved a distance away.

With his current Earth Veil, even if Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth could be integrated into the spell, it could still only resist the attack of a Fifth-level spell. It could do nothing toward a Sixth-level spell.

Fortunately, Merlin still had Pandora Demon Ability, Flash Wind. This three-stage Pandora Demon Ability was extraordinary. Although it possessed no attacking power and could only be used for fleeing, only a handful of people would be able to catch the user.

"Eh? There's still someone who can avoid it? Jelena, he's yours now!"

Ninth Wizard Oden narrowed his eyes. With a gaze like a viper's, he stared at Merlin, then waved to Wolf Girl Jelena who was beside him.

"Hehe, another tasty meal."

Wolf Girl Jelena hoisted the huge hammer, which looked extremely disproportionate to her body size. Then, she slowly walked toward Merlin.

“Whoosh!”

Wolf Girl Jelena’s speed suddenly accelerated. In an almost residual figure, she went straight for Merlin. Her petite body seemed to contain infinite power as she viciously battered down on Merlin.

“Flash Wind!”

Merlin’s body gently fluctuated with Wind Elements. Then, his figure reappeared on the other side, and his cold stare landed on Wolf Girl Jelena.

Earlier, Merlin had also discovered that Wind Elements emerged on Wolf Girl Jelena’s body. That was to say, she was also a Spell Caster – one who liked using the hammer?

“Oden, it’s not that easy to kill me!”

In the towering inferno, Snake Elder furiously yelled. At the same time, numerous runes started rising rapidly, forming a compact protective cover, shrouding Snake Elder and the others.

It was no secret that Snake Elder was proficient in runology.

Snake Elder had not only drawn runes, but his expression also started to become atrocious. His long Wizard robe began to tear bit by bit as his body swelled intensely.

Finally, in bursts of roars, Snake Elder transformed into a huge python. His huge body occupied the flames, his cold eyes gave off a deathly stare directed at Wizard Oden.

This was the unique ability of the alpine Snake People. They were able to transform into vicious monsters, increasing in strength rapidly.

The alpine Beast People had all kinds of abilities. They were not only Spell Casters but could also take the form of monsters, which enabled them to become much stronger. In a sense, the alpine

Beast People should have been successful too, but this involved secrets from thousands of years ago. No one can say for sure whether the alpine Beast People had gained more or lost more.

“Hmph, it’s just the last struggle. Snake Elder, how long do you think you’re able to hold on?”

Ninth Wizard Oden was not in a hurry. This time, he came forth personally with a few powerful Spell Casters, so he was full of confidence. He was determined to kill Snake Elder and the others to cripple the eighth prince’s forces.

The competition and battle between the princes of the Kingdom of Blackmoon had almost reached the peak of the critical moment. Even the fourth prince could not wait to blatantly cut off the forces of the eighth prince.

This also indirectly proved that the eighth prince’s situation in Imperial City was not very optimistic.

Merlin withdrew his gaze. It seemed that Snake Elder and the others could still hold on for a moment. After witnessing the peculiar power of the alpine Snake People, Merlin now had a better understanding of the alpine Beast People.

Wolf Girl Jelena, who was in front of him, was clearly also of alpine Beast People origin. When Merlin repeatedly showcased Flash Wind and easily escaped Wolf Girl Jelena, this lovely little girl had finally transformed too.

“Skrr-skrr-skrr...”

There was a tearing sound of the tight-fitting leather outfit on Wolf Girl Jelena’s body. The fair skin on her body could now be seen, which then immediately turned dark and black fur grew out swiftly.

The originally petite body was now inflating madly, turning into a two-meter-high big wolf with menacing sharp teeth.

This was the real Wolf Girl Jelena!

“Swish! Swish!”

The speed of the terrifying big wolf Jelena had greatly increased after the transformation. This was obvious as the emergence of Wind Element fluctuations around her body had concentrated, which meant that the big wolf was still a Spell Caster and could cast spells.

Moreover, the alpine Beast People could also use spells to complement their strong beast bodies to exert even greater strength. For alpine Beast People, spells were merely used as an aid.

The speed of the big wolf was extremely fast. In addition to the complement of Wind-type spells, her speed became faster. Before this, Merlin relied on Flash Wind to dodge easily but now, it became difficult for him to avoid Wolf Girl Jelena's attacks.

“Bam!”

A huge hammer was still within the grasp of Wolf Girl Jelena's giant wolf claws. It directly struck downward with its powerful force smashing Earth Veil, which was integrated with the Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth, into pieces.

Although Merlin escaped with Flash Wind, his body was still affected by the quake, he faintly sustained some injuries.

This time, Merlin also felt a little enraged. It was the first time he was humiliated.

“Damn, Wolf Girl? Let's see who dies first?”

Merlin stopped evading. In an instant, a black mist appeared on his body, which instantly shrouded Wolf Girl Jelena. At the same time, Fiery Collapse also appeared in front of Merlin, the pale flame exuding a force which made people shudder.

Chapter 328: Forced Retreat

Jelena's entire body exuded a violent and bloody life force. After being shrouded in darkness, she even let out a loud roar, but the voice soon stopped.

“Whoosh!”

Merlin's figure instantly entered the darkness. No matter how strong Jelena was, her Mind Power was only comparable to a Fifth-level Spell Caster. There was no way she could resist Merlin's Darkness Tide.

"Fire!"

The pale flame burned intensely in the darkness of the night, and it drowned the horrifying big wolf in the blink of an eye...

"Eh? Jelena, what's wrong with you?"

Ninth Wizard Oden, who was suppressing Snake Elder and the others, saw that Wolf Girl Jelena's figure was shrouded in darkness, and petrifying pale flames blazed on intensely. Oden had a bad feeling about it.

"Hoo..."

The darkness gradually dissipated, and a figure slowly walked out from it. However, it was not Wolf Girl Jelena, but Merlin!

Beneath Merlin's foot was a dead body which was black as charcoal, and it was Wolf Girl Jelena. Merlin's Fiery Collapse had actually failed to burn Jelena's body to ashes, showing how strong her body was. If he did not rely on Darkness Tide to drag her into an illusion, it would certainly be very difficult to kill Wolf Girl Jelena.

Ninth Wizard Oden noticed Jelena's body at Merlin's foot and his gaze froze. This unpredicted change was beyond even Oden's expectation.

Wolf Girl Jelena had fought for the fourth prince through countless battles. She had also encountered countless dangers but she had always managed to come back in one piece. It was certainly not expected that she would die in such a desolate place today and to add to that, she was killed by an unknown figure.

"You're the genius Spell Caster from the Dark Magic Region, Wizard Leo's student, Merlin?"

Before Oden embarked on his mission to kill Snake Elder and the others, he had naturally inquired clearly that Snake Elder and the others went to Prakash City to pick up Merlin. Perhaps Merlin became a one-time sensation after killing Weiss and Bluebird, but it was only for those Spell Casters below the Fourth-level.

For a Sixth-level Spell Caster like Oden, he was a powerful Spell Caster wherever he went, so he would naturally not take Merlin's so-called "achievements" to heart. Even his Snake Elder assassination plot this time did not take Merlin into consideration.

Yet, it was precisely Merlin, the one person "disregarded" by Oden, who had killed Wolf Girl Jelena!

"You three, stop him!"

Oden's face turned blue. He brought four people with him but now Wolf Girl Jelena was dead. Not only was Jelena powerful but she was also a girl favored by the fourth prince. Now, she had died under Oden's command. So, even if the mission was successful, upon their return, Oden would still not escape punishment.

Thinking of this, Oden was extremely annoyed deep down. His murderous rage had now been stimulated and the spells he unleashed onto Snake Elder and the others intensified with overwhelming strength. Jelena was already dead. She could not be recovered, but the task at hand must be accomplished.

The only thing Oden could do now was to successfully complete the mission in order to alleviate his punishment from the fourth prince.

Snake Elder had already revealed his true form and the top of the head was full of intricate runes. However, in the face of Oden's overwhelming spell attacks, he began to lose his drive. The runes had begun to flash and he seemed unable to persist any longer.

"Swish! Swish! Swish!"

Three figures quickly formed a circle, surrounding Merlin in the middle.

These three Spell Casters were all of the Fifth-level. They glared at Merlin covetously. After all, it was Jelena's body on the ground. They did not think they were a match for Jelena's strength, so naturally they would not take Merlin lightly.

Merlin glanced at Snake Elder and the others. He found that their situation was already extremely perilous. If Merlin waited until Oden finished off Snake Elder and then went back to deal with him, he would have a hard time too.

"Flash Wind!"

Merlin took a deep breath, and then his figure quivered a little. In the blink of an eye, he broke through the encirclement of the three Spell Casters. The speed of Flash Wind was ridiculously fast that even after revealing her wolf form coupled with the help of Wind-type spells, Wolf Girl Jelena could barely keep up with Merlin's speed.

As for the others, they could not even lay a finger on Merlin's figure. Merlin also did not want to be held by the three Spell Casters, so he rushed to Ninth Wizard Oden directly!

"Hmph, you're all useless!"

Seeing that Merlin had rushed out of the encirclement and went straight toward him, Oden's face showed a hint of coldness. He then spread his fingers, a trace of chill drifted out and began to spread rapidly.

"Ka-chak! Ka-chak!"

Everything around Wizard Oden was frozen by the ice crystals, and the cold kept on spreading. This was a Sixth-level spell. Even Merlin's Pandora Demon Ability, Fuse Earth and Wizard robe would not spare him.

Yet, Merlin could not go back. Once he retreated, Snake Elder and the others would be utterly finished!

"Come on, Sixth-level Spell Caster! Darkness Vortex!"

Merlin fixed his gaze on Oden, then waved his hand. A huge vortex immediately appeared above Oden's head, just like a black hole. It was indefinitely deep, consuming all Darkness Elements.

This was the third-level spell, Darkness Vortex, deemed to be able to devour all Mind Power. Even for those Spell Casters with immense Mind Power, once caught in Darkness Vortex, their Mind Power would be engulfed, thus falling into an illusion.

In particular, Merlin's Darkness Vortex was also fused with Darkness Heart, bringing the hallucination to greater heights. However, whether or not Wizard Oden could be dragged into the illusion, Merlin was not really sure.

Darkness Vortex itself was one of the most powerful and bizarre Darkness-type spells among all Third-level spells. If Merlin did not have the help of the Matrix, he would never consider constructing Darkness Vortex.

However, once Darkness Vortex was constructed, its power was terrifying too, especially after fusing with Merlin's Darkness Heart where it would become much more terrifying. As soon as Darkness Vortex appeared, it began devouring the Darkness Elements around it wildly, more importantly, the Mind Power of Spell Casters.

Even though Mind Power was invisible, Darkness Vortex could still devour it. Snake Elder and the others, as well as ninth Wizard Oden who was positioned the nearest, were all affected by Darkness Vortex. They felt that their Mind Power was forcibly extracted from their bodies, and the feeling was extremely painful.

"Hum... Hum... Hum..."

Along with the devouring of Darkness Vortex, the original Darkness Vortex which was only one meter in diameter began to expand frantically. In the blink of an eye, it expanded to a diameter of ten meters, even shrouding ninth Wizard Oden within.

"Good opportunity, Fiery Collapse!"

Merlin did not hesitate at all, violently igniting Fiery Collapse. Suddenly, the pale flame instantly turned into a rain of fire, flying toward Darkness Vortex, and swiftly tinting it into a white hue.

This was the first time Merlin had fought with a Sixth-level Spell Caster, and a powerful Sixth-level Spell Caster at that. Ninth Wizard Oden could not be matched by any average Sixth-level Spell Casters.

“Ka-chak! Ka-chak!”

Suddenly, the initially pale flame was frozen by a chill in the blink of an eye. Then, a figure stumbled out of that huge Darkness Vortex, and it was ninth Wizard Oden, whose Mind Power was constantly devoured by Darkness Vortex.

After all, Wizard Oden was a Sixth-level Spell Caster, and his Mind Power was strong. Merlin’s Darkness Vortex could only make him fall into an illusion. However, all the while ninth Wizard Oden was plunged into the illusion, he was able to resist the scorch of Fiery Collapse. How frightening!

“Whoosh! Whoosh!”

Snake Elder and the others quickly approached Merlin. Snake Elder was the most familiar with Oden. He whispered to Merlin, “Wizard Merlin, I didn’t expect your Darkness-type spells to have already reached the point that even Oden could be dragged into the illusion for a brief moment. However, it’s not easy to kill Oden. Maybe you don’t know that ninth Wizard Oden’s most powerful trick was his Defensive spells. He has a Pandora Demon Ability too, which has been integrated into his spells. Hence, he’s protected by Defensive spells all the time.

“There was a Seventh-level Spell Caster who battled with Oden. In the end, he couldn’t even harm him. We want to kill him, but it’s really really difficult.”

It turned out that Oden had such a brilliant record. He was indeed one of the most powerful Wizards around the fourth prince. Perhaps as the ninth Wizard, Oden’s own strength was not really great but he was the most difficult to kill, and not to mention the most annoying one.

“Is that so? The most annoying, and the most difficult to kill Wizard? That may not be true!”

There was a smile at the edge of Merlin’s lips with his eyes staring at Oden without the slightest scruple. It might be arduous for the others to kill Oden because he always had protection from spells.

However, Merlin was a Dark Wizard, proficient in Darkness-type spells. Darkness Vortex earlier had already plunged Oden into an illusion. Although it was only for a brief moment, it was enough for Oden to consider it a huge threat.

In the moment he fell into the illusion, he could no longer cast spells. If the illusion lasted a little longer, how long could the spell he cast be maintained?

Oden did not suffer any damage earlier because he had cast Defensive spells and a Pandora Demon Ability. In addition, the time spent in the illusion was very brief so Merlin's Fiery Collapse could not blast through Wizard Oden's Defensive spells and Pandora Demon Ability.

However, Oden was not sure about Merlin's capabilities. If he was stuck in the illusion for a longer time, it would be very dangerous. Therefore, Oden had an indescribable expression on his face. He could not make up his mind.

Merlin's expression looked solemn as he said to Snake Elder, "Snake Elder, the moment I say 'charge' later, you guys will charge together. We'll gather our most powerful hit and kill Oden!"

Merlin did not conceal his words as Oden heard them too. Oden's expression suddenly changed. He had already experienced Darkness Vortex earlier. That feeling when his Mind Power was being devoured and being plunged into an illusion made him extremely wary.

"Very well, Wizard Merlin. We shall meet again in the Imperial City!"

Oden stared deeply into Merlin's eyes. He then led the three other Spell Casters and quickly turned away, fleeing the scene. It did not take long before they vanished entirely into the night.

Chapter 329: Blackmoon Tower

The Ninth Wizard Oden left, leaving behind only traces of scorched battle marks on the ground.

Merlin's expression was pensive as he stared in the direction that Wizard Oden and his men had disappeared towards. Truth to be told, he was actually at a disadvantage in the last battle. If they had continued to battle, he probably may not have gained an upper hand at all.

“Looks like my abilities are still not enough. Even at my best, I can barely compete with a Sixth-level Spell Caster!”

Merlin had initially thought that once he constructed his Darkness Vortex Darkness-type spell, then most of the Sixth-level Spell Casters would no longer be worthy opponents. It now seemed like this was not completely true. The Darkness Vortex was indeed strong, especially in cases where Merlin was strengthened by the Darkness Heart. It could engulf the Spell Caster’s spirit, causing them to fall into an illusion.

Nevertheless, the Darkness Vortex was still a type of hallucinating dark spell, and many Spell Casters once they reached the Sixth-level would have attained an immense level of Mind Power. Thus it was difficult to entrap them in an illusion.

Moreover, even if one were so lucky to break through the seven levels of Mind Power, the casted illusion would have been severely weakened. This was the reason that Merlin’s Darkness Vortex only managed to trap Wizard Oden in the illusion for a very short time.

In addition, Merlin’s Fiery Collapse completely failed to defeat the Sixth-level spells. He was unable to overcome even the general Sixth-level defensive spells, not to mention inflict damage on Wizard Oden, who had mastered Defensive-type spells.

This time, it was lucky that Wizard Oden was being cautious of Merlin and dared not face him properly. Merlin could not guarantee that he would be as lucky as this every single time.

The Snake Elder resumed his human form, but his face was extremely pale. It appeared that he must have used up a lot of elemental power and sustained heavy damage. After all, in the beginning, he was fending off Wizard Oden’s attacks alone.

“Wizard Merlin, thank you very much for your help this time. Otherwise, we fear it would have been for the worse.

The Snake Elder shot a complicated look at Merlin. Originally, he thought that he had understood Merlin sufficiently and knew his powers well enough. However, it seemed that he was still far from fully comprehending the force that was Merlin. He was amazed that Merlin was able to not only resist but also scare away Wizard Oden. Needless to say, that was not a feat easily achievable by an average Wizard.

Even though Oden had left, Merlin still dared not lower his guard. He said with a low voice, “They may have departed temporarily, but no one knows if they would change their mind. We better hurry and be on our way.”

The Snake Elder and the others nodded in agreement. If the fourth prince had sent Oden to them, then the conflict between the princes must have escalated beyond boiling point. In fact, the situation might be even worse in the Imperial City.

This trip the Imperial City, what would happen next; no one knew.

Over the next few days, Merlin and the Snake People focused all their energy on their journey. Since they no longer had to put up with the two ugly Wizards, the Snake Elder and his people could put their Flying spells to work.

Merlin, too, had a Flying casting tool that allowed him to keep up with them, but it consumed large amounts of elemental crystal stones.

Along the way, Merlin gained a better understanding of the alpine Beast People. The speed and strength of the wolf girl Jelena, in particular, left a very strong impression on him.

If Jelena’s Mind Power had been a little stronger, Merlin may not have been able to conquer her. On the contrary, she may have been able to harm him. Once the alpine Beast People transformed into their true forms, they each possessed unique strengths.

However, the number of alpine Beast People was simply too small. The Snake People, for instance, only had approximately three thousand people, barely enough to maintain a small tribe. They were very rare indeed.

Even the alpine Beast People, all together, only had a few tens of thousands in population. Despite being so strong and capable, they faced problems raising offspring like normal people. Every alpine Beast couple who wanted to procreate would have to experience various difficulties, sometimes even life-threatening ones, in order to produce offspring.

This was also the greatest weakness of the alpine Beast People. The ancient Spell Casters might have used the most advanced spell casting methods to create the alpine Beast People, but ultimately they were a failed product; a race with irreparable defects.

Once upon a time, the alpine Beast People had a population of a few million. However, following the difficulties in reproduction, there were only tens of thousands of their people left today. They also tended to live in extremely remote places and within relatively bad environments.

Many alpine Beast People could not help but escape the perilous mountains, but as they look different from normal people, they easily stirred up panic among the masses and as a result, faced dangerous situations.

Therefore, the alpine Beast People retreated back into their respective tribes and began to approach specific forces. The Snake Elder chose to support the eighth prince, in hopes that if the eighth prince became the king of Blackmoon, then the Snake People tribe would gain a big enough piece of land for themselves to live out a quiet life.

The wolf girl Jelena was from the alpine Wolf People tribe. Most probably, she had the same thought as the Snake Elder as well – to support one of the princes so that if he became the king, they would be able to obtain a piece of land and live a quiet life.

The only misfortune was that the different camps that they chose ended up pitting the Snake Elder and the Wolf Girl Jelena against each other; even though both of them had originated from the same alpine Beast People group.

“This world is getting more and more interesting...” Merlin murmured under his breath. From a Spell Casters’ world, he already thought it was beyond comprehension when the mysterious relief sculpture appeared, but now there were also the strange alpine Beast People as well.

The alpine Beast People were truly most powerful in their true forms, whereas their spells, runes, etc were just supplementary abilities. However, when they revealed their true forms and fused with it, they were truly terrifying. It was no lesser than a Spell Caster with Pandora Demon Ability.

This world was getting more and more interesting, and still held many hidden secrets, but Merlin knew that power was of utmost importance. Only with great power, he would be able to stay safe.

This trip to the Imperial City, he would have to find a way to enter the palace’s Spell Library, no matter what it took. After all, it was for this sole purpose that Merlin had agreed to go to the Imperial City.

...

Against the bright clear sky, dark shadows began to cast outside the majestic ramparts of the city. Behind those tall white walls was an even taller, twisted tower. Its peak stretched all the way up to the clouds, emitting a faint glow of light.

Any person who saw this tower would feel amazed in the depth of their hearts.

At this juncture, Merlin was staring intently at the unique tower. Although he had been looking at it for a whole hour, his heart still did not manage to calm down.

A Wizard's tower. Merlin had seen such a sight many times in the Dark Magic Region. Even towers constructed by Seventh-level Spell Casters were considered ordinary sights in Merlin's eyes. Bearing in mind that the Dark Magic Region was a Spell Caster organization which excelled in the knowledge of runes, the towers contained therein were all pinnacles of runic knowledge.

This tower, however, was a whole other level.

No matter how many towers that existed in the Dark Magic Region, they were far from comparable to this tower that stood before his eyes. From the very moment Merlin first laid his eyes on this tower, he was shaken to the core.

“Hehe! Wizard Merlin, people who see the Blackmoon Tower always react the same way. When I first followed His Royal Highness the eighth prince to the Imperial City and saw the Blackmoon Tower, I was also astonished. It was hard to imagine, that someone in this realm managed to build such a magnificent and indescribable tower. In fact, this is not even the most magical time to view the tower. You should wait until this evening which would be the night of the full moon. The Blackmoon Tower would be even more glorious and magnificent.”

The Snake Elder, too, squinted at the towering structure standing proudly among the clouds. This was the iconic building of the Blackmoon Kingdom – the Blackmoon Tower.

To be able to see the Blackmoon Tower, meant to the Snake Elder and his people, that their long, day-and-night journey had finally brought them to the Imperial City.

After a long time, Merlin slowly withdrew his gaze. He sensed that the Blackmoon Tower was not only filled with mysterious power but enveloped the entire kingdom with it. It was almost like it was the heart and core of the kingdom.

The Blackmoon Tower also gave Merlin an unusual sense of tension. Within the sea of Merlin's awareness, the Flame Maxim had always behaved calmly. Now, near the Blackmoon Tower, he could vaguely feel a sense of suppression.

The Flame Maxim was the power that belonged to Legend Nikola, the legendary Wizard. In a way, the Flame Maxim represented the depth of understanding the Legend Nikola had towards flames.

Alas, even though the Flame Maxim might be the same, there were certainly differences in the level of mastery between different legendary Wizards. For legends with titles – such as the Legend of Darkness Wizard Oflas – to be crowned with the title 'Legend of Darkness' represented that he had achieved an unparalleled understanding of darkness and complete mastery over the Darkness Element.

Legendary Wizards who obtained their titles in this manner were truly forces to be reckoned with. They could banish a powerful god or conquer a plane of existence.

At this very moment, Merlin's Flame Maxim was being suppressed by the Blackmoon Tower. This indirectly spoke volumes about the extraordinary effect of the Blackmoon Tower.

Even since Merlin received the Flame Maxim, this was the first time it was suppressed!

Due to that, Merlin felt a slight quiver in his heart and was very curious about the Blackmoon Tower. He asked the Snake Elder, "Snake Elder, which Spell Caster built this Blackmoon Tower? From the looks of it, it is out of the ordinary!"

The Snake Elder shot a faint glance at Merlin and drew a deep breath. "The question of who built the Blackmoon Tower, I'm afraid even the oldest Spell Caster does not know," he calmly replied. "However, this Blackmoon Tower was not built by the Kingdom of Blackmoon. It was a remnant from the Molta Empire.

"The Blackmoon Tower has mysterious powers. A few Great Wizards of the Kingdom went inside to study the tower and discovered that the power of the Blackmoon Tower can be invoked to protect the entire Imperial City, making it impervious to any form of attack. However, this is related to the mysterious power, which is not something that we can comprehend...

“Nevertheless, it is because of the Blackmoon Tower that the Imperial City is completely safe. No matter how many Great Wizards congregate in this place, they are unable to pose any threat to the Imperial City. According to rumors, the Blackmoon Tower contains a stronger power of attack that even the Great Wizards could not withstand. That is the price to pay for invoking the power of the Blackmoon Tower. Perhaps it is too unfathomable...”

Merlin gained a general understanding of the Blackmoon Tower’s abilities. Since it was inherited from the Molta Empire, it was likely that it was left behind by a powerful Legendary Wizard.

To be able to cover the entire Imperial City and make it impervious, obviously involved powers of nature. Powers which only Legendary Wizards could control. Blackmoon Tower was definitely linked to a powerful Wizard from the Molta Empire.

Thinking of the Blackmoon Tower’s suppression of the Flame Maxim, Merlin suddenly felt an impulse to enter and study the tower. However, the Blackmoon Tower was the most secretive core of the royal family, especially the eighth prince. There was absolutely no chance of entering it. Merlin could only dream.

“Wizard Merlin, the situation in the Imperial City is very complicated. Let’s seek an audience with the His Royal Highness the eighth prince.”

Chapter 330: The Eighth Prince

The Imperial City of the Kingdom of Blackmoon was naturally busier than most cities. Regardless of whether it was when Merlin was in Blackwater City or Floating City or the Kurdmansla Islands, those places were less busy than the Imperial City which was right before his eyes.

In particular, the Imperial City was a city where Normies and Spell Casters lived together, which resulted in a different scene. On the street, Spell Casters dressed in apparels of various colors and went about their businesses, and the Normies seemed unperturbed by the sight. There were also Spell Casters whose appearances were as strange and deformed as the alpine Beast People, but they attracted no curiosity as well. Evidently, most people were used to them.

Nevertheless, Merlin only glanced around carelessly at the Imperial City. At the moment, he was preoccupied with observing the Flame Maxim in his Awareness.

Outside the Imperial City, Merlin had felt the Blackmoon Tower suppressing the Flame Maxim. It might be that the Blackmoon Tower had a mystical power which was able to suppress the Flame Maxim.

Therefore, Merlin was afraid that some change might occur, so he was paying close attention to the Flame Maxim.

Fortunately, although the suppression of the Flame Maxim increased after he had entered the Imperial City, the Maxim did not undergo any changes, remaining silent in his Awareness.

The gigantic Blackmoon Tower could be clearly seen from anywhere in the Imperial City. Merlin kept looking toward the Blackmoon Tower from time to time, as he could feel traces of the suppressing force that it emitted.

Snake Elder had said before that there was more than one Great Wizard keeping watch in the Blackmoon Tower. After all, it functioned as a foundation for the royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon. With more than one Great Wizard overseeing the activities in the city, they would be able to defend against any attack on the Imperial City.

In addition, with the presence of the imposing Blackmoon Tower, no spell casters' organization or Spell Caster would dare to attack the Imperial City. Even the arrogant and contemptuous Ozmu had never made a move in the Imperial City.

Snake Elder and the rest went along the streets, and after a silent journey, arrived at a grand and magnificent manor which was strictly guarded. Elite guards were vigilantly keeping watch outside the manor, and now and then, Spell Casters would probe around with their Mind Power from inside.

As Merlin and the rest headed straight toward the manor, multiple streams of powerful Mind Power brazenly swept across Merlin. Most of the Mind Power could be comparable to a Sixth-level Spell Caster's.

"Security here is really tight!"

Merlin frowned as if he was unhappy about the Mind Power inspection he was subjected to within the manor.

It was true that any Spell Caster, examining with their Mind Power so openly, would offend other Spell Casters. Sometimes misunderstandings might even arise because of this.

Snake Elder said hurriedly, “Wizard Merlin, please be patient for now. The manor of His Royal Highness the eighth prince was not like this in the past. It appears that His Royal Highness the eighth prince is in a rather delicate situation these days, which is why security is so strict.”

Of course, Merlin knew what Snake Elder meant, so he nodded. “I hope to meet with His Royal Highness the eighth prince as soon as possible.”

“Very well, please wait for just a moment, Wizard Merlin. After we’ve met with His Royal Highness the eighth prince, then we shall invite you to meet with His Royal Highness!”

With that, Snake Elder, Wizard Hasbro, and Wizard Sacra hurriedly walked into the manor’s living room, leaving Merlin in a secluded hall.

There were finely detailed statues within the hall. These carvings were perfect imitations – anyone could tell that they were the works of a master. The human figures were so lifelike. Merlin could not help but think of the mysterious relief sculptures he had obtained. It had been such a long time, and all he had was four relief sculptures. Presently, he had excellent physical attributes, but because the time needed to cultivate the four relief sculptures was too long, the development of his physique had reached a plateau.

Merlin knew that there were more than four mysterious relief sculptures. However, Merlin had acquired each of the relief sculptures by luck, and it would be challenging to seek them out on purpose.

After a moment, Merlin felt that the streams of Mind Power that had been scrutinizing him seemed to have disappeared. They must have realized that Merlin posed no danger, and thus stopped their spying.

Now that no one was peeping at him, Merlin became relaxed. With nothing better to do, he shut his eyes and began to do something he rarely did – Mind Power Meditation.

...

In a splendid room, a well-proportioned, handsome figure stood ramrod straight. Long wavy curls flowed behind his head to his shoulders, and his fair face was filled with grace. However, his eyes held unfathomable depths as if they contained a strange power, and no one dared to look straight at him.

This man of mannered grace, dressed in fine clothing, was the eighth prince. Before him, stood Snake Elder, Hasbro, and Sacra, three Spell Casters with their heads bowed.

With a face full of shame, Snake Elder said, “Your Royal Highness, what happened was this. We were delayed for over a month, and on our way back, we were ambushed by Wizard Oden of the fourth prince. Thus, we’ve only managed to return now.”

The eighth prince’s expression remained unchanged as if nothing could arouse his excitement or his disappointment. There was always a subtle sense of steadfastness and confidence about him.

After a period of deep consideration, the eighth prince began to speak slowly, “Snake Elder, you said that Merlin has given me three generous gifts? A Second-level Spell Caster who could destroy three city-states in a row, and even Finello, who was a master of runes, is dead?”

Snake Elder nodded with a solemn expression. “That’s right. We’ve underestimated Merlin’s abilities by far. In fact, his powers are terrifying, and could be compared to a Sixth-level Spell Caster! On our way back this time, we encountered the ninth Wizard and even my two disappointing subordinates have died. If it wasn’t for Wizard Merlin who made his move at a crucial point causing Oden to leave somewhat fearfully, I’m afraid things would have been much worse.”

Wizard Hasbro and Wizard Sacra nodded repeatedly. They had witnessed themselves how Oden became apprehensive and left after Merlin had attacked, allowing them to return to the Imperial City safely. They could not have done so without Merlin’s efforts.

The eighth prince smiled as well. “That’s good. I’m glad that you’re able to return safely, and more importantly, you’ve brought Merlin as well. As for Merlin, I have my plans for him.”

Snake Elder and the rest felt reassured. The eighth prince had always been respectful toward Spell Casters, even if it was the alpine Snake People tribe. There were many who looked down upon the alpine Snake People deep in their hearts, but Snake Elder could see that that the eighth prince genuinely treated the Snake People as ordinary beings.

This was also a crucial reason why Snake Elder was so bent on following the eighth prince. It should be known that even Wolf Girl Jelena, who had pledged allegiance to the fourth prince, was only used to break through the front lines in attacks. Her position was only a little better than a slave's.

“Your Royal Highness, has the peace of the Imperial City been broken? The fourth prince was even brazen enough to send people to kill us...”

Before Snake Elder could finish, the eighth prince interrupted him with a wave of his hand. The prince's face gradually darkened, and his fair fingers tapped the table lightly. This was a long-time habit of his, which he would do only when he was feeling anxious and unsure about what to do.

After a long moment, a determined light glinted in the eighth prince's eyes as he said softly, “Go on, let's meet with Wizard Merlin first. As for Fourth Brother... Now is not the time yet!”

Snake Elder and the rest bobbed their heads, after which they followed behind the eighth prince as he left the room and went toward the hall.

...

“Viscount Merlin, His Royal Highness the eighth prince requests an audience with you!”

Merlin was meditating when a guard in silver armor came beside him and called out softly.

Although he was meditating, Merlin had not loosened his perception of the external world. Therefore, he opened his eyes quickly and glanced at the silver-armored guard, saying calmly, “Lead the way.”

Following that, Merlin trailed behind the silver-armored guard and entered the great hall of the manor.

It was well-lit inside the hall, and one could see everything clearly inside. There were four individuals in total, three of which were Snake Elder, Wizard Hasbro, and Wizard Sacra, all of whom Merlin recognized.

In the center was a slim and handsome aristocrat whose expression was inscrutable. There was no doubt that this was the eighth prince.

Merlin immediately behaved under the standard etiquette of aristocracy and bowed toward the eighth prince. After all, besides being a Spell Caster of the Dark Magic Region, he was now also a viscount, an aristocrat in the Kingdom of Blackmoon!

“Your Honorable Royal Highness the eighth prince, I thank you for sending Snake Elder to Wilson Castle in the past, saving the Wilson clan from suffering a calamity!”

No matter what the eighth prince’s intentions were, his act of sending Snake Elder truly did protect the Wilson clan, sparing them from the invasion of Spell Casters. Merlin was expressing his genuine gratitude.

A slight smile appeared on the eighth prince’s face, and he said warmly, “Viscount Merlin, sending Snake Elder and the rest to Wilson castle was merely a small effort – your three generous gifts are much more precious!”

Merlin knew that the eighth prince was referring to Taran City, Guinomi City, and Fanya City. Merlin had slaughtered the Spell Casters of these three independent city-states throughout his journey, forcing them to pledge allegiance to the eighth prince.

With this, the three city-states could be united with Prakash City. This was significant to the eighth prince, so it was naturally a “lavish gift”.

Merlin had been observing the eighth prince. He did not seem very old, but Merlin knew that the eighth prince was in fact over forty years old. Among Spell Casters, forty years was considered young. The eighth prince was a Spell Caster too, and a powerful one at that. Merlin had the vague feeling that the eighth prince was even stronger than ninth Wizard Oden who had tried to kill Snake Elder and the rest on their way here.

It made sense when he thought about it. The entire royal family of the Kingdom of Blackmoon was comparable to a large spell casters’ organization. As a prince from the royal family, one who was competing for the throne, how could his Spell Caster talents be lacking and unremarkable?

Thus, even though he was only forty years old, the eighth prince was already a Sixth-level Spell Caster. This might seem inconceivable to other people, but to a prince from the royal family, this was something incomparably normal.

However, this indirectly revealed that the heritage of the Blackmoon royal family was something the Dark Magic Region could not compare to by far!

“Your Royal Highness had sent Snake Elder and the rest to Wilson Castle. Naturally, I would not forget my lord’s kindness! However, surely my lord would not send those people to protect the Wilson clan without any reason?”

As soon as he spoke, Merlin narrowed his eyes and looked toward the eighth prince without wavering.