

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 451: New Alchemy

In a magic tower in Salyvaor, the capital of the Kingdom of Brianne.

The ending song of Allyn's Past Week was still lingering in the room, however, it was suddenly cut off by a hand that turned off the radio. The slender-figured archmage Lauren had a sneering look on his face, and even his little mustache was showing his scorn. "What a good student of Neeshka. Lark doesn't even want to hide her inclination."

For a sorcerer like him, knowing who was hiding behind 'Lark' was just a piece of cake.

Lauren was standing in his study, which was decorated with dark red curtains and soft crystal lights, and looking at his students in front of the desk.

A senior whose hair had all turned grey said bitterly, "Arcana Voice, Truth of the World... Lucien is the one who is hiding behind. No matter how hard they try to cover it, they are always sitting on the chair engraved with the words 'the Particle Theory'. Shame on them! A programme at least should be bias-free! How could they let Lark intently shake the wave theory supporters confidence!"

He looked much older than Lauren.

“Christal, it doesn’t matter,” said Lauren calmly. “The world of arcana only respects truth, which makes here the justest place to live in. No matter how tricky they are, in the end, the experiment results will speak for us.”

Although he just mocked Lark, Lauren didn’t really hold anything against her. As an archmage whose great honors had been piling up, he did have the confidence and tolerance to only attack Lucien in a dignified manner with the experiment results and images.

Sitting beside Christal was a young man with light brown hair, yet his yellowish-brown eyes belonged to that of an aged man. He said to his teacher hesitantly, “Sir... About the result...”

“Yes, Manuel?” Lauren looked at him, frowning slightly.

The student’s lips pressed against each other into a thin line, and finally, he became determined to speak it out, “Sir... I think we should be prepared for the fact that the experiment result might not be able to overthrow the light quantum hypothesis.”

The middle-aged woman who had beautiful light purple hair also seized the chance and agreed. “It’s True, Sir. The several experiments in the past a few years have shown that the light quantum hypothesis can perfectly explain the photoelectric effect.”

“You...!” Lauren stared at his students angrily. He did not want to believe that what Lark said in the programme had indeed shattered his students’ confidence.

“If that was true, I’d rather prefer there is no explanation for the photoelectric effect at all!” Lauren reproached his students and then walked out of the study in a rage.

Outside of the window in the darkness, the fine spring raindrops were thrumming the field, indicating the upcoming harvest of a season.

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In the Atom Institution, Lucien was still working on observing the tiny flashing light spots, trying to find what he wanted from their messy traces he took down. Meanwhile, the improved magic circles were now buzzing as the powerful electric currents passing through, slightly twisting the surrounding magnetic field.

Thanks to the Lord of Storm’s experiment of using helium atoms to bombard a piece of metal foil, Lucien now had the perfect reasons for applying to Magic Research Board for introducing the lately improved magic circles and alchemical facilities to meet all the requirements for conducting the experiment — the Atom Institution specialized in studying the microworld and the inner structure of the atom. Since the Lord of Storm had proved the existence of the atomic nucleus and described the atom’s inner structure by colliding particles, the Atom Institution had the very reason to conduct further studies based on the Lord of Storm’s achievement, and the institution’s request should be fulfilled without a doubt.

Finally, Lucien had identified the trace he had been seeking for!

Charge-to-mass ratio, charge quantity, mass... all the data flashed through Lucien’s brain. In the next second, he sprang up from the chair and started measuring the particle that made the trace!

Time flew, and Lucien’s work was almost done.

Charge-to-mass ratio, the same!

Charge quantity, the same!

Mass, the same!

The numbers had overlapped with each other!

Suddenly, Lucien's cognitive world embraced him again, and the elements in the sky and the environment started changing in front of his eyes: the central core surrounded by the electrons had turned into the combination of two particles! The only difference between all the elements such as hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon was the different numbers of particles they had!

This was the nucleus of hydrogen! This was proton! This was the nature of the elements!

The great shift in Lucien's cognitive world was done within seconds. Lucien could sense the fundamental changes it brought, as he could now feel the connection with all the elements much more sharply. Seizing the chance, Lucien quickly entered his meditation world and now his spiritual power possessed both the properties of particle and wave. This was not a simple combination of wave and particle, as now even a single spiritual quantum of his showed the nature of wave!

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In his Kingdom of Electromagnetism, Brook stepped into his lab.

His lab looked like a fantasy: Cold metals, weird patterns and shapes, jumping and flashing electric arcs, black twisted magnetic fields, as well as the vast starry sky...

He stopped in front of a complex alchemical operation table, placed on his right-hand side were all the experiment notes and records.

Brook took a glance at the records he made, and a strange look stopped for a second on his face where his years had begun to show. Then he put aside all the thoughts and started focusing on the experiment.

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By the time he walked to the door of the lab, Lauren had calmed down. He turned around and said to his students following him, “Manuel, Diana, you two can leave now. I will start my experiment.”

Manuel tried to say something, but Lauren had disappeared behind the door.

The door charged with flashing electric currents cut the students off from their teacher.

“It’s gonna be alright, isn’t it?” Manuel murmured subconsciously.

Christal had a cold look on his face. “Of course. The light quantum hypothesis can not explain everything, say, the diffraction image.”

“That’s true.” Agreed Diana.

She was not feeling too nervous, since she believed that the experiment result would not be too surprising. She was confident that the worst scenario would just be that her teacher suffered some damage to his cognitive world, which would only take a few years for Mr. Lauren to fix. In the past three years, she had gradually shifted her cognitive world to a more balanced position, if it was not more on the particle theory’s side, thus she was prepared for both outcomes.

If she could do so, it should not be a problem for her teacher.

Lauren put on his magic robe, and a layer of grey covered him from head to toe. After carefully checking all the magic circles and alchemical facilities, he started the experiment conscientiously, just like every time in the past.

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In Lucien’s cognitive world which was basically substantialized, his spiritual power had filled in every corner of this space. The joining spiritual quanta together formed mysterious and dreamlike cloud clusters, but when Lucien approached them, they scattered and became particles and waves.

When everything calmed down, the image of Lucien's cognitive world also disappeared. Lucien opened his eyes, knowing that he finally made the last step for finishing his own meditation method, called the Evans's Duality Meditation. The meditation method was still in its first stage though, and Lucien could still make further improvements on it.

With this meditation method, the cost that Lucien paid for forcing his way into senior-rank could be compensated. Lucien tried with his new meditation method and drew the conclusion that his meditation worked at least three times better than the best existing senior-rank meditation method, and it would take him just another one or two years to reach the seventh circle.

In the past three years, due to the damage done to his soul previously, Lucien did not make any remarkable progress in increasing his spiritual power. Therefore, he had spent most of his time studying sixth-circle magic incantations and creating new spells. By now, Lucien had constructed twenty-one sixth-circle magic spells within his soul. Among them, there were three newly-created spells: a curse spell *Professor's Solicitude*, an electromagnetic spell, and an astrology spell.

Taking a deep breath, Lucien repeated the experiment he just did. Then he took out the special parchment for writing arcana papers and a quill-pen and started writing his paper right on the operation desk:

"... The experiment showed that when using helium atomic beams to bombard nitrogen, positively-charged hydrogen atoms were produced. Therefore, a conclusion could be made here — Hydrogen nucleus could be extracted from the nuclei of nitrogen, thus a hydrogen nucleus is also an inner part of an atom. Because a hydrogen atom only contains one such particle, in the past, it was only thought of as the hydrogen atom..."

"... I'll name this fundamental particle 'proton'. The positive charge it carries is equal to the negative charge an electron carries. Considering its mass and its electric neutrality, it is reasonable to say that a hydrogen atom consists of a proton and an electron..."

“... To push the conclusion further, it is found that the listing of the elements in the periodic table of the elements also follows the number of protons. Based on the nuclear charge and the electromagnetic theory, it can be predicted that besides proton, there is another kind of particle which has the same mass but is not charged within the atom nucleus. The number of this neutral particle decides the variants of a particular chemical element...”

Lucien did not restrain himself within the experiment result, instead, he extended his conclusion to establish a theoretical system. His theories and predictions went beyond the evidence provided by the current experiments, as usual.

“... Starting from the conception of Mr. Fernando that the atom structure resembles the celestial body motion system, and by introducing the quantum theory, the structure of electrons orbiting around the nucleus could be quantized... That is to say, we no longer see electrons as particles orbiting around, but rather of different energy levels. When absorbing and emitting energy, they do transitional movements, and skipping levels is possible...”

“... This is proved by the discontinuity of the emission spectrum of atomic hydrogen...”

This time, Lucien did not choose to wait for more theories supporting him to come up, instead, he directly introduced the quantum theory into describing the atom structure by skipping many studies as prerequisite conditions and making predictions boldly.

There was roaring thunder coming remotely in Lucien's cognitive world when the electrons orbiting around the nucleus all stopped. The electrons were on different energy level tracks – Some of them were absorbing spiritual quanta and making phase transitions, and some were losing spiritual quanta when dropping to lower energy levels. There were these continuous ups and downs as well as the constant reciprocal transformations in the flow of Lucien's spiritual power.

Not distracted by what was happening in his cognitive world, Lucien kept writing very fast,

“... The number of electrons in the outside shell decides the alchemical property of an element; all alchemical reactions can be described and explained by the concept of gaining and losing electrons, including ionization and the valence state. As for the reason behind the configuration, I currently assume that each shell has a certain number of electrons, but this still requires further study...”

“... In this way, the School of Alchemy has been fully included in the School of Element!”

In his cognitive world, the electrons around the atomic nucleus started exchanging with that of the other nearby elements, and more matters and substances started to form. Lucien’s cognitive world became more abundant and colorful, in which his magic model of Elements Order had been further improved, and now the structure was already very close to being completed!

The quill-pen in Lucien’s hand moved fast, presenting Lucien’s profound thoughts on the parchment.

The darkness of the night outside of the window became denser. The moist air foreshadowed the upcoming rain.

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In the lab, as more data had been collected, and the image gradually became complete, Brook’s eyebrows knitted in a frown.

Taking down the last group of data, Brook did not write down any conclusion. Instead, he looked out of the window at his demiplane, the Kingdom of Electromagnetism, and finally released a sigh.

Bang! Bang!

In the deafening thunder, fierce and thick bolts of lightning directly struck the twisted magnetic field from above and instantly tore the flowing electric currents and flashing electric arcs into pieces!

Under the ground of the demiplane, all the substances and matters were collapsing under the power of the strong magnetic field. The destructive power was dismantling the space as easily as crushing dry weeds and smashing rotten wood.

The momentum was unstoppable. This seemed to be the end of the entire Kingdom of Electromagnetism.

“Sir...” In the magic tower shaking violently, Barek looked at the upper floor helplessly.

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In Brianne.

His eyes gazing upon the data and the experiment image, Lauren was unable to suppress his panic.

“Impossible!”

His hands trembling, Lauren tried to stop, but his drastically-changing cognitived world interfered with his soul, and he could not resist the urge to continue.

The experiment result was there, right in front of him. The look on Lauren’s face was distorted, as if he had been possessed by a demon. Boundless fear seized him.

He could not believe this.

“... based on the instantaneity of time, light presents the prominent property of quantum; based on time average, light shows the property of wave. Therefore, perhaps we should be more open-minded when facing the argument.”

Lauren recalled Lucien’s paper.

He could not understand. He shook his head, murmuring to himself. “How could something like this exist?”

In his cognitive world, the electromagnetic waves fiercely swelled up and snapped!

Like blowing up a balloon, Lauren's head seemed to grow bigger and bigger. He burst out a painful cry.

His head had been blown up to its limit. Silently, the bloody firework bloomed.

There was red and white, falling down to the floor like raindrops.

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"... In the radioactive substance, I have found the trace of the new element, which perfectly matches what I expected: In the process of radioactive decay, energy and the helium nucleus are released and thus new elements are formed...

"... Since human beings acquired magic, the dream of turning elements into gold has always been there. This is not merely our pursuit of wealth, but the longing for the truth of the world, as we always wish to master the secret of matter transmutation!

"... However, for thousands of years in the past, there was not a single alchemical reaction which had successfully transmuted a substance fundamentally without relying on a permanent magic circle... In front of the gate of the forbidden zone belonging only to gods, we human beings could not march further...

"... But now, after discovering the inner structure of the atom, by studying the nature of decay, we can find the path for fundamentally changing substances and creating new elements! Following my theory, although the product might not be worth the cost, we can finally take over the power once exclusively owned by gods! Now we see the deepest secrets hiding behind substances, and we are on the way achieving the shared dream of sorcerers for generations!

“... This is a big step forward in the history of arcana, but more of further improvement of the human civilization!

“... The journey waiting for us is full of challenges and even risks, but I hope that we can go much further together.”

Piling up the rolls of parchment, Lucien wrote down the title,

“New Alchemy”.

Outside the window, the spring thunder came, and lives started thriving.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 452: The Two Generations

Hearing the thunder, Lucien looked outside the window. It was already early morning. The soft dawn light was a bit fuzzy in the drizzle.

Turning off the magic circles and alchemical facilities, Lucien walked to the window with a cup of tea in his hand and pushed the window open. The refreshing, moist air came directly to his face.

What a lovely day.

Thinking of the paper titled New Alchemy that he just finished, which was actually a compilation of dozens of papers, Lucien took several deep breaths of the fresh, cool air and then said to himself in low voice,

“Here comes the era of head explosion.”

The realm that they were stepping into was strange and unimaginably queer, diverging completely from human being’s intuition. The query brought by that ‘cat’ would trigger a brainstorm for every arcanist.

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In the Kingdom of Electromagnetism, the magnets were crumbling, the electric currents disappearing. The bolts of arc light in the sky had joined the lightning. Together, they struck the ground and the protection shield of the magic tower.

“Is this the end... Sir?” Barek looked out of the drastically shaking window, and he saw the many black cracks appearing on the shield.

Suddenly, the electric currents in the sky joined together and turned into a giant electric snake. It slithered all the way up along the magic tower and opened its mandibles wide. As the bolts of lightning in the sky were absorbed by the snake, its body had swelled up to its limit.

The snake exploded abruptly, filling the space with silver-white fireworks. Whether visible or invisible, the electromagnetic waves suddenly became prominent in the entire space, like the magnificent tides of an ocean.

Starting from the middle, the waves seemed to broke into small pieces. But the shape of the waves was maintained.

However, this spectacular scene lasted for not even one second. Before Barek realized what he saw, it had completely disappeared.

The collapsion had stopped. The Kingdom of Electromagnetism survived. However, evidence of the terrible destruction was everywhere. Less than ten percent of the electric currents and magnetic field were left, and there were even terrifying black holes in the air.

A long sigh followed.

“Sir...” Barek was worried, as he knew clearly that a legendary archmage’s demiplane was the reflection of his own cognitive world. Witnessing what had happened to the demiplane, Barek knew that his teacher’s cognitive world must have experienced something very bad.

Wearing a wig and gold-rimmed glasses, Brook walked down from the stairs. His face was abnormally dull-red. He shook his head, and said, “there’s still no way for me to fit the light quantum hypothesis into the wave theory.”

“So the result...” Barek asked subconsciously.

Brook said in a low spirit, “although I was mentally prepared, the fact that the experiment result perfectly matches the hypothesis was still a bit hard for me to accept. Thus, my cognitive world was shaken. Then I tried to understand the hypothesis from another perspective and combine it with the wave theory to reconstruct my cognitive world, yet I cannot find the breakthrough point.”

Barek was not young anymore, but now he was still caught in a great panic. “Sir, your cognitive world has...”

He could not say the words out.

“Has broken and solidified.” Brook rubbed his forehead, revealing a hint of fatigue and helplessness.

Barek knew how this worked, but he still could not believe it. He was even more shocked and grieved than Brook. “So Sir... You can’t make any further progress anymore?”

“That’s right.” Compared to Barek, Brook appeared to be quite calm. He shook his head self-deprecatingly and said, “I have to be grateful. Three years ago when I first saw Evans’s light quantum hypothesis, if it had not been the limited experiment conditions, I would have done this experiment right away. If that had been the case, my cognitive world would have collapsed completely, and the Kingdom of Electromagnetism would have been destroyed thoroughly, together with half of Allyn. Fortunately, because of the mental preparation and the feedback of the experiments in the past years, I’m still alive.”

The collapse of a legendary archmage's half-solidified cognitive world could be powerful enough to affect the main material world.

Therefore, Brook was not exaggerating. If the Kingdom of Electromagnetism had gone down, half of Allyn would have indeed been buried with its falling. What was needed to say here was that Allyn was a city with the protection of the most powerful Mythals in this world, and if this were to happen in other cities like Rentato or Aalto, the entire city together with the surrounding towns and manors would have been completely devoured by the explosion of the electromagnetic storm.

“Bloody Evans!” Barek flared. Although he knew that this was not Lucien's fault, he could not accept this emotionally.

Brook waved his hands; his face had turned from dull-red to pale. “If he was insisting on an absurd belief, I would definitely fight him until the last second. However, the experiment result has proved his hypothesis, which means I am the one who's wrong, and I am the one who's too obsessed with my own incorrect belief. In this case, shall I hate this world for not existing as how I wish?”

Although his cognitive world had broken and solidified, Brook still maintained his manner.

Brook was completely different from Fernando, whose feelings and emotions were always intense, but there were two things that they shared in common: the reverence towards the unknown, and the passion for arcana.

“But...” Barek still could not accept the reality. His brows knitted together bitterly, as if he had been the one who had lost all the hope for making any progress in just a few hours.

Brook walked to the window in the living room with his hands folded behind. “This isn’t necessarily a bad thing, Barek. For me, there is indeed desperation, but there’s also hope. In this great setback, there is also chance.”

“...?” Barek did not get it.

Brook lifted his right arm and opened his hand. “We don’t know if the God of Truth really exists, but except for the Him, there are only four who have managed to reach the level of Alterna from the legendary level in history — the Lord of Hell, the Will of Abyss, the mysterious existence in the World of Souls, and the Pope. The first three were said to be born with this power, just like the God of Silver Moon.”

“But Sir, didn’t the previous Popes also reached this level?” Barek asked.

Brook coughed a bit, and then answered, “to me, the Pope is only a symbol, a symbol of ‘the Speaker of the God of Truth on this world’ , not a specific existence. The pope uses the power of the God of Truth to reach the next level. Therefore, the name behind the title is meaningless. All the previous Popes and the current one should be counted as one.”

“It’s true.” Barek nodded.

Brook looked at his half-destroyed kingdom and said in the same gentle voice, “... From the legendary level to demigod is a journey beyond arduous. In the past thousands of years, only the Popes succeeded relying on the power of the God of Truth. The many great geniuses like the Sun King and my teacher all failed to progress any further. Although they are setting out to seek the falling pieces of Alterna and the mysterious existence in the World of Souls, I don’t see much hope in finding anything that really helps.”

“Therefore,” Brook paused a bit and drew the conclusion, “stopping here at this level isn’t something urgent and serious.”

Barek released a sigh of relief. He knew that his teacher was right. Although Mr. Brook’s cognitive world had broke and solidified, he was still an archmage at the climax of the legendary level, whose power was only inferior to that of the three demigods who never really showed up. And even if his cognitive world was intact, he could not advance further.

“There is desperation, for sure, but this could also be a chance...” Brook’s voice lowered, “In this experiment, I saw the great flaw of the wave theory of light. When I figure out why there is this duality in the electromagnetic waves, perhaps I can rebuild my cognitive world and even make a further breakthrough.”

Hearing his teacher’s words and seeing that his teacher was still the same ambitious and positive facing the horrible setback, Barek recalled the great respect he held when he first became Brook’s student. It had been years, and the respect was always there. Brook just mentioned the Sun King and Mr. Douglas as examples of great geniuses, but in Barek’s mind and in many Congress arcanists’ minds, Brook was also a genius who was no less powerful and intelligent than the two.

Brook deconstructed the ancient magic system and built the vast kingdom of electromagnetism. He obtained the title of grand arcanist before reaching fifty and then became a legendary when he was eighty. No one would ever doubt his giftedness.

“Sir, are you going to publish the experiment result?” Barek asked.

Brook nodded. “Yes.”

“But...” Barek was afraid of a mass head-explosion incident.

Brook sighed. “I am the founder of the wave theory of light, and also one of those who completed it. That’s why my cognitive world still broke and solidified even after three years of preparation. The other arcanists will not suffer this bad like me after these three years. In the worst scenario, their cognitive world will be just severely damaged.”

“There are those who are extremely stubborn...” Barek still hesitated.

Brook’s voice became cold. “It’s been three years. If now their heads are still going to explode, giving them another three or even thirty years will not change the result. Stubbornness has merged into their cells and blood. But the development of arcana and magic will not wait for them to change their mind.”

“If Lucien Evans wants to become a grand arcanist...” Brook continued rather seriously, “... he has to march forward stepping on the exploded heads, scattered brains, and river-like blood. These will finally become his ladder for ascending. Sometimes, this is even crueler than a true war.”

Brook was totally qualified for making the statement. He was the one who caused the previous mass head-explosion years ago.

“I’ll go and organize the data then. The introduction part will be left for you, Sir,” said Barek. He felt a chill creeping over his body.

Brook nodded lightly. “Go ahead. I’ll take a rest and do the next experiment.”

“What experiment?” Barek was confused.

Brook laughed a little as if he was mocking himself. “Since the light quantum hypothesis matches the result of the experiment, now we can treat light as the complex of particles. A particle should not only carry energy, but also momentum. I am going to bombard different matters using the newly discovered X-ray to see if the momentums are changing.

“I never expected that I was going to be busy with proving the particle theory...”

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In Lauren’s magic tower.

Manuel and the rest of the students were waiting anxiously. Suddenly, the strident alarm went on.

“Accident in the lab. Call master, call master...”

“No response, no response, inspection activated...”

“No toxin released, no cursing, no dangerous creatures... Lab door has opened...”

The cold and indifferent alchemical life’s voice filled the hall.

Manuel and Diana exchanged a look between each other and in the next second, they were already on their way rushing to the lab. Entering the lab, they saw the scene that they would never forget in the rest of their life:

The body on the ground was wearing that grey magic robe which they could not be more familiar with. However, the head was missing. The entire space — the walls, the operation desks, the piles of paper, and the energy shields on the magic circles — was covered with mixed red and white bloody stains as well as tiny bone pieces. The smell of blood overwhelmed them.

On the chest of the boy, there was the ninth-circle and the nine-star badge, as well as the Ice & Snow Medal and the Silver Moon Medal.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 453: The Strike

“Sir...” Diana’s voice was weak and remote, as if she was trapped in an endless nightmare.

Manuel's yellowish-brown eyes were filled with agony and terror, as this was totally out of his expectation. After three years of foreshadowing, the worst scenario he thought of was that Lauren's cognitive world became broken and solidified. As a ninth-circle archmage, Lauren could transfer to a lich or extend his life in some other ways after he reached his life limit of around three hundred years old, and there was still a slight chance that he could reconstruct his cognitive world in the future... However, what was in front of him now was the death image of this ninth-circle archmage.

"No! It can't be like this!" Christal burst out a bitter cry, his grey hair now looking completely messy, his wrinkled face distorted and hideous. "... He's still alive! Mr. Lauren used Life Harbor, right?"

As a ninth-circle archmage, Lauren was capable of taking precautions against unexpected deaths. Although Life Harbor did not work as well as a lich's phylactery, it was enough for handling most situations.

Diana buried her face in her hands and murmured with great sorrow, "Life Harbor won't work... He's gone. Even a lich's phylactery is useless against the complete destruction of the cognitive world..."

Currently, powerful sorcerers could divide their soul and life force into pieces and save them in a phylactery or hide them with spells. As long as the pieces were kept intact, they would never die completely. However, the cognitive world was something even more elusive than the soul. It took root in a sorcerer's consciousness and could not be attacked by magic or divine power. Therefore, the cognitive world could not be divided either. Once a sorcerer's cognitive world collapsed, a true death ensued.

A legendary sorcerer's demiplane was, in fact, a projection of the meditation world in the true world reflecting his or her cognitive world, and the change in their cognitive worlds would be reflected in the demiplanes. However, it was not vice versa. A demiplane destroyed by an enemy would not do any damage to a legendary sorcerer's cognitive world.

Also, if one built a subversive theory in an illusion spell to make his or her enemies' cognitive world collapse and their heads exploded, this would not kill them in reality. It would, at most, cause them to feel very dizzy and confused for a while. Currently, the only person who could kill by projecting the cognitive world collapse in an illusion spell to the reality was the King of Nightmare.

There was only one situation that a sorcerer could come back to life after cognitive world collapse — the cognitive world was not fully destroyed. When a sorcerer was more or less mentally prepared or had been unconsciously influenced by the subversive findings, the situation of their cognitive world would then fall between being solidified and destroyed. In this case, the sorcerer would have the chance to transfer their souls to somewhere else before their head exploded, and the blow would be neutralized by the explosion of the head. Yet to those who did not have a phylactery or other ways for revival, this meant the total loss of their cognitive world.

“Who did this to him?! Lucien Evans?” Christal yelled madly. “It must be Lucien Evans! He killed Mr. Lauren to stop the experiment!”

He dashed to the operation desk, stepping on the floor of brain juices and blood.

Manuel and Diana were in such a great shock and sorrow that they did not realize what was about to happen to Christal. They blankly watched Christal pick up and read the experiment notebook, blankly watched him stare at the magic circle with his eyes wide open.

“It is fake! It must be!” Christal had gone crazy. He turned on the magic circle and started verifying the last set of data.

Fake... Manuel was lost. After a while, he suddenly realized what was going on. Casting a spell, Manuel tried to stop Christal.

“Stop it!” He cried.

Before his voice faded in the air, warm drops of blood and brain tissues fell on his face. The smell of blood went all the way up his nostrils.

“Ahhhh!!!” Diana the fifth-circle sorcerer screamed like a helpless little girl.

Christal’s headless body fell to the ground with a loud thump.

“Another...” Manuel could not respond to the scene. He wondered if he needed to consult a psychologist.

The fifth popular programme of the channel Truth of the World was called Chicken Soup for the Soul, which was designed for caring about sorcerers’ mental health, while, without a doubt, Allyn’s Past Week was the no. 1.

Manuel forced himself to calm down. He could guess and had accepted the result. Walking to the operation desk, he picked up the notebook soaked in blood and brain tissues.

Manuel cleaned it up with magic while trying his best not to vomit. Then he carefully read the record and released a long sigh.

“So... the hypothesis is correct, isn’t it?” After she finally recovered partially, Diana asked in great sorrow.

Manuel nodded, having no idea how to respond to the result. “Yes, it has basically proved the light quantum hypothesis.”

He should feel encouraged by the result, as all his effort of gradually shifting his belief in the past three years had paid off and he could possibly reach the eighth circle within five years. However, the two headless bodies on the ground covered with blood and brain were dragging down his heart.

“So this will be Mr. Lauren’s last paper... Shall we publish it for him?” Overwhelmed, Diana was not thinking in a logical manner anymore. Somehow, she asked this question.

Manuel nodded. “We will. But we’ll say that our teacher’s experiment result has proved the hypothesis and he also accepted it. His death was an unfortunate accident. We must protect his reputation. After all, His Excellency Mr. Brook is also doing the same experiment, so we can’t hide it from people...”

“What about Mr. Brook? Will he be alright?” Diana asked, terrified.

She didn’t even ask how many arcanists would actually believe that Lauren died in an accident.

Manuel suddenly felt very insecure again. “We must go back to Allyn immediately and send him the experiment report. Hope that he hasn’t started the experiment. If Mr. Brook also... this will become a disaster...”

“So shall we... for our teacher... Lucien Evans...?” Diana said ambiguously.

Manuel knew what Diana was trying to indicate. He put on a bitter smile and shook his head. “If Christal was still alive, he would definitely seek for revenge. After all, he was the one receiving the most attention from our teacher. I do hate Lucien Evans for what happened, but honestly speaking, I don’t think this is his fault. He neither designed nor carried out the experiment. Perhaps in the future I would oppose his theories or proposals because of what happened today, but there is no reason for me to take direct revenge on him.”

What was more important was that Manuel had already changed his side and warned his teacher.

Diana nodded. She shared the same thought with Manuel, but also had her own concern:

Lucien Evans was currently a level-six arcanist and sixth-circle sorcerer. It was said that he had almost nine thousand arcana credits due to the introduction of Influence Factor, thus he was going to reach level seven in less than two years. Also, those who were standing behind Lucien Evans were at least senior-rank sorcerers, including his condisciples Thompson and Chloe, as well as the Lord of Storm! There was no way that a level-four arcanist and fifth-circle sorcerer like her could seek revenge.

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Having no idea that Lauren had fallen, Lucien was enjoying black tea as well as the crispy spring morning.

Sensing that someone was approaching, Lucien slowly turned around and saw Sprint push open the lab door and walk in.

“Morning, Sprint. That’s early.” Lucien smiled.

Sprint was startled, for as a second-circle sorcerer, he did not sense his teacher’s presence at all. Was it because Mr. Evans had progressed further again?

“I have been coming early recently... Got some work to do in the lab,” answered Sprint honestly. Lucien was currently the only person he felt a bit afraid of, since he had not met the Lord of Storm yet.

Lucien nodded slightly, and walked away from the window with the teacup in his hand. “Jerome’s achievement motivated you, didn’t it? Good. It’s good to apply your pride to things like these.”

Sprint did not want to admit, instead, he looked around and saw the pile of parchment. “Sir, are you turning in papers again?”

“Just one. I’ll wait for a few more days,” said Lucien peacefully.

“Why? The next issue of Arcana is about to come out,” asked Sprint. He believed that the paper was about something big, since he saw how hard his teacher had worked in the past days.

Lucien shook his head and smiled. “A few more days.”

Before Sprint could say anything, the gate of the lab opened again. The students Annick, Heidi, Katrina, Layria, and Chely filed in, and were all surprised when seeing their teacher and Sprint.

Lucien nodded in satisfaction. As a teacher, he was happy to see his students working hard.

It had been three years. Chely had become a real sorcerer last year, and the rest of the students had reached the second circle. Among them, Annick was the leading one. He had come close to middle-rank. Keeping up with the most advanced arcana theories had benefited them a lot.

...

On the Solar Islands, the arcanists including Blake were gathered in the hall to listen to Truth of the World. They always enjoyed discussing with each other while listening.

Today should be the releasing day of the latest issue of Arcana and the other journals. The programme of the channel, Watching Magic, which was broadcast at nine in the morning, was going to briefly introduce the important papers on the journals.

This programme did not mean much to sorcerers in Allyn and Rentato. However, for them who lived remotely from the big cities, they really appreciated this first-hand update.

The sorcerers on the Solar Islands were particularly big fans of the programme. On the islands, soon after the last issue of Arcana and the other journals arrived, the next issue was already available in Allyn. The programme helped them pick out the most important papers, thus their time was greatly saved.

“Welcome to Watching Magic. I’m your old friend, Eagle.”

The gentle and rich male voice came out from the radio. “Now with me are the latest issue of the ten journals. I’ll start with this month’s Arcana, the one that everyone has been waiting for so long so badly. I know that, including me, we have all been waiting for His Excellency Mr. Brook’s and Mr. Lauren’s experiment results. Will this month’s Arcana tell us the answer?”

Blake silently clenched his fists.

The other arcanists were also very nervous and excited. Today might be the day of overthrowing the light quantum hypothesis and defending the wave theory of light.

“Alright... I do see two papers here — one from Mr. Brook and the other from Mr. Lauren. Let’s take a look at Mr. Brook’s paper first.”

The short silence became burning to the arcanists present.

A few seconds later, Eagle finally started reading, but his tone was a bit hesitant. “... I did the experiment to fight against the light quantum hypothesis. However, the result and the experiment image perfected matched the features of the light quanta. I have to admit that my effort for denying the hypothesis turned out to be, at this stage, the evidence supporting it.”

Blake abruptly lifted his head out of the astonishment. His head buzzed. Since he was listening to the radio, instead of reading the paper on his own, and also, most importantly, his meditation

world had changed gradually in the past several years, his soul only suffered some slight damage. Two trails of blood came out from his nose.

However, as soon as he looked up, sticky blood and tissues splashed onto his face, covering his eyes and mouth. The smell of blood went all the way up to his brain, and all he could see had been covered with this thick red and white.

“... Sonia’s head exploded...!”

He heard other arcanists’ dazed and terrified voice.

Something fell down to the ground.

Head? It took Blake a second to comprehend the situation, and then his stomach started churning. Hurriedly turned aside, he puked badly.

Somehow, when Blake was puking, he also felt a bit lucky — Fortunately, there was only one whose head exploded after hearing the result.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 454: Gloating

In the magic tower of the Congress' headquarter in Allyn.

The always young and vigorous Rachel had put on a dark magic robe, which revealed her heavy mood. She had been waiting for the final result of the experiments conducted by His Excellency Mr. Brook and Mr. Lauren, wondering what the results would be and if they could deny Lucien's light quantum hypothesis.

Affected by her best friend Samantha, Rachel's cognitive world had changed a lot in the past three years. She was no longer a solid supporter of the wave theory of light, instead, she was now even leaning towards Lucien Evans' hypothesis. However, all the knowledge that she had acquired since she was an apprentice, together with the classic double-slit interference image as well as the Brook bright spot, all reminded her that light displayed the nature of the wave.

Maybe just like Lucien said, they should go up to a higher level to examine the stalemate between the wave and the particle theory. Rachel thought to herself before stepping on the stairs. Taking back her right foot, she quickly turned around and headed for the exchange office. Although in her teacher's office, she would get to read the latest issue of Arcana half an hour later, Rachel could not wait any longer.

Her pace was slightly faster than usual. When she came close to the exchange office, Rachel saw it was crowded with people. She was not surprised — Everyone was waiting for the experiment result of the wave and particle war. Normally, there wasn't such a big crowd waiting for Arcana, as most arcanists below senior-rank could not understand all the articles on it.

Rachel forced her way into the crowd, trying to reach one of the desks in the corner surrounded by slightly less people. What made her feel strange was that the crowd was rather quiet. Strangely quiet.

“What happened?” Rachel wondered. Driven by curiosity, Rachel cast a couple of spells on herself and pushed herself to the exchange desk surrounded by most people.

“Ah!... ” The short scream stopped abruptly.

Rachel saw an incomplete body, head exploded... red blood, white brain tissues, and the latest issue of Arcana lying open on the floor.

Many arcanists in the crowd had killed someone in the past, however, the scene was still too much for them. After all, in the recent hundred years, head-exploding was just a remote story told by seniors. Only some middle-rank and senior-rank sorcerers from the Will of Elements and the Hand of Paleness had witnessed it once. On the contrary, pastors or cardinals turning into a holy light torch or fireworks could be seen every once in a while.

Those low-rank sorcerers and apprentices who hadn’t been sent out on missions before were even more frightened. Murmuring the terrifying name and the title, Headcrusher, their faces had turned pale as if their heads were tightly grasped in the claws of a devil lord.

Rachel wondered if more arcanists would come to her and her teacher for illusionary therapy for curing mental trauma in the future; After all, Chicken Soup for the Soul was popular among arcanists... She had no idea why the thought came to her at this depressing moment.

The scene was not the major cause of the stressful and terrifying atmosphere, instead, it was because of the journal lying open on the floor. On the page shown, there were several lines of bold letters,

“... I did the experiment for fighting against the light quantum hypothesis. However, the result and the experiment image perfected matched the features of the light quanta. So I have to admit that my effort for denying the hypothesis turned out to be, at this stage, the evidence supporting it...”

“— Edwyn Brook, grand arcanist, level four in the legendary class ‘the Emperor of Control.’”

Rachel removed her eyesight from the page and turned to look up at the ceiling. She did not know what to say — Since she became a student of the magic school, the wave theory was one of the most fundamental beliefs introduced by her teachers. In her mind, the wave theory of light was like a giant tower, standing straight up on the solid ground just like the other theoretical systems put forward by His Excellency Mr. Douglas and Mr. Brook.

She felt that the world had become strange to her.

The rare sentimental feeling seized Rachel’s heart. Silently, she retreated herself from the crowd and then went to the Arcana Review Board. Knocking at the door of her teacher’s office, Rachel felt that she was like a child seeking her mother’s comfort.

“Come in.” Isabella’s voice came from behind the door.

Hearing her teacher’s voice, Rachel suddenly woke up from her dreamlike wandering and found herself in the wrong place. She was supposed to go to the Brain and Hormone Research Center beside the Atom Institution to wait for her teacher. Also, Ms. Isabella wasn’t supposed to be in her office this early.

Carefully pushing open the door, Rachel saw that her teacher's magic robe had turned into a long black dress. On Isabella's chest, there was a small white flower.

"Who is it...?" Rachel asked carefully.

"Lauren, Christal..." Isabella said the names sorrowfully. She had known those stubborn mages for quite some years.

"Mr. Lauren...?" Rachel recalled the look of the tall and thin elder man. But what left her with the deepest impression about him was the row of badges in front of his chest, indicating the great honor that belonged him.

Isabella nodded, her eyes glistening. "Yes, an archmage has fallen. An archmage who once won the highest honor in the school of Electromagnetism, Light-darkness, and Thermodynamics has fallen. He was eliminated by the development of arcana and magic..."

"..." Rachel suddenly understood the cruelty of the world.

In front of her student, Isabella forced a smile on her face to cheer her up. "Don't be afraid. Don't get lost. This is not something abnormal. When I was young, every once in a while, some particle theory supporters' head would explode. This is why there are now so few arcanists supporting the particle theory right now. You should feel lucky, Rachel, so should I, for we had the past three years to get prepared. The committee members who reviewed the papers of Mr. Brook and Mr. Lauren thus survived. They just need a few months to have their soul recover from the trauma."

"I understand." When she was in school, Rachel read about this piece of history. During that period of time, His Excellency Mr. Brook's outstanding talent was glowing and he managed to overthrow the particle theory of light. Stepping on blood and exploded heads, he finally ascended to the

throne of grand arcanist and became the second top legendary in the congress. It was said that a close friend of Mr. Douglas, who was a member of the Highest Council and also a legendary archmage at that time, fell together with his demiplane.

But reading history from books and seeing it with her own eyes were two completely different stories. Rachel's heart was still palpitating from the horrible scene.

Seeing that her student's face still looked pale, Isabella walked to Rachel and gently stroked her hair, like a mom comforting her daughter. "An era of progress is coming. In the past several decades when Mr. Brook brought the huge revolution to the Congress, we saw new leaders entering the stage — The two grand arcanists, Hellen and Vicente, as well as the other four legendary sorcerers. The power of the Congress of Magic almost doubled. Now we have more archmages and senior-rank mages than ever before. When I was young, the Congress only had about twenty archmages, but now we have sixty-two... sixty-one."

"This is our chance," said Isabella, "keep it in mind. We shall never become blindly obsessed with our belief nor lose our faith. We must believe in facts."

...

In the Radiance Church in Holm.

"Lauren, Lightning of Destruction, ranking no. 76 on the Cleansing List." Vaharall read the list with a big smile on his face, "Christal, Bloody Thunder, no. 269 on the Cleansing List... Oh, I wish that I could give Mr. Lucien Evans, our Professor, a Night Angel badge, in order to honor his great contribution to eliminating the vicious sorcerers!"

After spending a long time in Holm, Vaharall had learned the standard Holm Crown prize awarding speech and turned it into a joke.

Stone, the divine knight, also laughed hard. “An archmage, three senior-rank sorcerers, twenty-seven middle-rank sorcerers... not to mention those whose cognitive worlds have gone broken and solidified! If Lucien Evans is willing to become a night watcher, he would definitely be in top five because of these numbers!”

There were only three legendaries in the Inquisition, and one of them was an ancient sorcerer who had converted, therefore, he was also in the ranking of the night watchers. The ancient sorcerer once killed a legendary ranking in the top 30 on the Cleansing List, and thus became the top night watcher. Although there were many senior-ranks in the team, no more than ten had reached the power of the ninth circle, even few had ever cleansed a level-nine arcanist and ninth-circle sorcerer like Lauren.

Philibell could not hold back his smile as well. This was the most wonderful news to him in the past ten years. To them, it did not matter at all whether light was wave or particle. There were pastors devoured by the holy light before when Brook proved that light was a type of electromagnetic wave, but it was because of the fact that the finding had deprived the divinity of light. As for the light quantum hypothesis, they were totally fine with it.

Rubbing his thick white beard, Philibell grinned.

“What a pity that Evans failed to explode Brook’s head, or the Pope would have to give him the title of Saint. You two remember the time when some were saying that we should directly call Brook a Saint? Compared with Brook, Lucien Evans is still a bit behind, isn’t he?”

Hearing the comment, Vaharall and Stone burst out loud laughter, gloating over their enemy’s loss.

“It is said that Brook was also badly hurt by this. I wonder how does his cognitive world look like right now. If his cognitive world has gone broken and solidified, I have to say that this is the perfect arrangement of the God of Truth. So many years ago, he took away countless pastors’ faithful hearts and destroyed many sorcerers’ cognitive worlds. What goes around comes around,” said Philibell piously. He deeply believed in the existence of the God of Truth, more faithfully now than ever before.

“Only Truth lives forever.” Vaharall and Stone drew a cross in front of their chest together.

Then the three exchanged a look with each other and smiled again.

Philibell said humorously, “shall we pray for ‘Saint’ Lucien Evans? Let’s pray for his safety so he can carry on his glorious mission serving the Lord?”

...

“New... Al-che-my?” Fernando stressed each syllable of the title of Lucien’s new paper. His scarlet eyes stared at the calm and composed Lucien alertly.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 455: Creation and Destruction

Today, Lucien felt totally relaxed standing in front of Fernando.

“Sir, this paper is about the microworld. Using a new particle found inside the atom and two recently discovered elements, I further improved your atom structure model and applied it to describing alchemical reactions and explaining ionization and valence. As this study looks into the secret behind the transformation of matters, perhaps it can fulfill the shared dream of the generations of alchemists. So I named this new theoretical system ‘New Alchemy.’”

“A new particle found inside an atom and two new elements?” The look on Fernando eased a bit. He asked casually as he started reading the paper.

After the belief that atom was indivisible had been discarded, the exploration of the inner structure of the atom had stepped into a brand new realm. Fernando felt a bit more relaxed since the paper in his hands was certainly not going to destroy any sorcerer’s cognitive world, as no one was using the brand new theories to construct his or her meditation environment.

When Lucien first appeared in his office with the new paper, Fernando had to admit that he was quite worried. The aftermath of the experimental verification of the light quantum hypothesis was not over yet, and Allyn could not bear to see more sorcerers’ head explode.

Personally speaking, Fernando, also found the bloody scene quite thrilling to some degree. However, it would definitely scare away the younger generation from joining the Congress to pursue their magic dream. That would be bad, as, despite the improvement of the theory system, reduction in the subsequent generation’s population would impact the Congress’ strength.

“I was inspired by your experiment, Sir, the one using helium atomic beams to bombard a thin foil of metal. So I turned to bombard gases and knocked out hydrogen nucleus from nitrogen. The nucleus carries one unit of positive charge, so I believe that a new particle has been found. Then, the discovery of the positive ray confirmed my belief. As for the two new elements, I found their traces when analyzing the radioactive substance, based on the experiment that you temporarily put aside.”

Seeing the look on Fernando's face softened, Lucien knew what Fernando was thinking. He could not help but slightly shake his head, as the realm they were stepping into now was going to be even more subversive and incredible than ever before. The knowledge they were going to obtain would overturn most sorcerers' macro-cognition and ontology.

Fernando had finished reading the part on the discovery of the proton. He commented. "If it wasn't because of your light quantum hypothesis, Hathaway and I would continue the study of the radioactive substance, and perhaps we would have already discovered the elements..."

Again, he perfectly saved his praise to his student.

Fernando kept reading and quickly browsed the data of the two newly-discovered elements. He started frowning again. "Your research data is saying that the two elements come from the decay of the previous element. This is one step into the Gods' zone. No wonder you call it New Alchemy."

"In fact, combining this with the finding of the proton, a theoretical system explaining the transformation of matter can probably be built," said Lucien with the same calm look on his face.

Fernando suddenly looked up at Lucien, his scarlet eyes filled with fine lightning. His great power enveloped Lucien.

"You know what you're talking about?"

Lucien was being careful with his words, using 'probably' to soften his tone. However, Fernando had directly caught the point — His student just claimed that a theoretical system had been built!

If he could call it a system, it would not only consist of one or two hypotheses!

"I do," replied Lucien.

Fernando kept on asking. "Do you understand that you are heading into the forbidden zone, trying to take over the Gods' power of creating the universe for human beings?"

"I do," answered Lucien determinedly.

Fernando asked one more time, "Then do you understand what this means?"

"I do. It will change the time. And it means the title of grand arcanist." Lucien answered while looking directly into Fernando's eyes. "... But the system is still on the theoretical level. Currently, the magic circles and alchemical techniques are not qualified for carrying out specific experiments. It will take a long time to verify the system."

Fernando closed his eyes for a while as if he was taking a break. Then he picked up Lucien's paper and continued to read. He did not make any further comment again until he saw Lucien's prediction of the existence of the neutron.

“Reasonable...” The Lord of Storm slightly nodded. “... So this is the reason behind the differences between the elements. The periodicity can also be explained. With the theoretical guidance and the method of particle bombardment, it will be just a matter of time for the neutron to be found.”

“So Sir, you do believe that particle bombardment can be a regular technique, right?” Asked Lucien expectedly.

Fernando was a bit amused and cast a glance at his student. “You have believed it for quite a long time, haven’t you. Aren’t you adding these kinds of magic circles to your magic tower? Adding these magic circles is very time-consuming.”

“Sir, you’ve been there?” Lucien was a bit surprised. He did not expect that his teacher would pay a visit to his magic tower under construction.

“Two silver hollow metal semi-rings engraved with magic circles. And a feeling hard to describe...” Fernando would not admit that he was secretly paying close attention to his student, and he roughly described the underground part of Lucien’s magic tower. “... I roughly know what you are trying to do.”

“A cyclotron. It accelerates charged particles outwards from the center along a spiral path, so cyclotron beams can be used to better bombard other atoms...” Lucien briefly introduced his concept. “Theoretically speaking, the acceleration is limitless. But due to many factors, there is indeed a range. But the result will already be much better than before.”

The many factors that Lucien ambiguously mentioned were in fact relativistic effects.

“Limitless... bombardment... I feel that you’re destroying the world...” Fernando repeated the keywords and rubbed his brows. “... But this isn’t bad. I think I’ll get one as well.”

Fernando was also a fanatic when it came to doing experiments.

“When I reach the legendary level and own my demiplane, I want to have a Large Collider!” In front of his teacher, Lucien did not need to hide his passion and dream.

There was a smile on Fernando’s face for a second, and then he went back on reading the paper. Based on the atom model and the theory of decay, the following sections of the paper were very logical, thus they were totally within Fernando’s expectation. Finally, when he saw the part in which Lucien introduced the quantum theory into the understanding of electron orbits, he pressed his lips against each other into a line and then said, “before the light quantum hypothesis was proved, I would scold you for this. But now even light’s quantization has been proven, the quantization of electron orbit seems acceptable.”

Lucien grinned. This was the chance that he had been waiting for.

“But it is still hard to believe that electrons are also doing space jumps and skipping the areas in between... Is it because they have special properties?” Fernando was using his own understanding to explain the transition of electrons.

In Lucien’s expectation, Fernando would give him a good lesson after reading this part on the quantum jump, since the discontinuous transition indeed seemed to be absurd. However, he forgot that space jump worked in this world, which made the concept more acceptable by sorcerers.

So Lucien answered in a low voice. “Currently there’s no idea why it works like this. Though it is a logical conclusion following quantization.”

Fernando did not make any further comments on the following predictions made by Lucien. He kept reading until he finished the last part on explaining alchemical reactions using atomic electron transition and describing ionization and valence. He put down the paper and said to Lucien rather seriously,

“There are still contradictions between your new alchemy system and the classic electromagnetism theory. Perhaps further improvements are needed. But I currently do agree with you on the structure of the atomic nucleus and the transformation of matters, and on the extranuclear electrons and alchemical reactions.”

“Ever since human beings acquired magic, the history of alchemy also started...” Fernando took a pause. “... But you are the first one pointing out what alchemy is!”

Fernando rarely spoke so highly of Lucien, and this praise made Lucien’s face flush.

However, Lucien had to say that the Congress’s progress in the school of Alchemy was rather imbalanced. The arcanists were reaching the level of matter transformation, yet on the other hand, the research on the structure and the synthesis of organics was still in its infancy.

“Because of your theory, the school of Alchemy is now included in the school of Element. If Hathaway could accept, assimilate, and further improve your theory, she will become a top legendary in a few years.” Fernando said a bit emotionally.

Lucien cared more about his own teacher. “Then what about you, Sir?”

“Me? I am shifting between too many interests, so my promotion has always been relatively slow. The atomic structure and matter transformation do not have much to do with my legendary class, unless they are related to studies on energy blast or high temperature. If they do, I can go up further and become a top legendary.” Fernando treated this topic as one of his jokes, as he knew it well the result of focusing on too many fields and always being distracted.

Lucien nodded, but made no comment.

Fernando stared deeply into Lucien’s eyes and said, “when this theoretical system is fully developed, you should be able to obtain the magic pattern for creating your own legendary class through the interaction between your cognitive world and the real world. Because of the nature of your theoretical system, when you become a top legendary or a demigod, you should be able to directly manipulate the particles and energy and turn them into various matters. Your title can be ‘the Creator’.”

“It’s such a provocative title to the Church.” Lucien smiled.

If he could manipulate the particles and energy, Lucien thought to himself, he would be able to make use of the power of fusion reactions. Then his title should not be ‘the Creator’, instead, he should be called ‘the Lord of Destruction’.

Creation and destruction were two sides of the same coin in the sense of the particle world.

Fernando found Lucien’s response funny. “So your New Alchemy system isn’t something provocative to the Church?”

Before Lucien could say anything, Fernando grabbed the paper on the desk and said to him, “Let’s go and find Douglas. We’ll have a plan to give the Church a good strike. They’ve been enjoying themselves for too long recently.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 456: The Mad Dog

In Douglas’s magic tower in his demiplane.

The latest issue of Arcana beside him, Artil burst out loud laughter. “It’s been proven! I knew it! What a pity that I wasn’t there in Brook’s lab and missed the chance to see the look on his face! He must be beyond desperate! I’d be laughing in my sleep now if his cognitive world had exploded just like that idiot Lauren!”

Joy. Wild joy. Artil could not hold it back.

Fed up with Artil’s crazy spirit, Norman coughed a bit and secretly thought to himself that Artil indeed deserved the title of the Mad Dog — that was how the other arcanists called Artil.

Norman’s face was a bit pale from the injury in his soul. Using Douglas’ lab, he just verified the conclusion published in the journal.

To find the mysterious dimension, the legends in the congress had gone all out. Very frequently, they had to leave Allyn for the exploration. Therefore, although Douglas was also paying lots of attention to the verification of the light quantum hypothesis, his progress in improving the magic circles was slower than that of Lauren. However, after the design of the experiment was published in Arcana, it only took him half an hour to finish the improvement.

Luciana was in a very good mood as well. After the suppression of all these years had been released, she did share the same wild joy with Artil. However, she was definitely much more restrained. “Lucien Evans is indeed the most promising one of the younger generation to become the next grand arcanist. His hypothesis derives from the perspective which was ignored by all our particle theory supporters. I’m starting to appreciate the light quantum theory now. Maybe the form of the world is actually discontinuous...”

“If it is discontinuous, then what about calculus?!” scolded Artil. The fact that he had paid Lucien the fifty-thousand arcana points did not mean that he had fully accepted the hypothesis. In his eyes, Lucien’s hypothesis was just another variation of the particle theory, and it had nothing to do with if the world was continuous or not.

“There must be something wrong with the hypothesis! It has to be changed! I’d say the same thing even if Lucien Evans was standing right in front of me!” said Artil.

By the way, Lucien had used the fifty-thousand arcana points to pay off his debt with the Lord of Storm.

Luciana was just expressing her happiness, and she used ‘maybe’ before her ideas. However, it still triggered Artil’s anger. Luciana felt offended and her lips moved silently in the shape of the words,

“Mad Dog.”

Artil did not care about Norman and Luciana's attitude at all. He picked up a piece of information and read it, then let out a satisfied and vicious laugh. "Lauren, Christal... An archmage, three senior-rank mages, twenty-seven middle-rank sorcerers, and more whose cognitive worlds have gone broken and solidified. Those bloody wave theory supporters finally got what they deserve! When they were showing off their victory years ago, had they ever imagined today's situation? When Brook reached his throne of grand arcanist stepping on blood and brains, had he ever thought of his miserable ending?"

His hatred was even stronger than what Luciana and Norman imagined. Luciana frowned. Although she was also a supporter of the particle theory, she still thought that Artil's hatred was too much — Lauren and the others were all sorcerers of the Congress, one shouldn't act such happy and thrilled to their death.

Norman looked quite pissed. When he was just about to refute Artil's words, the look on his face suddenly changed to respect.

"Sir."

Douglas had walked down the stairs. Slightly frowning, he said to Artil. "Mind your manner, Artil. There are still phenomena, including the classic double-slit interference image, that cannot be explained by the light quantum hypothesis. We have to remain careful and humble all the time. All the sorcerers who died are our companions. We do have disagreements, but we still share the same goal — to strengthen the Congress of Magic."

"Yes, Sir..." Artil held back his joy. "Lucien Evans is the one who made this happen; too bad he couldn't carry out the accurate experiment three years ago. I wonder how he's feeling right now, and what he is working on."

"I heard that Lucien Evans is working on particle bombardment following his teacher, the Lord of Storm," answered Norman. As a member of the Affair Committee in charge of the Magic

Engineering Department, he knew that the department was sending senior-rank sorcerers to Lucien's Atom Institution to improve the facilities.

Douglas nodded. "Fernando has taken Lucien here. Artil, if you really want to know, you could directly ask them. Norman, if you don't feel comfortable seeing Lucien, you can go back. Don't force yourself to do it."

Norman was a bit discouraged. "No matter what I think, the experiment result speaks the loudest."

"Great. I was about to thank him and have a conversation with him in person." Luciana, on the other hand, was surprised and delighted.

She was working on improving her own meditation method using the light quantum hypothesis, and she had many questions to ask. Some of the questions she could talk to Douglas, but the rest would be most efficiently solved if she could directly talk to Lucien.

Artil was also excited. "I have to ask him if he still has other experiment clues for completely destroying the wave theory!"

— And send most sorcerers in the Congress who were above middle-rank to death?

Casting an angry glance at Artil, Luciana hoped that Artil knew what he was trying to encourage.

After a few minutes, Lucien, who was wearing the black double-breasted suit and his monocle, walked into the small living room following the Lord of Storm.

“Got something new again?” Douglas saw the thick pile of parchment in Fernando’s hand.

The paper rose up in the air and flew to Douglas.

“Lucien’s ‘New Alchemy’. Take a look at it yourself,” said Fernando.

Fernando’s scarlet eyes looked around. Artil, Norman, and Luciana all took a step back spontaneously from his vigor. With the Lord of Storm present, they dared not to pry into the paper using their spiritual power.

Seeing that Fernando was being unusually serious, Douglas started reading the paper attentively,

As he read further, Douglas’s mouth slightly opened and raised his right hand, as if he was about to make some strong comments. But he held himself back and kept reading.

Time went by. And it had been two hours.

Douglas’s students just waited there. They dared not to talk or even use Telepathic Bond. Douglas should not be disturbed at this moment — They knew it very well.

Before the fall of the ancient Magic Empire, Douglas had already become an archmage. He was deeply influenced by the Empire's tradition in the relation between students and teachers — although Douglas was indeed kind and patient to his students, his students had to be deferential to him as well.

Douglas finally put down the paper on the walnut table, and then he closed his eyes. In the following half-hour, he was quiet and seemed to be simulating something in his own cognitive world.

Finally, Douglas opened his eyes and said to them rather seriously,

“The Church has always been accusing us of profaning the divinity of God, of attempting to step into the forbidden realm that only belonged to God. However, we are all aware of the fact that we do not deserve such high comments from our enemy. We have just peeled off some holy wrappings on the outside, but are still far away from that realm. But now, it will be different. The theoretical system in Lucien's paper has brought us right to the gate of the forbidden realm, and what is needed for pushing open the gate is the experimental proof. Finally, we won't let the Church down anymore.

“But we can only fully rely on the theoretical system until the experiment's proof is available. Lucien, your theoretical system can only be verified until the neutron is found, until how an element is changed by bombardment is proved, and until all your predictions come true. All the grand arcanists after me have gone through this after their theoretical systems first came out.”

The title, grand arcanist, only emerged after Douglas's theoretical system was widely accepted.

When he was talking to Lucien, Douglas seemed to be a bit excited.

Finally, they had approached the truth of the world, the secrets behind magic!

The power of creation had always been the ultimate pursuit among all sorcerers! They were now much closer to the dream than ever before!

If human beings could do the same thing as Gods could, then what was the meaning of having Gods?

“What? Grand arcanist? The forbidden realm of God?” Asked Artil hurriedly.

After looking at Fernando and saw him slightly nodding, Douglas allowed the finding in the paper to be revealed to the students present. After all, the paper was going to be submitted very soon.

“Lucien’s new theoretical system, New Alchemy, will be able to give us insight into the secret of matters and hand us the power of creating. It’s going to be a theoretical system capable of changing the era,” said Fernando.

“... What?” Norman could not believe what he just heard.

Luciana’s spirit had been lifted again after the long wait. She looked at her teacher and the paper on the table and then turned to look at Lucien. She wondered if another grand arcanist was about to appear — a twenty-something-years-old grand arcanist.

Seeing the elegant, well-mannered young man standing in front of him, she could not imagine a man like this just claimed that he had mastered the secret of creating the universe.

She suddenly understood how the pastors in the Church felt. There was no way that they could accept the fact that there was no difference between God and human beings.

Artil shook his head fiercely. “This is impossible! Nobody can step into God’s realm! Impossible!” He was even more agitated than when he attacked the wave theory supporters.

As if he had gone mad, Artil suddenly made a rush for the paper beside Douglas and picked it up.

Fernando was just about to stop him, but saw Douglas slightly frowning and shaking his head, so he decided to remain silent and watch.

Lucien felt that he had grasped something.

“Proton... Neutron... Electron... Nonsense! How dare you make such a claim without any experiment support?” Artil turned to Lucien and asked furiously with a completely distorted look on his face.

Lucien answered calmly. “If you don’t believe in the existence of proton, I can go to the lab and prove it to you on the spot. As for the prediction of the neutron, it’s based on atomic weight, proton mass, and electronic mass. It makes sense logically.”

“Then let’s go to the lab!” Artil grabbed the paper and started heading for the lab, and he saw Lucien followed him behind at a leisurely pace.

Nodded in confidence, Lucien said, “no problem. I’ll show you two experiments. Also, we should be able to locate the trace of the new element in the radioactive substance now.”

He was referring to the fifth-circle spell for collecting small amount of elements put forward by Hathaway.

Norman and Luciana had no idea what was going on. Why was Artil acting so weird? Why would he hate Lucien so much for this? Was it because that he hate someone who could receive the title of grand arcanist at so young an age, someone just like Brook?

“It must be a fake experiment... It must be...”

As Artil saw Lucien’s attitude and knew that the design of the paper was reliable and the data was persuasive, the look on his face was replaced by perplexity. “How’s this possible? This is... God’s realm...”

Lucien then saw a beam of bright light burst out from Artil’s body and devoured him.

Before the power of the light could spread out, Douglas’s magic shield had stopped it.

The scene of the light spots slowly falling down was as beautiful as a dream. Watching it, Lucien knew that his sense had been correct.

Artil was not mad. He was not really a ‘Mad Dog’.

“No wonder he was continuously challenging the wave theory...”

“If he had believed in the particle theory that bad, his head would have exploded years ago...”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 457: The Heart of Faith

“Such a good student, Douglas.”

When the small firework died out, Fernando said a bit sarcastically.

Douglas seemed to have aged in seconds. With the bitter smile on his face, he said, “ever since Brook became a grand arcanist based on the electromagnetism theory and the wave theory, I noticed that Artil started behaving strangely. He was prone to exaggerate things, and often said that the reason why there were currently unexplorable and unexplainable questions was that we had not found the Origin. I first thought that it was because Brook’s achievement was too much for him to take. But then I started feeling suspicious... and I did find some clues later...”

He released a gentle sigh and continued. “... Then he seemed to become aware of it. He came to me and confessed that he was trying to take advantage of the Church to get rid of Brook instead of actually believing in the God of Truth, and that the more the Church had trusted him, the more useful it would be for the Congress. Artil has been my student for more than a hundred years; I watched him grow up from a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old kid. I thought I knew him well, so I didn’t invade his mind. I chose to trust him at the time being and tested him with other methods...

“Artil behaved well when we launched the artificial planet and when the electron was discovered. Also, he had always been strongly against the wave theory in the past years, so I lowered my alert... I didn’t expect this...”

Norman and Luciana finally realized that Artil was a spy of the Church. It was the holy light that killed him, not head explosion! But Artil cast magic, not divine spells!

“Unless a demiplane was formed based on his cognitive world, there was no way for us to track if his part of his cognitive world demonstrates divine creation,” said Fernando rather seriously. While the sorcerers’ power grew when they got closer to the truth of the world, the clergy’s power came from their faith. Once their faith became unstable, they would lose all their power or even be devoured by the holy light. Therefore, the Congress was unable to send any higher-rank spies into the Church.

Lucien nodded thoughtfully. After integrating the Light of Faith into his cognitive world, although Artil was not able to cast divine spells, he more or less believed in the existence and power of the God of Truth. Therefore, when his faith was shaken, the holy light burst out when his cognitive world collapsed and devoured him before his head exploded, which was a sharp contrast to the old mage from before, who believed in the God of Truth but whose head exploded. Lucien guessed that this depended on which side played a more dominant role in the cognitive world.

In this case, it seemed that the power of Sard, and the power of the North Church's pope and the Saints, as well as that of the heretics of the Saint Truth that Lucien once met, did still come from their faith.

It seemed that as long as they still had faith in the God of Truth, no matter how their understanding of the doctrine and cognition changed, they were still able to use divine spells without being devoured by the holy light.

But Sard and the heretics didn't seem to be that devoted to the God of Truth either... Lucien rubbed his chin in confusion.

"In fact, I also suspected him... but I put the thought aside seeing that he was fine after Evans's Miracle Experiment," Norman recalled. "... He had two friends in the Affair Committee; they could influence many things indirectly."

A veteran senior-rank sorcerer like Artil, although bad-tempered, still had quite a few friends.

"I'll have Vicente investigate them," said Douglas briefly.

Meanwhile, Lucien started analyzing the constitution of Artil's cognitive world. "He did not see Miracle Experiment with his own eyes, and he had been mentally prepared by convincing himself that the experiment could not completely deny Creationism, but simply offered another possibility. Also, there was no following theory coming up to further support the experiment. However, New Alchemy is based on a complete and reasonable theoretical system. Once the neutron is discovered, following the system, creating spells that could overtake the throne of creation will become possible and practical. It's too much for him."

“So, in his cognitive world, the God of Truth should be the origin of the universe and the initial creator.” Fernando drew the conclusion and then turned to Douglas. “I was about to ask you how we can use New Alchemy to give a good strike to the Church, but here we got a spy first.”

“If we wait until when the neutron is found and when the new spells for permanently changing matters are created to publish New Alchemy, at least one or two saint cardinals will fall. But now because of Artil’s death, the Church will soon find this out. When they are mentally prepared, we’ll miss the chance.” Douglas regained his usual calmness, but the loving smile on his face had disappeared.

There were horrible storms in Fernando’s red eyes. “You investigated him before, right? So you should know how he reached out to the Church. Seize this opportunity, and give the Church a good lesson.”

“To make it a harsh lesson, just the New Alchemy without experiments as proof might not be enough. I’ll have Atlant join us here to come up with a plan and create the most powerful atmosphere for mental hint.” Douglas slightly nodded and gestured Norman and Luciana to remain his office for a while.

...

In the headquarter of the Will of Elements, the royal magic tower of Holm.

Raventi just received a thick pile of paper and a thin piece of secret message.

“New Alchemy? Lucien Evans?” Raventi slightly frowned when seeing such a brief and general title.

But he knew that Lucien was always being very cautious and precise, so there must be a reason why he chose the title. He put the question aside and started reading the paper.

The school of Element and Alchemy were always closely interrelated with each other. Therefore, the Holm Crown prize was also the highest award shared by the two schools. The four arcana review members from the Will of Elements were also authorities in the field of Alchemy.

As soon as he started reading, Raventi sunk into Lucien’s paper deeper and deeper. His brows twitched and his hands were slightly trembling as if he was truly an old man.

After a long time, he seemed to be a bit out of control and roared in a low voice to himself. “So, this is the deep-hiding secret behind matters!?”

His sight became blurry. In the vagueness, there seemed to be a white-haired old man who was so thin that pretty much only bones were left lying on a bed in the magic robe of element. His soul was severely damaged by the failure of the lich-transforming rite and was near collapsing, however, his voice was full of great passion and solemnity.

“Raventi, do you know what it means – the word ‘Alchemy’?”

“It means our dream – to master the secret of matters!”

“Take my place, carry the dream on!”

Raventi closed his eyes and murmured, “Sir, can you see this? New Alchemy!”

Lost in this atmosphere, Raventi took a long time to calm down. Then he picked up the secret message.

“Artil is a spy from the Church? He’s devoured by holy light after reading New Alchemy?” Raventi’s brows knitted together.

He finished reading the message and called the student waiting outside in.

“Go and check who is close to Artil.” Raventi gave the order.

“Why?” His student confused.

Raventi repeated the message to his student and asked solemnly, “understand?”

“Yes.” His student was just about to turn around, but he suddenly thought of something and asked, “Sir, shall we keep the message a secret?”

“The message can be revealed. Accessing the message doesn’t require a high level of authority.”
Raventi recalled the notes behind the message.

When the student left, Raventi headed for the lab. He had to verify Lucien’s experiment first before writing the review.

Mr. Raventi had always been a cautious and conscientious arcanist.

...

In a demiplane, another member from the school of Alchemy whose name was Prado waited beside the desk full of respect.

It seemed that the black-haired, black-eyed man who always had a cunning smile on his face had fallen asleep. Sitting behind the desk, he did not open his eyes even when a doll puppet that had the appearance of a blonde little girl walked in to bring him tea.

After a long time, Klaus sighed. “Finally... I see this alive with my own eyes.”

Looking at the delicate expressionless doll, and then turning to look at the bright blue sky outside of the window, he let out a burst of low laughter.

“Such a wonderful world.”

“New Alchemy. How far could it go?”

...

In the Radiance Church in Holm.

Philibell had just finished his daily prayers when he saw the cardinal directly rushing in.

“Message! Archangel level!” Cried the cardinal before Philibell could scold him for being so reckless.

Archangel level? Philibell was rather surprised. He wondered if Douglas had reached an even higher level, or if the sorcerers had made any new major discoveries that lead them into the realm of God.

Philibell had lots of questions in his mind. Knowing the importance of the message, he took over the thick pile of parchment and asked the cardinal to invite Stone here.

“Archmage level... from Artil, as expected... important material attached, contains curses...”

Philibell checked the file carefully and noticed that indeed there was cursing power emitting from a small pouch tied to the file. Thus, he trusted the message even more.

“Philibell, what is it?” asked Vaharall. He was right in the church, so it was easy for him to come quickly after receiving the message via the divine circle.

Seeing that there were two legends here as his witnesses, Philibell opened the file and started reading the thick pile of paper.

Seeing the complicated magic spells and arcana symbols, Vaharall looked away and waited for Philibell's summary. Meanwhile, it seemed a bit weird to him to have the entire paper sent to the Church. In most cases, an important piece of paper should be summarized first before being sent. How could the entire file all belong to the archangel level?

As he read further, Philibell's body started trembling out of anger, and his eyes were written with fury. Skipping some parts, he directly jumped to the most important section.

“... In the radioactive substance, I have found the trace of the new element, which perfectly matches what I expected: In the process of radioactive decay, energy and matter are released from helium atomic nucleus and thus new elements are formed...”

There was a line of words here: “See attached material. Important.”

Philibell quickly opened the black pouch and saw a piece of ore marked with magic symbols. It was red, but with the emission of the faint rays in three colors – black, white, and green – part of the ore stone turned blue, and then dark radiant green.

The tiny traces of the new element within was amplified by magic, while the magic waves had been hidden by the cursing power.

This was a real piece of ore stone from nature, except that its changing process was presented by the magic tags.

“This is an element turning into another through decay...” Philibell could not help reading further, as if he had been possessed,

“... Since human beings acquired magic, the dream of turning elements into gold has always been there. This is not merely our pursuit of wealth, but the longing for the truth of the world, as we always wish to master the secret of matter transmutation!”

“... However, for thousands of years in the past, there was not a single alchemical reaction which had successfully transmuted a substance fundamentally without relying on a permanent magic circle... In front of the gate of the forbidden zone belonging only to gods, we human beings could not march further...”

Recalling the atom structure put forward by Lucien Evans and how he described the decaying process, Philibell felt that his brain was seized by panic. The answer had emerged in his mind...

“... But now, after discovering the inner structure of the atom, by studying the nature of decay, we can find the path for fundamentally changing matters and substances and creating new elements! Following my theory, although the product might not be worth the cost, we can finally take over the power once exclusively owned by god! Now we see the deepest secrets hiding behind substances, and we are on the way to achieve the shared dream of generations of sorcerers!”

Philibell's head buzzed as if someone just hammered his head. Driven by great fury and hatred, the everlasting peace in his mind was gone.

“How dare these filthy sorcerers to pretend to the throne of creation! How dare you, Lucien Evans!” Roared Philibell.

This was no longer a groundless accusation, but solid evidence. In the upcoming future, Lucien Evans would step into the forbidden realm once only controlled by God!

Before he could say more, several cardinals rushed in, with messages in their hands.

“Your Excellency, Artil has been devoured by the holy light because of New Alchemy!”

“Your Excellency! Confirmed! Artil's faith was shaken; holy light outburst!”

They had no idea that Artil was a spy before this, but now they had all realized what was going on.

The messages arrived just in time. Philibell got a bit confused and helpless – He thought that the finding still needed to wait until the discovery of neutron to be proved.

His eyesight fell on the bottom line of the message. The words had turned scarlet under the rays.

“Artil has been devoured by holy light. What about you?”

The red ore stone in his left hand was still emitting rays; it was still turning into a blue new element.

Philibell heard his heart thumping. Voice and sound faded away from him. He simply could not look away from the red decaying stone, and he even used divine power to verify it.

It turned out that the decaying process was indeed real, the same with the existence of the new element. Lucien Evans’s description was correct. If the process could be controlled or even reversed, the changing of matter could no more be a secret which once only belonged to God.

Fear and panic possessed him. Philibell could not help murmuring to himself.

“The Lord is still almighty! The Lord is still the origin of the universe. But... but if an ordinary human being can do the same thing as God can do, then...”

Vaharall’s eyes suddenly opened big. He sensed the danger a second before it arrived.

Outside the Radiance Church, people walking by were shocked to a powerful, majestic light pillar soar into the air and everything within the range vaped. Then, quickly, the divine circles outside of the church were activated and counteracted the power of the light pillar.

Standing far away from the church, after seeing how the central part of the building was ruined and the clergies who screamed bitterly in the holy light, Douglas sighed. “It has been hundreds of years; we never did any damage to the building. But today we almost completely tore it down.”

“But it looks like Philibell is not as devoted as he claimed.” With his eyes closed, Atlant the Eye of Curse said to Douglas, Fernando, and Lucien.

In the air, Vaharall looked down at the church which had been severely damaged and the clergies who did not manage to escape, he felt the anger burning his guts, but at the same time, he also felt lucky that he could not understand the paper.

“Philibell, are you alright?” Varahall asked Philibell, who was kneeling on the ground in the center of the huge hole, as if he was making a confession.

“My faith was shaken...” said Philibell bitterly; his grand cardinal robe had been torn into pieces. “... Not only can I never reach the next level, but my power has even receded by one level.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 458: The Angry Pope

Finishing the experiment together with his teacher, Prado relaxed down as he looked and saw the dreamlike sunset glow. He felt more satisfied than ever, as he had clearly identified the next step he was going to take in the research — find neutron to support Lucien Evans' matter transmutation theory.

He used to think that he would never reach the legendary realm and become an "Excellency" like his teacher, but now the New Alchemy had brought him hope!

With a big smile on his face mixed with excitement and joy, Prado picked up the quill-pen.

"Please first allow me, as an alchemist, to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Lucien Evans, the author of the paper. He has made generations of alchemists' dream come true!

"Starting from fact, Mr. Lucien Evans has made a comprehensive but detailed description of the inner structure of the atom and its properties. He then built a theoretical system that could thoroughly explain alchemical reactions, ionization, valence, periodicity of elements, and spectra lines patterns of elements. This theoretical system also elaborates the nature of elements. Furthermore, based on the new element found in the radioactive substance, Mr. Lucien Evans has reasonably explained how matters transmute and predicted several methods of transforming matter.

"If Mr. Lucien Evans' theoretical system is proved, it will become the greatest research achievement since that of Her Excellency Hathaway. His theoretical system is powerful enough to change the era!

"As an alchemist, I'd say that this theoretical theory will become the code for the school of Element and Alchemy. The glory of this achievement is greater than ever.

“However, since the final establishment of the theoretical system still requires solid experiment support, so far I cannot directly send all these compliments to Mr. Evans, nor the title of grand arcanist.

“Based on what we have so far, I can say that this theoretical system explaining the school of Element and Alchemy is groundbreaking, innovative, extremely important, universally applicable, and is greatly worth discussing. Five-thousand arcana credits and one-hundred-thousand arcana points are suggested to be given as a reward.”

When he put down the quill-pen, Prado was still in the excitement.

He looked out at the dimming night sky, and he knew that tomorrow when the sun rises, it would be a glorious bright day.

.....

Thanks to the divine circle God’s Guard designed for defense against the grand arcanists, the periphery of the Radiance Church was left intact.

However, as Stone the Four-winged Knight rushed here and saw the shocking scene, the look on his face became extremely distorted with great hatred and sorrow — All the cardinals and bishops in the central part of the Church, who either lived here or were on duty, were all dead.

Stone’s vision became blurred, as if the blood of the clergy had covered his eyes. The loss was too much for him to bear.

To stand against the Congress of Magic which growing stronger day by day, the parish of Holm was the center of the surrounding four districts Colette, Brianne, Calais, and the coastal area of the northland. Thus a great number of cardinals were gathered here, most of them in the Radiance Church.

“So far, it is estimated that at least three level-nine red robe cardinals, fifteen red robes of lower ranks, and almost a hundred cardinals were martyred...” Vaharall’s coarse and miserable voice seemed to be directly blown out from hell. Yet he could not let the sorrow and angry completely seize his mind right now, as he still had to turn on the divine circles to prepare against the possible upcoming attack from the Congress of Magic.

“Lucien Evans!” Recalling that he had just gloated over Lucien’s kill record, Stone could no longer hold back his anger..

Great shame!

He had known from Vaharall that it was Lucien Evans who caused this. Such a scale of loss was even rare during the War of Dawn and the war against the North heresies. Although the South Church claimed that the number of their middle-ranks and senior-ranks was equal to that of the Congress and the North Church added together, due to the vastness of their realm, they were still in trouble regathering enough pastors and cardinals in a short period of time.

However, what pained him the most was the degradation of Philibell’s power! This was their greatest loss!

“Also, Douglas, Fernando, Atlant...” Philibell knew the legendary sorcerers very well. Lucien Evans was not alone.

Douglas was Artil's teacher, and Fernando was Lucien's. And the way they did this was of the typical style of Atlant.

Philibell seemed to have aged within seconds. "I've sent the message to His Holiness the Pope. War is inevitable. Lucien Evans must die."

Lucien Evans must die now. It would be too late when he became a grand arcanist and legendary sorcerer.

Given New Alchemy enough time, the future of Lucien Evans would be out of their control!

"We'll wait for His Holiness's command." Stone tried his best to restrain his fury.

Philibell added despiritedly. "I'm not able to lead the Holm parish anymore. I've applied to His Holiness to send a more powerful grand cardinal here."

"Philibell..." Vaharall knew how this felt.

The sky dimmed. The night fell much earlier than expected.

.....

Using the magic circle improved by the Will of Elements, the rigorous Raventi did two separate experiments to confirm the existence of proton, while the discovery of the new element was much easier.

Picking up the quill-pen, Raventi recalled the time he first saw Lucien, who was wearing a black double-breasted suit and standing quietly among the low-rank sorcerers. Except that he was better-looking and more well-mannered than his peers, there was nothing else that made him different from the others. Raventi had never imagined that this young man would have made such amazing progress within just a few years. Now, he was very promising to become the eighth grand arcanist in the Congress, when he was only around thirty.

His Excellency, Lucien Evans, the Creator.

“The scarlet moon... The tide of the time...” Raventi murmured to himself silently.

Then he started writing the review comment. To him, a level-nine arcanist and a ninth-circle sorcerer, New Alchemy showed him the hope of reaching the legendary level!

“Although the Introduction of the quantum theory into the atom structure model still requires more experiments as verification, it is, without doubt, a paper to which all sorcerers in the school Element and Alchemy have to bow. It is the Code of Element and Alchemy.

“As long as the neutron can be found, and that the artificially created matter can permanently exist outside of the permanency magic circle, Lucien Evans’s New Alchemy will be able to shift the direction of elemental and alchemical magic development and change the time. Perhaps the theoretical system is still not perfect, but so far it is definitely reasonable and logical.

“Lucien Evans has combined the many alchemical reactions together and offer them a shared explanation derived from his theoretical system.

“So far my review comment has to be made based on the current experimental results. Therefore, I’d say that this is a groundbreaking, extremely important, and universally applicable theory worth broad discussing. Six-thousand arcana credits and one-hundred-thousand arcana points are suggested to be given to Lucien Evans as a reward.

“This is an epic step into the exclusive realm of gods of us sorcerers. Now, we are only one step away from accessing the throne of creation.”

The darkness of the night outside the window was thick and dense.

.....

In the Bright Hall, Holy City Lance.

The members of the Grand Cardinal group were silently waiting for the arrival of the pope.

Suddenly, the space was filled up with tyrannical, divine, and bright power. The superior power made them lower their heads.

“Lucien Evans stole the Lord’s power with his New Alchemy. Severe punishment he deserves! And the Congress of Magic!” the Pope, Benedict II, strode out of the divine circle holding his scepter high. There was a distinct rage in his voice.

The members had never seen the pope this furious. They quickly exchanged a look between each other.

Stealing the power of the Lord and profaning the glory of divinity, these charges were indeed very bad, but Lucien Evans was not the first sorcerer who did those. Douglas, Brook, and the rest of the grand arcanists... they all more or less deserved similar charges, but the Pope had treated their issues calmly. What was the difference this time?

Was it because this theoretical system could really change matters freely that it even made the Pope uneasy?

His white hair neatly combed backward, Benedict II gave the top command. “I declare war against the Congress of Magic. The five parishes — Holm, Colette, Brianne, and the Northland along the coast — will be leading. Support will be given. And the Parish of Holm will be in charge.

“Philibell is injured. Someone must take the role in the Radiance Church in Rentato. A Saint.”

After a short period of silence, Sard stood out and said, “Your Holiness. I wish to take the role of the Grand Cardinal of Holm and lead the five parishes.”

Although he looked just like an ordinary old man, Sard had reached the third rank of Saint Cardinal two years ago and had been given the title, Saint.

“Your devotion makes you glow, and the Blessing will always be with you. When the war begins, we shall all join,” the Pope nodded.

Then the Pope started drawing the plan for the upcoming war, with Sard giving advice.

No one dared to say a word against the decision of the furious Pope. The plan was drawn fluently.

Then the Pope said to them, “the top thirty night watchers shall all see eliminating Lucien Evans as their top priority once they are available. Lucien Evans now ranks no. 19 on the Cleansing List.

“I have one thing to clear up,” said the Pope all of a sudden, “Lucien Evans was once a Seraph beside the Lord, thus he owned the incomparable talent in music and wisdom. But he was lured and betrayed the Lord. He stole the power of creating from the Lord and fell to the ground.

“He is the Primordial Demon, and also a Fallen Angel!”

The grand cardinals and the leaders of the Inquisitions all understood the Pope’s words immediately. The Pope was saying so for solidifying the followers’ belief — Human beings could never be as powerful as God; Lucien Evans was able to do so because he was a thief who stole the Lord’s power.

Ranking no. 19 on the Cleansing List, the name Lucien Evans, the Fallen Angel, was even above many legends!

The Pope raised the scepter high and was about to declare the start of the war. However, at this time, Benedict II suddenly looked up at the sky and then, it felt that the entire world trembled a bit.

Standing among the stars in the sky, seeing the blurry scenes of the foreign dimension in front of his eyes, Oliver grinned to Hathaway.

“Here it is.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 459: The Start of the Chaos

In the Bright Hall, the Holy City Lance.

The entire world trembled a bit. All the cardinals present felt it. In the clear blue sky, there was a blurry image of a brand new world, so strange and so familiar at the same time.

It was the dimension that they had been seeking for in the past three years, where Alterna and the mysterious existence fell.

“Someone found it,” Squinting his eyes, another Saint, Anasta, broke the solid silence in the Bright Hall. “This world seems to be quite special; its revelation made too big a stir, so now we can also precisely locate it... it’s another fair competition.”

All of them turned to look at the Pope, waiting for his further decision. Should they stick to the war plan, or switch their focus to the newly-found dimension, to finding the injured Alterna and the mysterious existence?

Except for the two Grand Cardinals, who looked rather calm and indifferent, the rest of them all looked a bit excited. For them, the choice would definitely be the latter!

Was Lucien Evans important? Of course. This was not the first time that Lucien Evans brought disaster to the Church, and they all knew it well that Lucien Evans was very likely to become the next grand arcanist and legendary mage in his thirties or forties. If they simply left Lucien Evans alone, he would quickly grow into a huge threat to the Church.

However, compared to the secrets hiding behind Alterna and the mysterious existence, Lucien’s importance paled. If they could catch Alterna and the mysterious existence and find out their secrets, the gain would be immeasurable for the Church, for the Pope, and for everyone!

All the previous popes wished to be immortal like Alterna, just like the saying —“eternal is the Silver Moon, eternal is the Moon God.” However, because their power came from the God of Truth, they could not prolong their years using magic and potions, thus five-hundred years was their limit. Also, after becoming the pope, their bodies aged even faster from bearing the power of God, even though they were already Saints before ascending to the throne.

The Grand Cardinal group's members could easily notice that the popes never lived long, but they did not know the reasons behind. The most reasonable guess was that a human being's body and soul ascending to demigod level would have to bear unrepairable damages.

Therefore, knowing the secrets of the real demigods could for sure prolong the Pope's life span.

As for the grand cardinals, knowing even the smallest piece of secret would greatly benefit them. They would see much bigger hope in ascending or even becoming demigods, Saints, or Angels on the Ground to enjoy immortality.

With such power, the entire Church would be invincible!

Under the burning gazes, the Pope released a sigh and said calmly, "eliminating Lucien Evans, the Fallen Angel, was what we were planning on. However, now the Lord has decided to send us to an even more dangerous and challenging task. This is our honor and pleasure. Sard, you will still lead the parish of Holm, as well as the entire five parishes to stand against the Congress of Magic. Before this ends, no spare support can be sent to you. This is a tough situation."

"Your command is the will of the Lord. Only truth lives forever," answered Sard without any personal emotions.

However, in other grand cardinals' eyes, he was of extremely bad luck.

Being the leader of the five major parishes and ranking only below the Pope in the Church was once the ultimate pursuit among all the powerful characters in the Church. However, the Congress of Magic had become much more powerful than ever, and thus the role had now become a very risky one. What was more important was that Sard was going to miss the chance heading for the

dimension to look for Alterna and the mysterious existence. But since Sard did not say anything, they were also glad to have fewer competitors.

“Anasta and Maria, you two shall come with me.” Benedict II commanded calmly.

Maria was another Saint, and just like Anasta, he was fully trusted by Benedict II.

Different from the constitution of the North Church, in the South Church, the Pope had unparalleled authority and power. No one dared to stand out and speak against the Pope. What surprised them even more was that the Pope was going to join in the exploration of the dimension! Ever since the division of the Church, His Holiness had never stepped out of the Holy City.

The Pope has put an even heavier emphasis on this than they expected.

“Arzaro, Varantine, Bellia...” The Pope picked another five members from the Grand Cardinal group, who were either saint cardinals or legendary knights. “... should also come along with me.”

This arrangement had made the most from what the Church had right now. The Church had so many enemies that the Pope had to be very cautious all the time in case they would launch a strike when the Church was unprepared, although the Pope believed that their enemies would also choose to focus on chasing after the newly-found dimension.

Also, this time the Pope would join in person, and he is confident in himself.

After the arrangement, the Pope said to them, “get the senior-ranks, top two hundred night watchers, radiant knights and above to prepare themselves. We know nothing about the dimension yet. Maybe it’s as broad as the Star Tomb, then we’ll need stronger support.

“As for the punishment that Lucien Evans deserves, two or three top night watchers should still bear the mission in mind.”

The Pope still insisted on killing Lucien as soon as possible even now.

“As command, Your Holiness,” answered the members in chorus, as they drew a cross in front of their chests,

“Only Truth lives forever!”

...

In the boundless starry sky, Oliver shrugged at ease and said, “there’s something wrong with this dimension. The stir we made was too loud to avoid the attention. The North and the South Church may already be on their way now. I’ll get in there first. You go back and tell the president all the information we collected. Let him make the plan and gather everyone else.”

“I see.” Hathaway did not waste her words. Turning around, she did an elegant Space Jump using her demiplane — Element Paradise. A few hours earlier, she received Fernando’s secret message and was informed about Lucien’s New Alchemy. Therefore, she resisted the temptation of exploring deeper into this dimension, and instead, applied to guard Allyn in the next five-year period, in order to assimilate and further improve the theoretical system.

After Hathaway left, Oliver released a sigh,

“Here starts the chaos.”

...

On the Night Highland, in a busy city.

The buildings in this city carried the style of ancient times. Some were heavy solid stone huts from of the Age of Steam, while some were green treehouses left from the time when elves were still ruling this territory. However, most houses and buildings in the city had pointy tips and looked grayish, which was typical of the ancient Magic Empire. This city was a place where most races in this world gathered together, including human beings of different ethnicities, werewolves, beautiful elves, pale vampires, scaly Kuo-toans, and so on.

All of a sudden, the space and the living creatures cracked like a mirror. The image of the two human beings having a heated conversation in the corner broke into small pieces, together with the buildings and the entire city.

On the empty land, a black castle emerged. In the castle, the lid of a huge coffin opened fiercely, and a man in his thirties wearing a black evening suit and a cloak that was black on the outside and red in the inside flew out. His eyes were scarlet, creepy but enchanting.

“Finally...”

In the next second, Dracula had vanished.

On the Night Highland, the several vampire princes all responded in the same way. They had all set out, leaving their territories behind exposed to possible attacks — There was nothing more important than the Primordial Ancestor.

In San Ivansburg, in Antiffler, in the Dark Mountain Range... Countless legendaries looked up at the sky simultaneously and immediately set off for that dimension, with or without companies. No one could resist the temptation, not even the arrogant Rudolf II or the mysterious Pope of the North.

...

“We are heading for the dimension — Douglas, I, Vicente, Hellen, Atlant, Hull-Chulia, Chelsea, Davy... Eleven legendaries in total to support Oliver,” said Fernando who just directly showed up in the Atom Institution. “You stay in Allyn. Don’t fool around. If you have to, use your Transformation Mask.”

If Lucien had not made such a mess and thus became the most hateful one in the eyes of the Church, Fernando would bring him and his other students together with him, so they could gain experience by exploring the dimension under his protection. However, now the dimension would soon be turned into the battlefield among the legendaries. Lucien should not take such a risk.

In case the Church would launch a sudden attack, the Congress also saved six legendaries to help Hathaway safeguard Allyn, including Brook, who was still recovering from the damage in his cognitive world.

Although Lucien was, of course, very curious and he did long for the power hiding in that dimension, he had not lost his reason to greed. Joining the battlefield of the legendaries as a sixth-circle sorcerer would be directly courting death. He had better just stay here and hope that the Congress could bring back some pieces, so he apply to research on them in the future as a grand arcanist. With the credits he just earned from the light quantum hypothesis and New Alchemy, Lucien was now already a level-seven arcanist. Expecting more citation credits coming up, plus the Influence Factor, Lucien believed that he could become reach level eight in a few years.

“Yes, Sir. I’ll be cautious,” said Lucien like a deferential, good student.

Meanwhile, his brain was spinning fast — Seizing the chance, he could bring out the dwarves from the Night Highland once his magic tower was ready.

This was the best chance ever!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 460: Lucien’s Magic Tower

A few days later.

The tall silver-gray tower reached all the way up into the cloud, featuring its elegant curves and lines. Compared to the many other magic towers owned by the senior-ranks, which more or less looked gloomy, Lucien's magic tower was a good match to the starry sky and had some kind of unique taste in it.

"Hmm... A musician's fantastic magic tower," commented Rock, who was still quite whimsical even though he was already a third circle sorcerer now after the several years.

As an expert in Astrology, Lucien had to observe the stars, so a tall magic tower made sense. However, it seemed that the color and the shape of this magic tower were almost too unique and eye-catching to match Lucien's even-temperedness. However, considering the fact that Lucien was also a musician, the guests present all accepted the design.

Louise fancied the design of the magic tower quite a lot. It suited her taste much better than the traditional, gloomy-looking towers and castles. She smiled and said to Lucien, "Mr. Evans, you also have a very good taste in architecture. I'd appreciate it a lot if you can offer me some opinions for my villa's reconstruction in the future."

Although Lucien had told her multiple times that she could just call him by his name, Louise was still being the same respectful. After becoming the host Nightingale of the radio programme, Louise made quite a lot as a second-circle sorcerer. Therefore, she bought herself a garden villa in Allyn where property price was rising day by day.

"Did you name it, Evans?" Asked Samantha casually with the same indifferent look on her face.

Normally speaking, a sorcerer would not bother naming their magic tower. A name was usually saved for the demiplane. But Lucien was not only a sorcerer, but also an artist.

Lucien grinned as he stepped on the stairs. “I call it Babel.”

“Babel...?” Lazar and the students repeated the syllables confusedly. They had never heard the word before.

K was about to ask, but stopped himself when he saw the mysterious smile on Lucien’s face, knowing that this was probably Lucien’s little secret.

“Welcome back, my Lord. Welcome, distinguished guests. I’m Pinocchio. The brave, loyal, and honest Pinocchio.” The silvery voice of the alchemical life rang.

Lucien pointed at the gradually opening silver-gray metal gate and said, “this is Pinocchio, the tower guard.”

The guests greeted the tower guard although they had no idea what did such a name mean. Through the gate, they entered the hall, in which there was a metal sculpture of a huge wheel in the center.

“The Wheel of History. That’s what the sculpture is called.” Introduced Lucien.

Rock first burst out laughing. “Ambitious, Lucien, ambitious! But I’m sure the last thing you lack is ambition. A future grand arcanist who put forward New Alchemy will never lack ambition. No matter it is the Church in the South or North, they’ll be completely crashed by the wheel of history!”

“Despite bendings and windings, history keeps progressing,” said Lucien in a good mood.

The magic tower would be his first real home in this world. Here, with the magic tower, Lucien would be able to protect himself against the attack of a ninth-circle.

Samantha nodded lightly. “Your mind is sober. New Alchemy did not lead you to arrogance.”

Although the special supplement New Alchemy of this month’s Arcana had not yet been published, most sorcerers present had enough background and had thus already read this era-changing paper.

After reading the paper, the younger generation, including Samantha, Rachel, Larry, and Ulysses, held deep admiration for Lucien, but also felt a bit depressed. Before New Alchemy came out, Lucien was a leading rival of his peers, and chasing him up was a shared goal among the younger arcanists. The goal was almost unrealizable, but it was there. However, now they had realized that Lucien was no longer one of them. Lucien should be in the team of the legendaries, standing beside those including Douglas, Brook, Hathaway, and Klaus. They were too far behind to catch up.

This caused the feeling of helplessness among them.

“Underestimating your enemies is underestimating your own life.” Lucien looked at Samantha and said with a smile, “I’m not as talented as you all think. Like I said before, the study of the atom is such a brand new field in which even the smallest finding can lead to the discovery of a much bigger secret. In this field, there is so far no authority and no difference between us. When conditions are ready, we can all find something amazing. I just took a step ahead, and it does not mean that no one can catch me up. Being young and open-minded is the most valuable thing.”

Samantha looked into Lucien's serene eyes and knew that he meant it, instead of just being humble out of courtesy. She put on a sincere smile and said, "What a pity... I'm good at the school of Element."

The rest of the guests, including Larry, K, and Lazar, nodded thoughtfully. They knew what Lucien just said was true.

Lucien pointed up at the sky and said, "the macroworld is as important."

"Sir, can we take a visit to your lab?" Before Samantha could respond, Heidi asked curiously.

Lucien nodded and then led them to the elevator and then to the underground level. On their way, they walked past the spare energy room, the binding rooms, the underground magic garden, and arrived at the vast lab.

Most of the magic circles and alchemical facilities in this spacious lab were easily recognized by the sorcerers present. However, they had no clue what the two metal halves placed in the high-magnetic, vacuum magic circle in the middle of the lab were.

The two silver halves engraved with magic patterns somehow resembled the style of the magic tower.

"This is a cyclotron for accelerating charged particles. If any of you want one, my design plan is available in the Exchange Zone." Lucien briefly introduced how the machine worked to them, which was a smart and secret way of luring his friends.

Although the Congress did help Lucien out to some degree with this far-beyond-budget magic tower by selling the materials to Lucien at much lower prices, Lucien still had used up all of his savings in the past three years to improve his magic tower to an even higher standard to prepare for the future upgrades, so he was now in great need of extra arcana points.

Lucien was impressed by his own pace of progressing. Although he had made quite a fortune from the projects and papers, he was still far from being rich compared to those senior-rank sorcerers who had lived over a hundred years and thus had enough time for accumulating wealth. Lucien found his budget beyond tight, especially that he was seeking for the best materials for everything.

“What’s this then?” Asked Larry, pointing at the sealed box connected to the transmitting part on the top, on which there were many thermodynamic magic circles.

“It is a cloud chamber, for assisting alchemical experiments,” answered Lucien.

“Cloud chamber? For what?” K asked.

“When it is turned on,” Lucien smiled and explained, “it is filled with supersaturated vapor. When an energetic charged particle passes, it will be ionized, leaving a mist-like trail of ionized gas particles looking in the form of droplets. So we can observe and record the trace of a particle better.”

“I can’t believe I never thought of it!” exclaimed Ulysses, who specialized in the school of Thermodynamics. The observation of particles in the microworld had always been a big problem in their study. While lots of sorcerers were still working on improving amplification facilities, Lucien had solved the problem using vapor.

Louise and Heidi said simultaneously, “can we take a look?”

Lucien nodded and turned the cyclotron on.

In the box, elegant mist-like trails suddenly appeared against the dark background. The beauty of the curves was stunning.

The lab, for a while, became silent.

.....

After taking the tour in the lab, Lucien led the guests to the banquet hall. When the senior-ranks including Raventi, Gaston, and Isabella arrived, the banquet began.

In the cheerful atmosphere, Lucien presented eight pieces of piano bagatelle, and he also played the violin, impressing all the guests present.

When the performance part ended, the guests started talking to each other casually. Seeing the scene, Lucien suddenly felt a bit lonely. He knew that he was missing his friends and family in Aalto.

Lucien found a chance and snuck out of the hall and came to the balcony. Then he cast Electromagnetism Messaging.

“Hey, good evening, Lucien. Congratulations on your magic tower.” Natasha’s cheerful voice soon came.

Lucien also grinned. “Good afternoon, I’m celebrating.”

“What a pity I can’t be there. But still, congratulations, the Fallen Angel.” Natasha joked, “His Holiness is creative when creating these titles.”

Lucien replied seriously, “I’m only studying the particles in the microworld for the sake of arcana. But I think the experiment results show that the God of Truth has already handed human beings and nature the power of creation as a gift after the world was first created, and now the God of Truth only serves as spiritual guidance.”

For the sweet future, Lucien had been working on gradually shifting Natasha’s religious belief.

“So you’re saying... God is in our hearts, and the Church has been lying to us?” Natasha didn’t seem to be bothered. As long as Lucien was not indicating anything profane, she was fine with it.

Lucien answered decisively, “of course. Ms. Meredith was also a good person, right?”

Natasha giggled. "Alright, this isn't my point. The thing is that when the Church started calling you the Fallen Angel, I began picturing you in an angel costume, you know, like the one in an opera. It'd be even better if you are equipped with a pair of wings."

"I remember the costume for angels is usually genderless..." Lucien knew what Natasha was thinking.

Natasha burst out laughing, but with a hint of guiltiness. "Yeah... yeah... By the way, why the signal wasn't as good when I called Granny Hathaway?"

"The communication satellites still need further improvements. Mr. Douglas has been working on this in recent years," answered Lucien.

As a result, the plan of having satellite constellations was falling behind.

Natasha said thoughtfully, "but the quality of our conversation is... You know what's wrong, right?"

Lucien chuckled but said nothing.

Natasha knew when to stop asking questions. Then she released a gentle sigh. "The mysterious dimension has been found, and my mentor has set off to follow the Pope in there. Every time when I think of the battlefield there, my blood runs fast and I feel beyond thrilled. But I know I am not ready yet. However, His Holiness has also asked all the radiant knights and above to get prepared as the reserve force. If there's something wierd with the dimension, we will join in.

“If the day comes, I’ll lead the nobles in Violet into the dimension.”

Facing such a situation, the royal house must send a representative to be the leader. It would be either the Duke or Natasha, otherwise, the others would not obey heartily.

“I’d like to go, too.” Lucien said implicitly. The words he omitted were “with you”.

Natasha laughed, “Come on. None of the legendary sorcerers would pick on me, but you’re different. The entire Church wants you to die. You’re such a troublemaker!”

Their conversation did not last long, as Lucien could not just leave his guests alone. After knowing from Natasha how John and his family were doing, he had to end the call.

Turning around, Lucien saw Samantha looking at him from a distance with a plate on her hand. On the plate was steamed fish, a dish improved by Lucien that was favored by all the guests.

“I didn’t hear anything, but I can tell it from your face. Besides magic and arcana, some space in your heart is still saved for that lady.” Samantha sighed out of disappointment and then turned around without hesitation.

In the Congress of Magic, there were much more sorcerers who were single. Although they did pursue marriage just like common people, longevity made many of them lose their beloved ones. Also, some were deprived of desires, mostly the liches, so they chose to become single again. Rarely were there couples who both had the power to live very long.

Among them, the grand arcanists had the lowest rate of marriage — Douglas, Fernando, Hathaway, and Hellen were all single; Vicente Miranda’s wife had passed away a long time ago, and rumors said that until today, his biggest dream was to truly bring his wife back to life. Brook’s wife fell in the assassination of the Church; Oliver was the only one among them who had a sweet family.

.....

In the underground caves of the Night Highland.

Augustus the Elder was praying to the God of Steam attentively.

It had been a few years, and the Night Highland was getting more and more dangerous. The dwarves were still waiting for the guidance from their god.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 461: The Exodus from the Night Highland

“The Almighty God of Steam, the Lord of Life and Death. Your devout servant, Augustus, prays to you.”

“... Under your lead, we have spread out your grace across the land of Vlad, into all the middle-rank vampires’ castles. Now, we have twenty-three thousand seven hundred and eighty-six dwarf brothers and sisters praying in your name and following your words...”

“... Two thousand six hundred and nine brothers and sisters of us have devoted their lives to the fight against vampires and blood servants. The attention of the senior-rank vampires has been attracted. Our actions are getting increasingly dangerous...”

“I beg your guidance. I beg your mercy on all devout dwarves. I beg for help to break the chains and for new lives away from the Night Highland...”

“Steam Above.”

The holy statue in front of Augustus looked very strange. In the shape of a round, tower-like cone, it was engraved with countless unique patterns — The dwarves made the statue based on the beyond destructive weapon they saw in Atlantis.

In Lucien’s eyes, they were praying to a nuclear bomb.

Prostrate on the ground, Augustus was praying with all his heart. It had been three years, and the God of Steam never gave them any guidance again. But his belief was still solid. Augustus regarded this as their trial.

This did not mean that he was not worried. Several years ago, before their troop expanded, because Madam Tess had died and Count Vlad had fallen asleep, the Dwarf Rebellion grew fast with ease. They had the knowledge and had won the control of some mines and forges, thus their weapons and armors had been greatly improved — High-pressure steam rifles, vampire-killing bullets, mythril-mixed chain mails which were effective against the claws of vampires. And they were finally able to fight back.

However, as they started having more followers, and when they had reached the territory of the middle-rank vampires nearby, the situation suddenly became intense. It would cost the lives of over a hundred dwarves to hurt and back off a middle-rank vampire. Even the explosive bullets they invented later whose power did not differentiate vampires from dwarves did not work very well.

According to Harold and Aquinas, their only hope was to remake the huge warship from the ancient Steam Civilization, which could probably be very efficient for killing middle-rank vampires.

“But based on what we have — the knowledge and the techniques — there’s no chance for us to build such a thing...” said Aquinas, the leader of the Dwarf Rebellion, a bit desperately over the meeting.

Augustus, the leader, said with even greater worry, “now we’re only fighting against the middle-ranks. If the senior-ranks wake up, if Count Vlad wakes up... even the warship will become useless, unless...”

Augustus did not finish his words, but his listeners all understood. What Augustus was indicating was the ultimate weapon they saw in Atlantis, the one whose power was enough to temporarily create a new Sun and destroy the entire Night Highland.

Thinking of this, Augustus’s prayers became even more sincere. Their God was testing them, Augustus believed.

“You dominate everything, Life and Death. You’re the King of the kings, the God above all gods.”

Finishing his prayers, Augustus was about to stand up when suddenly heard a remote, powerful voice in his brain,

“The future has arrived. Take your staff, and guide your people to the new life.”

His eyes suddenly opened wide. Out of the ecstasy, Augustus trembled when he hurriedly mumbled the words. “In your name. As you command.”

He saw bright light blooming before his eyes, lighting up the entire underground cave. The light was an illusion resulted from his ecstasy.

After calming down a bit, Augustus asked very humbly, “Almighty God of Steam, how shall I guide them out of Night Highland?”

Although the tales passed on for generations said that the ancestors of the dwarves were from another place, Augustus had no idea how to leave the Night Highland.

“Do as I say. Do not ask why.”

“We shall sing forth the honor of your name. May we get out of the pain and sufferings under your blessing and glory,” said Augustus, his head lowering deeply.

Then he walked out of the altar and opened the gate in extremely high spirit. Full of confidence, he exclaimed in front of the dwarves,

“Command to you all! And all dwarves devoted to the God of Steam. We shall gather in three days! The Almighty, the God of Steam, has given us words — WE SHALL LEAVE THE NIGHT HIGHLAND!”

After a short silence, under the lead of the young dwarf lady Myrna, all of them present cried out loud.

“Steam Above!”

Joyful tears ran across their faces.

...

Three days later.

In the huge underground cave located within the territory of Count Vlad, close to twenty-one thousand dwarves were gathering here.

Some of them were carrying high-pressure steam backpacks and holding big steam rifles, guarding the entrance of the underground caves connecting to each other, while some wore only ragged cloth bags and their bodies were covered with wounds left by whipping. However, they had one thing in common – Their eyes were shining with bright hope.

“It’s the time. I’m very encouraged by the fact that we have all of us here. Your devotion deserves the blessing.” Augustus walked across the crowd, wearing the dwarf robe and holding a missile-shaped staff. “and I, Augustus, the Speaker of God on the ground, will lead you forward.

“On our way out, we shall have no fear and no hesitation, no matter what is waiting for us in the front. Because, we are blessed!”

“It’s time to hit the road!”

“Steam Above!” the dwarves cried out loud together.

Joining the teams they belonged to, the dwarves followed the instruction in the book, Military Training, which was left to them by the God of Steam, and walked in the underground caves quietly.

They all understood it. Staying here on the Night Highland only meant death and shame. The landing of the God of Steam gave them the only belief in the boundless darkness. Death, or fight. They chose to fight, although they were afraid.

Going through the caves, the path elevated, and countless tombstones appeared beside.

“Here sleep our heroes, who died for our freedom. Some of them were warriors, and some were just common men and women who died protecting us. At this moment which decides the living or death of us dwarves, every one of us is a hero!” Augustus said aloud in great respect, while leading the troop to salute the dead.

The two thousand six hundred and nine tombstones watched them march forward, and the atmosphere became rather solemn. Suddenly, a sharp scream penetrated the silence from behind – Two to three senior vampires, leading seven to eight lower-rank vampires, chased up them in the air!

“It’s Sanelson!” The dwarves screamed. “They’re here!”

Sanelson was a level-five vampire knight who had killed hundreds of dwarves.

Did anyone betray them?

Was it because the vampires had caught some dwarves on the way?

Panic and despair spread out. The dwarves knew how powerful those vampires were. The vampires were already close to senior-rank. In such a crowded place, many of them would die, without a doubt.

Harold stopped his steps, looking at his brothers and sisters helplessly screaming and running in panic. He made his decision within a second. He spat on the ground and commanded,

“Warriors from Mechanic Knight, stand out! We die for the God of Steam! It’s time for us to devote everything for our brothers and sisters!”

Damn it! They would rather die standing than die for nothing!

At this moment, he conquered his fear of death.

Holding the huge rifles in their hands, the warriors were also afraid. Despite that, some still stood out with great determination. They shot at their best, but only hit a lower-rank vampire, who roared in pain and rolled back and forth on the floor.

When Harold had no idea what to do, Augustus’s voice arrived,

“On our way out, we shall have no fear and no hesitation, no matter what is waiting for us in the front. Because we are blessed!”

“Hold your weapon, keep moving! We are blessed!”

It was the command!

Harold did not understand. If they kept fighting, there might still be hope, while they all would die if they followed the command. However, Augustus's severe eyes could not be disobeyed.

"All, keep moving!" Harold had to obey.

The dwarves did as asked, marching forward slowly in great fear.

To their great surprise, all of a sudden, the surrounding tombstones started shaking fiercely. The dead dwarves climbed out: Some had turned into bones, and some were half rotten.

At first, they thought that it was the vampires who were manipulating the bodies. However, the over two-thousand tombstones all started writhing, and the over two-thousand bodies stood up one by one, as the world of death had befallen.

Silently, the bodies rushed to the vampires in great numbers. And then —

Bang! Bang! They exploded.

Were they still protecting their people after death?

Were they still clinging to the hope of freedom?

The dwarves recalled that another name of the God of Steam was — the Lord of Life and Death.

Tears in his eyes, Harold looked at the dead dwarves exploding together with the vampires, and his fists tightened — He must complete the dream left by those heroes; They must free themselves!

For over ten thousand years, this was the solid belief shared by dwarves!

Harold lifted his arm and cried, “Steam Above! Keep moving!”

Through the cemetery, the dwarves left the underground cave, and they saw a giant rock in front of them.

Following the instruction of the God of Steam, Augustus opened the gate of the underground palace. He walked in leading the troop and saw a mysterious gate in the middle of the hall, on which bright starlight glimmered.

“Behind the gate is the new world. The world of redemption.” Augustus pointed at the gate. “If you have made up your mind, go through it.”

At this moment, no one would hesitate anymore. Under Harold’s organization, the dwarves walked through the gate and disappeared. The space shook because of the teleport. However, none of the vampire princes were here on the Night Highland as they were all rushing towards the dimension for the Primordial Ancestor. As for the senior-rank vampires, they were not as sensitive. The only

senior-rank vampire living nearby was Count Vlad who was still trying to get out of the trap in great fury.

When only members of the Mechanic Knight was left, Sanelson and the rest of the vampires finally got rid of the dead dwarves and arrived.

“What should we do?” the warriors exchanged a look with each other. Some of them were ready to cover the rest to make sure most of them could leave.

Harold put his hand on his chest and said, “don’t be afraid. Don’t stop.”

As soon as he finished the words, a silver shiny coin appeared above the gate, rolling upward.

As the coin rolled, distorted magnetic field and silver electric currents appeared in its surrounding. They twisted and wound around the coin, forming a giant, thick snake of electric currents.

Sanelson’s scarlet eyes opened wide out of great fear as he watched the lightning filled the hall.

The horrible power devoured the vampires swiftly. There was no chance for them to run away.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 462: The Morning Star

Bricks of stone fell like rain drops. When the lightning disappeared and he regained his sight, Harold finally realized that the vampires were all gone and the hall itself was also on the edge of falling apart.

“It was just a... silver coin...” murmured one of the dwarves.

Harold quickly calmed down and scolded. “The coin was possessed of the power of God! The Almighty God of Steam is not only the God of Machinery, but also the Lord of Life and Death, the King of Lightnings, the Lord of Punishment!”

“Why a silver coin then?” asked another dwarf.

Harold wasn’t good at explaining this kind of stuff. He squeezed the words out with great effort. “That shows the Almighty God of Steam is also the God of Wealth, the King of the kings, the God above all gods!”

Everything could be explained by the almightiness of God.

The dwarves nodded under the convincing words. All of them, including Harold, put their hands on their chests and bowed deep in front of the gate,

“Steam Above!”

They then walked in the gate in pairs. Within half an hour, they had all left the underground hall.

As soon as they left, the power suppressing the space instantly disappeared, and the space started shaking fiercely. Pieces of starlight fell from above, and soon the entire gate disappeared together with the collapse of the underground palace.

.....

After quite a few days, Sanelson’s “father”, a vampire duke, arrived at the ruins following the blood connection between Sanelson and him. He came to figure out why Sanelson had gone missing for days.

A space joint! The vampire duke was shocked.

Staring at the collapsed underground palace, he now cared no more about what happened to Sanelson. In great anger, he turned around and was ready to teach Vlad a good lesson — Even if he had fallen asleep to recover, Vlad still must be responsible for this.

An unreported space joint in his territory! The Church might find it and launch an attack at any time!

Another few days later, a deafening noise burst out in the direction of Count Vlad's castle. The vampire count's anger surged right into the air,

"I will kill that bastard who trapped me!"

However, Vlad had no idea who did this to him and had no clue to trace him, not even with Horoscope.

.....

Lighting up the torch, Augustus saw an abandoned city; there were thick chimneys, metal pipes, bolts, springs, and gears everywhere. The civilization of Steam was right in front of them.

He immediately understood. Tears gushed out. He cried in great excitement and sorrow. "This is our homeland, where our ancestors worked and lived!"

Augustus kneeled down onto the ground and kissed the cold land overgrown with weeds. "We're back! We're finally back!"

The dwarves all followed him, kneeling and kissing their land of origin. Bitterly they cried, shedding tears for what they had lost.

After Harold and the rest of the dwarves came and the gate disappeared, Augustus took a deep breath and said to the over twenty thousand of dwarves, “this isn’t our final destination. We shall go back to the ground, and start our new life! There shall be no more slavery, no more painful deaths, no more suffering!”

His eyes were shining with hope and determination. “Grab your torches and follow me! Don’t hesitate. Don’t be afraid. This is the revelation of the God of Steam!”

“Steam Above!” Answered aloud the dwarves together.

The torches were lifted. Following the command of the instructors, the dwarves marched forward in order, in units of families and villages, through the abandoned city of steam. The Mechanic Knight was divided into four, safeguarding in four directions.

The city was huge. Enveloping the light of the torches was the endless darkness. In the darkness, the only light came from the dim green shine emitted by noctilucent moss, but it wasn’t a comfort for the dwarves at all. They were afraid of the darkness, and the green light seemed to be the blood-thirsty eyes of countless monsters.

What was in there? They didn’t know.

Silence seized them, only the sound of their own steps could be heard. The journey seemed to be getting longer and longer, as if they could never leave this place.

When the dwarves started getting lost and panicking, Augustus’s voice came again.

“Don’t hesitate. Don’t be afraid. Follow me!”

“Yes!” Answered the dwarves together, although not too confident.

Augustus raised the staff high,

“The God of Steam is with us! No difficulty, no danger, no suffering can conquer us!”

Hearing the name of the God of Steam, the dwarves became braver. Saying God’s name silently in their mind, they were equipped with the courage for scattering the darkness. Gradually, they walked faster and faster.

Bang, bang! The rifles shot together, throwing the monsters leaping from the darkness to the ground in blood and flesh.

They had the power of steam, thus, they were invincible!

“The Almighty God of Steam, the Lord of Life and Death, the King of Lightnings, the Lord of Punishment, the God of Wealth...”

“You’re the God above all gods, the King of the Kings...”

The dwarves sang forth the names together. Their voice joined into this force driving away the creatures hiding in the darkness.

Finally, this huge troop walked out of the city through the tunnel and came to the caves connected like spider webs.

“This is the last test. Only true followers can walk out from the maze. Don’t hesitate. Don’t be afraid. Follow me!”

“Yes!” This time, their voice was much louder and full of confidence.

All the forks looked identical, and the dwarves were very afraid of getting lost. However, their leader Augustus had closed his eyes, walking following his heart.

Seeing what their leader was doing, the fire of hope lit up in the dwarves’ hearts again.

They should have faith in the Almighty God of Steam, have faith in His chosen exarch. Here, eyes and ears should not be used to seek the path, but hearts and faith!

They dwarves walked on, panicking no more, confused no more.

After a long time, they saw a dim light in front of them and a broad forest in the far end.

They did it!

They were on the ground now!

Suddenly, Myrna pointed at the sky and said, “look!”

The far end of the sky was partially lit up, where a bright star was hanging. The star was quiet but twinkling, directing the path eternally.

“Morning star...?”

“Is dawn coming?”

Those dwarves were born on the Night Highland and they had never seen daylight. They had only heard about morning stars from the stories passing on through generations and knew that it represented the arrival of light.

“You’re the Lord of Life and Death, the bright Morning Star. You connect night and day. You bring us new life!” said Augustus devoutly.

The morning star was replaced by the orange light in the east, and then, a fireball slowly rose above the horizon.

The dwarves had never seen anything like this. Now, they started to actually feel the arrival of their new life!

Augustus raised his arm and cheered aloud. “Our new life has commenced. We’ll strive for the prosperity of Atlantis! The Atlantis on the ground!”

“Strive for the prosperity of Atlantis!” The more than twenty thousand dwarves responded at the same time, their loud voice disturbed the flocks of birds hiding in the forest.

At this time, a melody full of passion arrived from faraway.

The dwarves turned their head and, to their great surprise, they saw a fat man wearing a long black windbreak and a beret walking towards them, followed by a group of human. The melody came from the small box engraved with strange black patterns in his hand.

Before the dwarves reacted, Augustus told them, “he’s the guide. I received the words of the God of Steam. He’ll be leading us to our brand new life.”

The dwarves were no more afraid. Belief had given them the power for conquering fear. They quietly stared at the fat man and his companies, who studied them like how they looked at buckets of ale and how the vampires look at blood.

“I am Arthur Adol, the one who will lead you to your new life, a life much, much happier than the previous one you had on the Night Highland.” Arthur grinned broadly at the dwarves.

In his eyes, the troop of dwarves was the symbol of a large amount of money. With so many skilled dwarves, the mass production of the alchemical products could be realized.

Following Arthur, the dwarves walked all the way down to the station. On the platform, when they saw the long magic steam train, they burst out into tears again. They were convinced again that this place was their homeland, the paradise of steam.

The dwarves stared at the magic steam train out of great curiosity, wishing that they tear it down and check every part of it, until they got on the train.

“Why is the guide sent by the God of Steam a banker?” Myrna just learned the word ‘bank’.

Harold said proudly, “I said it. The Almighty God of Steam is also the God of Wealth. It makes sense.”

Then he said longingly, “I saw the small silver coin turn into a powerful bomb with powerful electric currents... I wonder if the Civilization of Steam picked the wrong side for studying huge warships and cannons. Maybe... maybe we should invent new cannons using the power of electricity...?”

“Here you are, the new book from the Lord.” Smiling, Augustus handed a book to Harold.

Harold picked it up and saw the name: Basic Electrical Engineering.

Later, Arthur walked to the last carriage of the train and sat down in front of a young man wearing a double-breasted suit. He said to the young man like an old friend but also respectfully, “Evans, I can’t believe you can find this many skilled dwarves!”

Lucien Evans was probably the next grand arcanist. Arthur had to show respect.

Holding the teacup in his hand, Lucien said, “treat them well. Give them enough salary and freedom. After all, they left that place because of me. When they have acquired basic electrical engineering skills and knowledge, they’ll be able to train more workers.”

Because the vampire princes and the most powerful vampires on the Night Highland had left for the mysterious dimension, searching for the Primordial Ancestor, Lucien’s rescue plan carried out rather smoothly. He achieved the guidance using the power for awakening the dead of the Immortal Throne magic robe and a new electromagnetic spell, Lucien’s Electromagnetic Gun – Although this spell was not that powerful yet, when Lucien reached a higher level, its power would also grow.

“You have my words. I’ll treat them well,” said Arthur without hesitation. He did not ask a single word about the so-called God of Steam.

The magic steam train was approaching Rentato. In the early morning, the lights in Rentato were still on, as brilliant and bright as constellations in a sweet dream.

The dwarves were so surprised that they could not close their mouths. It was as if they had come back to Atlantis.

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“Evans, since most sorcerers in the school of Electromagnetics and Light-darkness — Sorry, I have to say this — dislike you quite much, for your safety, we are giving the public another excuse for holding this banquet rather than telling people that it is your award-winning party. I hope you understand,” said Joaquin, the president of the Moonsong League, a level-nine arcanist ND ninth-circle archmage, while smiling.

Since Brook just confirmed the change in momentum several days ago, which verified Lucien’s light quantum hypothesis, no matter how reluctant Moonsong League was, they had to accept it.

Following Joaquin, Lucien grinned. “We can save the trouble. You could just give me the prize. I’m worried that my presence might be too much of a surprise to the guests.”

“No, this is the tradition. We got to have a decent banquet when awarding you the medal.” The president shook his head seriously.

Otherwise, the public would look down upon Moonsong League, accusing them of being too narrow-minded to properly recognize Lucien’s great contribution.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 463: Lucien, the Devil King

The hall of the Allyn branch of Moonsong League was covered in a layer of cool and soft moonlight.

“Jurisian, what’s the banquet for?” A short young man looked around in confusion, “Why are those elementalists here today?”

It looked like he was only in his seventeen or eighteen, but his voice was rather mature.

The man he was talking to had black hair and dark brown eyes. With a gentle smile on his featured face, the man said, “no idea. The president informed me to come, so here I am. I’m not gonna stay here for long though, a banquet like this is always boring.”

Jurisian was wearing the five-star arcana badge and the five-circle magic badge. Thanks to the introduction of the Influence Factor, he had reached the next arcana level in these years. Also, because of his constant practice in fighting skills, his magic level had also advanced. Now, he was heading for the senior-rank.

“Jurisian, I’d rather it had been you who put forward the light quantum hypothesis.” Another sorcerer from the school of Electromagnetics joined their conversation and moaned to Jurisian. “Why you stopped digging in after discovering the photoelectric effect?”

Jurisian swirled the golden liquor in his glass. The smile on his face remained unchanged. “How do you know I never dug into it, Pono, Feya? But putting forward the hypothesis not only relies on conducting multiple experiments, but more importantly, an open mind and brilliant imagination unconstricted by the past theories. I never paid enough attention to the paper written by Lucien on energy’s discontinuity, so how could I get the key premise for raising the hypothesis?”

Pono was the short man who was talking to Jurisian earlier. He was more talented in magic than in arcana and was one of the sorcerers in Moonsong League who were most likely to reach the senior-rank. Hearing Lucien's name, Pono said in resentment, "every time I think of that person, I want to destroy the place with lightning balls! My teacher's cognitive world was broken and solidified because of his hypothesis, and my friend... his blood was all over my face..."

"If I see him outside of Allyn, I'll put him in trouble!" Pono claimed.

"Put him in trouble? How?" Feya asked sharply, "as a fifth-circle sorcerer? Will all those awards, he could counter a seventh-circle sorcerer, not to mention New Alchemy. Lucien Evans is the future grand arcanist. Stop dreaming."

She did not want to be this sharp. Her sarcasm came from the feeling of helplessness, for the sorcerer Polo just mentioned whose head exploded was also her friend.

"I know," said Pono remorsefully, "but if I don't think in this way, I'd go nuts. At least, when I see Lucien Evans, I do have the courage to spit in his face."

"That's very impressive. I think I do, too." The corner of Feya's eyes went red.

Jurisian was still wearing the same indistinguishable smile on his face, listening to their conversation quietly. The conversations of the other sorcerers could also be heard.

“If I see Lucien Evans in person, I’ll go and ask him directly how to explain the diffraction and interference of light using his hypothesis.”

“There will be one day when his head will explode because of a similarly bold hypothesis based on the wave theory!”

“I don’t care if he is a grand arcanist in the school of Element and Alchemy or not. Lucien Evans will never understand Light-darkness using his particles. The light quantum hypothesis is very likely simply a part of a correct wave theory. It’s not the end yet! We still have the classic theory in electromagnetism and the experiment image!”

Jurisian slightly rose his eyebrow. In his eyes, those high-rank sorcerers were like some little puppies whining after losing a game.

In such a situation, most sorcerers present were actually talking about Lucien. This was enough to show how much they hated Lucien Evans and his hypothesis. At the same time, on the other side of the hall, the elementalists and alchemists were also having a heated discussion over New Alchemy, although it was no longer a new topic among them. In their eyes, Lucien was going to be the future grand arcanist, the legendary, the new leader of the entire Congress.

Suddenly, Pono’s eyes opened big. He pointed at the stage in the front of the hall,

“There!”

Jurisian looked over and saw that Joaquin walked on the stage together with a cultured young man.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said Joaquin, “this is Mr. Lucien Evans.”

Lucien Evans? Pono recalled the horrible scene of his friend’s death as soon as he saw the young man on the stage. Until today, he could still smell the blood and feel the squishy brain tissues on his face. The sight of the headless body collapsing to the ground came back to him.

He had this great fury burning inside his heart, but fear seemed to be more. He could not utter the feeling, as if staring at this young man one more second would blow his head up.

The fine glass dropped onto the floor from Pono’s hand with a crispy sound. The scarlet liquid stained the carpet, just like the uncleared floor from then.

More glasses dropped. Staring at the color of the wine, Feya couldn’t hold back her nausea anymore. The scene reminded her of that day, the day of blood.

Unable to control their anger, many sorcerers directly squeezed the glass in their hand into pieces. Wine splattered over them,

Their faces became distorted because of the hatred but also fear.

As the sound of glass breaking died away, silence dominated the entire space. Even the sound of breathing had disappeared.

“Ladies and...” Lucien took a step forward and bowed politely.

Lucien did not even finish his starting words. As he took a step forward, the guests backed away subconsciously. Some were shaking their heads as if they were trying to get Lucien’s words out of their brains, or their heads would also explode. Among them, there were a few senior-rank sorcerers from Moonsong League who Lucien also knew, yet they were the same afraid as if Lucien would utter some extremely subversive theories at any time.

Silence resumed.

Lucien wondered if his name had joined one of the spooky campfire stories or nasty stories to scare young kids. Luckily, there was no kid here.

Joaquin was a bit pissed with how these sorcerers from Moonsong League responded to Lucien’s arrival — They had lost their decency!

Joaquin coughed a bit, and the solidified atmosphere started to break, yet no one dared to challenge Lucien in the face, although many of them were bragging about this minutes ago. They were afraid of Lucien; this fear was a result of many broken skulls, fresh blood, and brains.

“We’re gathering here today for awarding Mr. Lucien Evans with the no. 21 Silver Moon Medal, to recognize his great contribution to the school of Light-darkness and the school of Electromagnetism, for raising the Light Quantum Hypothesis,” Joaquin said a bit sorrowfully — The award was first established in memory of the birth of the wave theory and the classic electromagnetic theory, but now, the award would go to the hypothesis which overthrew them.

Jurisian examined Lucien calmly. It had been three years since the hypothesis first came out and he had already accepted it. As a young and less conservative arcanist of the new generation, he was not saddened by the fact. However, Joaquin's words seemed a bit sarcastic to him — Lucien Evans's great contribution? Contributing headless bodies and broken cognitive worlds?

The guests present finally realized the reason for being here today. It seems that without doubt, His Excellency Mr. Brook had found the evidence to prove the hypothesis.

"I always believed that It's rather stupid to be obsessed with the question 'particles or waves'." Lucien, the devil king in the audience's eyes, started speaking again in the aggressive air of confidence before taking over the Medal. "Is it really hard to accept the truth, to admit that the experiment results indeed show duality? We should see this from a broader and higher perspective. The micro-world goes beyond our imagination, thus we need to recourse to only the experiment results and math equations."

No one dared to utter a word, however, it did not mean that they agreed with Lucien.

Duality? Both particles and waves? How could that happen?

Lucien glanced at the expression of the audience and didn't go any further. It was better to just give them some hints. Smiling, he continued. "This's my first time winning the Silver Moon Medal, and I am totally confident that this is not the last time. In this brand new realm, honor is only saved for those who are open-minded and unbiased."

Then, Lucien took over the medal and wore it on his left chest, next to his Ice & Snow Medal.

He had won the highest honor of five different fields. Including Lucien Evans, only two accomplished this achievement in the Congress.

“The Silver Moon Medal, Light Quantum, level-seven perfect-rank magic item.

“Electric currents can paralyze the body and destroy the soul. The sorcerer wearing this medal could gain greater power in paralyzing his or her enemy when striking the target with lightning. Meanwhile, the power of the spells in the school of Electromagnetism and Light-darkness can be empowered to the seventh-circle.

“Great magnetic force will form a halo and encircle things within, which works perfectly when the targets are metal golems or knights wearing non-magnetic-proof armor — Seventh-circle Electromagnetic spell, Magnetic Halo. Cast three times a day.

“The giant lightning shall destroy everything — Seventh-circle Electromagnetic spell, Thunder Rage. Cast three times a day.

“Thanks to Lucien Evans for putting forward the Light Quantum Hypothesis, allowing us to see light from another perspective.

“We have figured out what lightning is, but not yet what light is.

“From Edwyn Brook”

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Rentato, Hexagram Station.

The black-haired man who was always chewing something in his mouth walked casually on the platform. He looked ordinary, like a random passing-by traveler.

Night watcher rank no. 13, level-eight radiant knight —“Flesh Manipulation” Ramiro.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 464: New World

At the parcel collection point of Hexagram Station, Rentato.

A fine-featured lass smiled politely. “Hello, how may I be of service?”

“I have a luggage bag that needs to be stored here until my return from Allyn,” Ramiro replied with a minty, relaxed smile.

The minty smell came from a specialty from the Kingdom of Brianne known as “Mint Fragrance”, which was a kind of tobacco, though it was not to be smoked but rather chewed on after a secret drying process and provided a mind-refreshing cigarette-like intoxicating effect.

The lass asked with a smile, “how many days would that be? Are you a sorcerer?” Despite being an average female in Rentato, she managed to find a leisure job with decent pay all thanks to “Arcana Voice”, which made her get rid of her bias against sorcerers and dared to apply for the job. She successfully stood out from the few applicants and secured the job. As a result, she became very fond of sorcerers.

“I’m just an ordinary sorcerer. Let’s make it three days. Nah, can I pay for seven days upfront and make adjustments later?” Ramiro asked calmly. It didn’t look like he was pressed for time in any way.

The lass replied, “no problem, please pass me the baggage for inspection.”

After listening to “Arcana Voice” and working at Hexagram Station, she realized that sorcerers weren’t as wealthy as she had imagined. There were many who, in the pursuit of power and arcana research, were left with barely enough to live by.

Like any normal traveler, Ramiro handed over the black luggage bag in his hand.

The female worker did not cut any corners. Abiding by the training protocols, she placed the luggage inside a magic circle within a piece of large alchemy equipment. Then she pressed the switch and turned it on.

The company “Gift from Elements” had developed this simplified alchemical item for exactly this kind of purpose. They could be powered by electricity, thus allowing ordinary people to use them. As a result, it had been widely implemented at locations including the Magic Steam Train Company, Nekso Palace, the villas and orchards of nobles, music halls, opera theatres, and the town hall.

The inspection had confirmed that there weren’t any cursed or dangerous items in the luggage. It was only after this confirmation that the lass opened the luggage to screen the items with her naked eyes. She found that the majority of the items were normal clothes, with a small portion being tobacco from Brianne. There was also a light-dark colored piece of meat wrapped in gray cloth.

“Specialty steak?” she asked out of curiosity.

Ramiro’s mouth twitched. “Ya”

“A silver a day, for a total of seven.” The lass closed the luggage and attached an identification tag on it. She then took it to the warehouse behind and placed it on the corresponding shelf.

After she returned, Ramiro took out seven shiny silver pieces. He let the pieces fall through his fingers one after another onto the counter while listening to the crisp sounds with slanted eyes.

“This is your receipt, please keep it with you for the final tally.” The female worker respectfully passed Ramiro a receipt that had been stamped with a special magical ink paste. Only official magicians — who wouldn’t do it for such a little money — could forge the ink paste.

Ramiro picked up the receipt. Still chewing on the tobacco, he nodded. “Thank you.”

Then, with hands tucked into the pockets of his tuxedo, he headed off towards the Magic Steam Train station. When he came near to a silvery-black trash bin, he pulled out his right hand and threw a carbonated piece of paper into the bin.

The black paper fell slowly, breaking into a countless number of butterflies at the slightest touch of wind. Not a trace remained.

Afterward, Ramiro went inside a restroom. He surveyed the surroundings carefully while wearing a carefree expression. After confirming that there was no one else around, he faced the mirror and pinched his face. His entire body suddenly wriggled erratically like a slime.

Seconds later, he had transformed into a beautiful young lady with a voluptuous figure. His tuxedo has also transformed into a lilac-tiered dress. The collar and cuffs had transformed into ruffles.

Looking into the enchanting deep blue eyes in the mirror, Ramiro smiled at “her”. “Long time no see, Avelina. Sometimes I find that being a girl is much more interesting than being a man.”

Naturally, “Avelina” didn’t respond.

After tidying up her clothes and donning a broad-brim hat with a beautiful long ribbon which she had seemingly conjured from thin air, Ramiro left the restroom elegantly and boarded the magic steam train that had just arrived.

“Avelina, so you’ve returned from Brianne?” A young man stood up from his seat in joyous surprise.

Ramiro smiled sweetly. “Yes, the magic development in Allyn is faster than I had anticipated. If I were to remain in Brianne, I would not be able to keep up with the times. So I’m back.”

“That’s marvelous. Where is your boyfriend Lavrov?” The young man eagerly invited “Avelina” to sit down.

Ramiro’s expression turned sorrowful. “We’ve broken up.”

“What?” The young man fought to suppress his happiness. Feigning sadness, he consoled her. “Cheer up, the best is yet to come.”

Ramiro watched “with grief” as the platform faded from view. Listening to the sound of the train horn and the clickety-clack of the wheels against the track, Ramiro thought angrily.

“Who on earth was that?”

Avelina had not spoken of this man after she had been controlled...

The “silent melancholy” that she exuded intoxicated the young man, rendering him speechless. Time passed swiftly. The magic steam train gradually ascended towards Allyn.

When they passed through the mythal of Allyn, Ramiro narrowed his eyes. He could feel the power of the mythal brushing past his body.

As expected, though Allyn appeared to be as open a city like any other ordinary city, the security checks that were hidden from view were extraordinarily stringent. Luckily, his “Flesh Manipulation” ability allowed him to be passed off as the real ‘Avelina’.

The magic steam train stopped at the station. Ramiro saw the brilliant starlight released by the Congress’ Headquarter Magic Tower from a distance, with an intensity rivaling that of the red sun in the sky.

“What’s happening?” Ramiro had recognized what it was, but he asked regardless.

The young man examined carefully and replied, “it seems to be the Portal to Alternate Realm. Could it be that the grand arcanists have returned from their investigation of the mysterious realm?”

“We’ll find out if we take a closer look,” Ramiro replied smiling.

This appeared to be an opportunity, yet it seemed to be too much of a coincidence.

However, Ramiro was not about to abandon such an opportunity. As the night watcher ranked number 13th, his powers and abilities overwhelmed many strong level-nines. Decisiveness and

willingness to take the initiative are what enabled him to become who he was — Those who were accustomed to plotting and scheming would never anticipate him to barge in like this.

“Merely two point seven seconds...” Ramiro whispered to himself. This was the amount of time that he had before the mythal would react, given that Allyn Mythal was not on its full power yet. He wasn’t exactly confident that he could kill Lucien Evans in such a small time window either and could only play it by ear.

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On the 32nd floor in the Headquarter Magic Tower of the Congress, within the grand hall stood an illusory door that was five-meters tall and three-meters wide.

The door was built on a complex magic circle that was made up of countless gems and rare materials. Rays of brilliant starlight shone outwards from the top, and many sorcerers had gathered around it.

“Sir, why are so many senior-rank sorcerers and archmages assembled?” Lucien had received no notice beforehand and arrived only after he detected the anomaly.

Fernando, who wore his scarlet magic robe as always, said solemnly, “the races of this world are normal, but its environment is special. Every corner is filled with a strange sensation, one that suppresses our spiritual power greatly. Even Douglas’ senses can only extend to a radius of 300 meters. This world is separated into countless little pieces by many spatial barriers that are incompletely solidified. Normal people are hardly affected by it, to them, the world is still whole. However, for us legendary sorcerers, it means that flight is almost impossible, for it’s too easy to collide into one of such barriers.”

“Under such circumstances, it would be very difficult to locate Alterna and the mysterious existence, as they can automatically shield themselves from many magical prophecies ineffective...” Lucien had a rough idea of why so many senior-rank sorcerers and archmages have gathered here. Strength lay in numbers in times like this.

Fernando nodded in agreement and continued. ‘We had a fight with the Church. The Pope was involved, and it caused us to fall leeward. However, the numbers that they could spare to send after us were not enough to surround and kill us. Then, after discovering the peculiarities of this alternate space, we reached a tacit agreement to stop the fighting. The highest priority now was to explore the new world and find Alterna’s whereabouts. Fighting directly would give advantage to other parties.”

“A new world ...” Lucien wondered if it meant that Natasha would lead the Duchy of Violet’s radiant knights to there as well.

Fernando noticed that Lucien wasn’t paying attention. He smiled and said, “according to preliminary calculations, this alternate space is half as big as the main world, so it can be considered as a new world. If anyone can claim ownership of it, they would gain vast amounts of resources.”

“So that’s how it is, then why weren’t the middle-rank sorcerers also summoned? The number of senior-rank magicians and archmages are quite small in comparison,” asked Lucien puzzledly.

Fernando shook his head. “That’s because a special kind of powerful beings exists in this world. Their abilities are beyond that of high-rank sorcerers. Sending middle-rank sorcerers in would only result in a large scale of loss.”

“A special kind of powerful beings?” Lucien had never heard Fernando speak of powerful beings in such a way.

Fernando's expression turned solemn. "False gods, those that came into existence in the early phases of the War of Dawn. They are a variety of monsters with powerful abilities. However, due to some strange reasons, they could bestow powers to their followers, much like demons and devils. Their minds are in a state of crazed stubbornness. Currently, one has been captured and is being researched on."

"Captured one..." Lucien suddenly had the impression that the False Gods were pitiful animals being hunted.

Fernando noticed that the senior-rank magicians and archmages were just about to finish entering the Portal to the Alternate Realm. He threw a stare at Lucien and warned. "Abandon any ideas that you might have. Just stay in Allyn and improve your magic. Until your power matches your Cleansing List ranking, you better not wander around. Don't think about participating in this mysterious space matter either."

But the power matching Lucien's Cleansing List ranking should be that of a legendary... Lucien rubbed his chin in frustration.

Fernando didn't speak another word, gesturing Thompson to enter the Portal to the Alternate Realm with him together.

With his entrance, the batch of reinforcements finished their transfer. Around the portal, only several friends and apprentices remained — This expedition was much more dangerous than the previous ones; It could very well be their last farewell.

Amidst the crowd, Ramiro watched the starlight dissipate and began calculating. The Portal to the Alternate Realm would soon regress back to its semi-charged state.

With the Portal to the Alternate Realm's scattering energy, the Allyn Magic Tower and its surrounding mythal's reaction time was seven seconds.

To avoid alerting Lucien, he only cast a fleeting glance at Lucien at the start and ignored him afterward.

“Seven seconds...”

The opportunity was prime. Let's take action now!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 465: Behind the Scenes

Seven seconds.

Ramiro's face was filled with excitement and happiness. Her starry eyes sparkling, she walked quickly towards Lucien. Her expression, gaze, and gestures were screaming to others the fact that she adored Lucien. Meeting her idol at the first opportunity in Allyn, she could suppress her urge no longer.

It was normal that Lucien, whether as a musician or an arcanist, received such adoration from the younger generation of sorcerers. The other surrounding sorcerers only muttered about how it was such a waste of a beauty — According to street gossip, Lucien was a crazy researcher who practiced strict abstinence, just like President Douglas. The swarm of beauties surrounding them was left absolutely untouched. If it had been Oliver, it would have been the complete opposite result.

“Really...” The young magician who had brought in “Avelina” watched enviously. If he had even a fraction of Lucien’s talents, Avelina would have fallen for him long ago.

Six seconds, Five seconds.

The ecstatic fan closed in on her idol. With slightly parted lips, she seemed to be considering how to start a conversation.

Lucien had also noticed that a young, beautiful young lady was heading towards him. He extended a hand and signaled her to stop. After receiving knowledge that his rank on the Cleansing List had risen to number 19, Lucien had kept a distance with everyone except his acquaintances.

It was caution that allowed him to still be alive. If she had anything to say, she could speak from where she stood. Only at this distance could his Contact Spell be activated undisturbed.

It seemed that Ramiro didn’t understand Lucien’s gesture and continued forward.

“Her” eyes were mystified; “her” cheeks were rosy. Most men would be harboring naughty thoughts by now.

Just a little bit closer, just a bit closer!

Four seconds.

Suddenly he saw Lucien raised his right hand, gripping the Sun Staff inlaid with a huge sunstone.

“What the f**k, he’s this cold even towards such a beautiful admirer? Not even the slightest shred of hesitation?” Grumbled Ramiro to himself in his mind. There was no doubt that if she took even a step further, Lucien would actually activate the magic.

The spell Thanos’ Maze could not only trap enemies but also restore composure in excited “fans”. Lucien had no trouble selecting the magic spell to use.

If the one charging at him was an enemy, the element of surprise would have been lost after being trapped in Thanos’ Maze. Within the walls of the Allyn Magic tower, it would leave the enemy entirely at his mercy. Even if Prince Dracula was here in person, there was no guarantee that he could leave alive. Grand arcanist in charge, along with the top-class mythal, the legendary-rank magic tower, and quick support from other top legendaries — Now that God’s Arrival was unavailable, even the pope would be wary of such a combination.

If it really was an over-eager fan, she would be left unharmed after Thanos’ Maze expired — the shattered confidence in her intelligence ignored. A simple apology would resolve the matter easily.

A brief urge to swear flashed across Ramiro's mind. After estimating the distance, he suddenly bolted across the space between them like a phantom.

Had he been just a bit closer, Ramiro could guarantee to land a magical blow on Lucien before the latter could react. That would drain his Contact Spell and set the stage for the assassination. However, now that the situation was already like this, and that it was very impossible that there would be another opportunity as good as this, he had to ignore the distance.

To a level-eight radiant knight, this distance was practically nothing. Also, Ramiro believed that his magic resistance could cancel out most of Lucien's magic — at this range, there was only enough time for one spell!

“So it's indeed an assassin.” With a mere thought of Lucien, the Sunstone on the Sun Staff shone brightly. If they were not immune to maze type spells, even legendaries could fall prey to Thanos' Maze. Though of course, considering the legendaries' magic resistance, it would depend on who was more blessed by Lady Luck — the chance of successfully trapping one is about once in twenty to thirty attempts.

Ramiro's gaze tightened, his acute instincts warned him of great danger. Thus, he abandoned the initial idea of relying on his magic resistance against Lucien's magic. He narrowed his eyes, and another idea hatched.

Three seconds

Boom, a huge explosion sound spread from within Ramiro's body. A horrifying shockwave rushed towards Lucien.

A rainbow of bright, clear protective shields lit up one after another. The surrounding sorcerers had unconsciously used their most adept protective magic.

Simultaneously, they watched in horror as the beautiful young lady exploded into countless pieces in the blink of an eye. Finger, arm, feet, heart, intestines, and brain rained down all across the floor.

What had happened? As most high-rank sorcerers and archmages had just left through the Portal to the Alternate Realm, none present knew how to cast ninth-circle spells. Even if they could react in time, they could not pause the time.

With Ramiro's self explosion, Thanos' Maze suddenly lost its target and stopped. Lucien couldn't tend to anything else other than quickly altering the spell model within his soul. Suddenly a faint rippling light surrounded him as if he suddenly sank to the bottom of a lake, surrounded by water.

As soon as the intense shockwave came into contact with the "water waves", semi-transparent whirlpools sprouted one after another, dissipating the force.

Sixth-circle magic, "Energy Absorption Field."

"Self-explosion?"

Before Lucien could take a breather, he suddenly saw the body parts on the floor come to life and catapult towards him with a spring. The scene was strangely terrifying.

Other than the Portal to Alternate Realm behind him, the body parts blocked every path of escape.

Two seconds.

Since they were not energy, the body parts passed through the absorption field with ease. Lucien was about to be hit.

If they were not energy, they must be matter!

Lucien was suddenly surrounded by huge whirlpools. Red, yellow, gold, silver... countless light spots gathered and spun. All body parts that attempted to pass through the whirlpools were decomposed into basic elements of charred coal, of gas, of iron scraps. All had returned to their original state.

Element Whirlpool!

Blood on the ground congregated and twisted into a humanoid shape. After his two failed attacks, Ramiro understood that his mission was going to end with failure. Now only one second remained before Allyn Magic tower and the grand arcanist on guard would react.

His gaze steeled. The blood began to boil, and suddenly, erupted with rays blinding as the Sun. The terrifying explosion headed for the Energy Absorbing Force Field like a tsunami.

This was the true self-explosion of a level-eight radiant knight. A power that could erase a mountain top was heading straight for Lucien.

From the beginning, Ramiro had not planned any time for escape, for it was unnecessary!

That's right, one who would self-explode into nothing would have no need to escape.

At the same time, the body parts within the Energy Absorbing Force Field no longer tried to pass through the whirlpools but exploded.

Attacking from both sides of the force field was the true power of a level-eight radiant knight's self explosion. Energy Absorption Field was torn into pieces, like a piece of paper in a storm.

Even if this couldn't kill Lucien, Lucien will not end well!

Energy Absorption Field shattered. Element Whirlpool shattered. But Lucien has yet to recover from the cooldown between castings.

In this time of crisis, Contact Spell was activated.

Short Range Blink and Energy Harm Protection were activated in an instant, and Lucien vanished.

However, Short Range Blink was not teleportation. The huge and terrifying surrounding energy could tear Lucien into mincemeat within the briefest of moments. There was only one direction left to go: behind.

After the blink, Lucien should have appeared across the hall, where he would only be affected by residues of the shockwave. However, unfortunately, behind him was the Portal to the Alternate Realm. So he blinked into the Portal, right before it regressed completely to the semi-activated state.

Starlight rippled like water. The shockwave immediately impacted on the door afterward, inducing violent vibrations. Many tiny cracks to appear on the Portal.

One second.

Allyn Magic Tower was activated, and the elegant, pretty Hathaway appeared above the Portal to the Alternate Realm. She pointed a finger, and the terrifying explosion disappeared immediately, as though they had never appeared in the first place.

Not a drop of blood nor a shred of flesh could be found on the floor of the hall. The power of the self-explosion had erased all traces. Only the cracks on the Portal remained as evidence of what had just happened.

Expressionlessly, Hathaway waved and activated the Portal to the Alternate Realm. Then, she stepped in to confirm the safety of Lucien.

However, the Congress of Magic at the other side of the Portal did not see Lucien arrive. It seemed that the explosion had interfered with the teleportation, and as a result, Lucien had been transported to an unknown location.

The only thing that could be sure that Lucien was indeed in this new world, for the main space joint did not change.

.....

The Hexagram Station, Rentato.

At the warehouse that stored the deposited luggage, a black suitcase suddenly started shaking. It opened with a bang, and a pale hand stretched out from it, a hand that appeared to have been severed.

The hand was enveloped by a piece of gray cloth. Slowly, limbs, body, the other hand and legs, as well as an ordinary-looking head grew from it.

The black-haired young man coughed violently, sounding rather creepy and scary in the silent warehouse.

“Lucien must have been forced into the New World. Now let’s see who he’ll run into first, legendary sorcerers from the Congress of Magic or our Grand Cardinals,” Ramiro murmured weakly to himself.

This kind of full-on self-explosion came at a great cost to himself as well. His power would drop one-level lower in the short term. Even with treatment of the Holy Water and divine spells, it would still take him at least a month to recover.

Putting on clothes taken from the suitcase, Ramiro shook his head. This operation was too reckless and dangerous after all. He was almost caught by Hathaway.

Even someone who was used to immediate action like him still found this operation too bold in hindsight.

After he finished dressing, he took the suitcase and left the warehouse, heading towards the Radiance Church.

After he left, an ominous wind suddenly blew inside the silent warehouse. A creepy, creaky, barely audible voice said, “obtain Maskelyne’s Protective Charm... I’d like to see if he would have some interesting interactions with the mysterious existence...”

.....

Ramiro received his orders promptly upon returning to the Radiance Church.

“By the Pope’s decree: The upper third of high-rank clergies, the top 200 night watchers, half of the radiant or higher-level knights of each country are to enter the New World.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 466: Secret Praying Congress

Thick dark clouds blocked out the sky. The streets were enveloped in darkness by dusk. Many were hurrying home. Regardless of the time or era, save for a few individuals, being drenched in rain was not considered a pleasant experience. It was especially the case in parts where medical treatments were absent or lacking, for catching a cold could often spell death.

The passersby were all wearing linen clothes of a similar gray color, absent in variation of color or styles. Only the occasional patrol soldiers stood out from the crowd. The bronze breast and shin plates together with the iron-black swords and spears equipped them with an air of toughness.

With his entire body wrapped in a linen robe, Lucien tailed behind a middle-aged man whose pace altered frequently. The man weaved between alleyways and main roads, just like every other ordinary passerby.

The sky grew darker, and winds began howling. A storm would come at any moment. The patrolling soldiers had no choice but to speed up their march towards the camp within the city walls.

Stopping in front of a stone two-story building, the middle-aged man surveyed his surroundings cautiously. Only after confirming that no one was paying attention in his direction did he knock gently on the walnut wood door with a peculiar rhythm: first twice on the center of the door, followed by thrice on the left near where the door would pivot, and finished with once on the lock. Each part produced a different sound.

After a ten-second silence, a hole suddenly appeared on the door, and a light-brown eye peered from it.

The middle-aged man took a step back, making sure that the gray rose on the corner of his shirt was clearly visible to the eye.

The image was so unobvious that unless one had known about it beforehand, he would never be able to spot it.

Lucien also adjusted his posture such that his “gray rose” stood out.

The brown eye blinked and vanished behind the door. Then, the walnut door opened slowly, and a midget-like hunchbacked man said in a low voice, “Respected initiators, ‘Crown’ is waiting for you.”

The middle-aged man took the lead and entered the room swiftly, his gaze signaling Lucien to follow.

Lucien was not as agile and alert as the middle-aged man. He pushed the doors open with a smile and entered the room leisurely as if it was a normal visit to an ordinary friend.

The middle-aged man nodded his head ever so slightly after witnessing Lucien’s performance.

After the night watcher assassin forced Lucien into the Portal, the teleportation was disrupted due to the self-explosion attack on the gate, and Lucien was thrown into this baffling city “Politown”. Furthermore, as Lucien had separated from the protection of the Portal during the final stage of the teleportation, he was affected seriously by space turbulence. Not only was his body severely hurt, but his spirit was now also very weak. He was only at the level of ordinary knights and middle-rank sorcerers. His equipment had also taken damage during the space storm, and required repair before they could be used again.

However, Lucien was rather lucky: He had neither run into any high-ranking godhood personnel and the Grand Cardinal of the Church nor into false gods or monsters. Instead, He had been taken in by a kind-hearted old man named Norton. After two months of recovery, his magic power and knight standard had recovered.

The only problem remained was that the magic items that he had equipped at the time required special materials to repair. Of course, the legendary Sun’s Corona and the ninth-level Sun Staff were protected by their tier-corresponding magic and were undamaged.

Frost Freeze, Pale Justice, Transformation Mask, and the other items in the storage bag were also undamaged. Even Norton only saw the transformed ordinary-human appearance of Lucien.

In the past two months, Lucien had not run into any sorcerer or the Saint Truth personnel, neither had he managed to obtain any relevant information. It appeared that they were far from the city, far enough that even rumors about the incident were nonexistent. If he had not felt the strange, omnipresent sensation suppressing spiritual power that Fernando mentioned about, Lucien would suspect that he had entered a different alternate dimension.

According to the old man Norton, Lucien came to know that Politown was situated at the shores of ocean Erdo, and was the heart of the Erdo peninsula’s politics and economy.

In the beginning, the indigenous Barril people ruled over this land. They built the Barril empire and worshipped the “the Lord of Fire and Destruction” Avando. However, a hundred years ago, the massive Angornorma Empire attacked from across the sea and conquered the land. Avando was also defeated and exiled by “The Lord of War” Antanas, who was worshipped by the Empire.

Seeking to crumble the foundation of faith of the Barril people, Angornorma’s Servants of God spread the word that Avando had been killed.

The Erdo Governor-Generals appointed by the Angornorma Empire had always ruled with cruelty and treated the Barrils as slaves. As such, the island was rife with war. Rebels who claimed that they were blessed by Avando and those who started worshiping other gods waged war frequently. However, due to the strength of the Angornorma empire, coupled with their horrifying “God”, the uprisings were quelled time and again.

This should have mattered little to Lucien as he was, with great caution not to reveal himself, preparing to gather information about the surrounding geography and kingdoms in hope of finding traces about the Congress of Magic. After all, sufficient preparation would guarantee a safe journey — The strange sensation that suppressed spiritual power suppressed Electromagnetism Message as well, and Lucien estimated that effective communication could only be established within a range of ten kilometers.

Thus, Lucien would not dare to venture out without precise information. Who knows if he would run straight into the Saint Truth personnel or lands ruled by the vampires. The Transformation Mask could fool your average Joe, but definitely not the Grand Cardinal personnel, not to mention the pope and Prince Dracula.

However, Norton, who was in the last phase of his life, seemed to have felt that Lucien performance in the past two months had steamrolled the youngsters and children that he had taken in. He was also convinced that Lucien was undoubtedly a faithful Barril by Lucien’s mastery over the Barril tongue — The Angornorma empire had gone to great lengths to popularize their tongue, so unless taught since a young age and coupled with a longing for Barril’s independence, no young man would be able to speak the Barril tongue with such fluency. As such, he decided to pass on his secret identity to Lucien before his death.

The identity was that of a high ranking member of the “Secret Praying Congress”, the seventh apostle of the incarnation of the “Lord of Fire and Destruction”.

Lucien was well aware that his mastery of the Barril tongue was entirely the credit of the magic spell Mastery of Languages. However, considering that information would be much easier to come by in an organization, he agreed. Due to the constant rebellions, Politown was under close surveillance of both the “Erdo Governor-General” and the “Lord of War Temple”. Under such conditions, trying to fool with others’ memories was unlikely to work well. Therefore, infiltrating into Angornorma’s high ranking officers to find information could only be attempted once, as he would be at risk of being exposed if the matter drags on for more than a day.

Honestly, if it hadn’t been for Norton’s protection, Lucien would have faced many identity checks already. As for the Erdo Governor-General, rumors had it that he was a hybrid child of god and human, and was capable of using the “Strength of God” like the chief priest of the God of War Temple. It was equivalent to having two ordinary two level-nine red robes stationed there.

There were no crazy sorcerers nor bloodline knights in this world. However, the false gods often indulged in promiscuity and produced many offspring. These offspring were also equipped with qualities similar to that of bloodline knights.

Ordinary humans could only promote by becoming Servants of God and rise along the ranks of the priests. The army was only capable of dealing with ordinary folk and was helpless in the face of the divine-blood “heroes”. Luckily, the divine-blooded were few in numbers, and the army was still useful in suppressing uprisings if things don’t get too out of hand.

Following the fifth apostle “Anheuse”, they passed through the great hall and arrived behind the building. As Anheuse opened a secret passage that revealed a staircase leading up, Lucien looked on detachedly as he pondered if he should find a chance and research on this incarnation of “The Lord of Fire and Destruction”. It was the first time that he encountered the incarnation of a False God, and it would be a prime opportunity to obtain first-hand information. This was also one of the main reasons why he decided to join this “Secret Praying Congress”.

The staircase looked like it would lead them straight to the ceiling. However, Anheuse stopped abruptly when they were halfway up and opened yet another hidden door. The staircase that appeared this time led downwards.

The two proceeded in silence for a substantial amount of time before finally arriving in front of a bronze door. The door was covered in all kinds of strange flame patterns.

His hand placed on one of the flame patterns, Anheuse's entire body radiated a red light. Then he pushed open the bronze door forcefully.

Beyond the door was a hall filled with a row of lit braziers. It was rather bare save for the stone pillars and a round table at its center.

There were 13 chairs around the table, one of which was gold and embedded with rubies. No one had occupied it yet. At both sides of the gold chair were 6 silver chairs, which were also decorated with similar flame patterns.

Five out of the twelve silver chairs had been occupied. An ashen-haired old man with a full beard looked at Lucien and said, "According to Norton's recommendation before he passed away, the great God of Flame and Destruction had prophesized that you, Leviathan, would be the seventh apostle."

Leviathan was Lucien's alias.

“However, you have not yet demonstrated any power nor made any sacrifice for the god. In the coming year, we will examine you. Only after passing the tests will you be granted the ‘Seed of Spirit’ and receive extraordinary power.”

“Understood.” Lucien was immediately curious about this “Seed of Spirit”. Could this be the key to deciphering the secrets of the divine spells? Should he capture the apostles or the “Lord of Fire and Destruction” for research?

After the old man finished his piece, he glanced at Lucien. “Have a seat. We will carry out the Flame Baptism for you in a while. As for now, we have more urgent matters to tend to.”

“What matters?” Anheuse had thought that they had gathered for the sole purpose of carrying out the Flame Baptism for the seventh apostle.

“It’s about our path in the future, about how to let the god recover completely”. The old man, who was the first apostle Jacob, said in a low voice.

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Chapter 467: The Guest

Anheuse stole a glance at Lucien. He was uncomfortable with the idea of discussing matters of such importance in the presence of Leviathan, who had only just become the Secret Praying Congress’ seventh apostle. For all they know, he could be a spy sent by the evil god Antanas, looking for the whereabouts of the God of Flame and Destruction. They should have waited for him to pass the one

year trial period and made sure that nothing was amiss about him before allowing him to participate in the discussion of core matters.

Members of the Secret Praying Congress were extremely cautious in Politown, for those who weren't were all already died, some even brought serious loss to the Secret Praying Congress.

"Why are we suddenly discussing this? I remember that the previous plan 'Missionary' had only recently been confirmed?" Anheuse looked at Jacob solemnly.

Jacob pressed the gray rose pattern on the corner of his shirt and replied in a low voice, "this is the direct order of 'Crown'. We shall wait for him in silence."

"Crown" was the Secret Praying Congress' leader, the Lord of Fire and Destruction's divine son, and the one claiming to be His incarnation. The father and son shared a body. As for apostles like Lucien, they were known as "initiators", those spreading the wisdom of religious discipline.

Anheuse's expressions finally relaxed, and he sat down on a chair on which the flame patterns formed the word "five" in Barril tongue. Some apostles looked at Lucien with caution, while others did so with scrutiny or indifference. Lucien mirrored Anheuse's actions and found himself the silver chair with the pattern "seven". He appeared as if he had been at his own home.

"Leviathan, Norton has spread the word that you have great strength, on par with the worst of the divine-blooded. Is that true?" A mess of white beard covered Jacob's face, making his expressions hard to read.

The other apostles stared at the dark red round table, as though they had not heard Jacob's question, nor were they waiting for Lucien's answer. Though strength of this degree was rare among humans, it was not unprecedented. Being on par with the worst divine-blooded also

referred solely to raw strength. As soon as the divine-blooded used the “Supernatural Power” of their bloodline, they cast miraculous spells and control nature itself. A human with super strength would then fare no better than a normal human, and death would follow swiftly.

Black hair and black eyes, Lucien’s appearance was that of an ordinary Barril man. He replied with a smile, “I have not fought with any divine-blooded yet and thus can’t say how I fare against them. However, it is enough to deal with common monsters.”

Lucien had claimed that his injury was the result of an encounter with a terrifying monster in the wild and that he had escaped only due to his natural strength. Norton, who was only capable of using spell-like abilities, was amazed by the knight’s strength. This could be one of the reasons why he recommended Lucien to become the seventh apostle.

Jacob’s back straightened, but there was no change in his gaze nor his tone of voice. “Then your future Seed of Spirit might lean towards that direction. Strength to crumble city walls, skin tough enough to withstand sword and spear, as well as immense speed. Just like that of the fiend Antanas before he killed his father.”

According to Angornorma’s legends, The Lord of War Antanas was the son of the Lord of Sky. He was a demigod of boundless strength; Even the sharpest blade could leave only scratches on him. Despite slaying the nine great monsters terrorizing the empire, he was blamed by the Lord of Sky. As such, he rebelled and killed his father, and rose to the main god of the Angonormanian pantheon.

“However, you need to use your strength to serve the great Lord of Fire and Destruction before you can attain such power,” said Jacob before Lucien could respond. Jacob had said similar pieces to all new members of the Secret Praying Congress, those who had yet to receive the Seed of Spirit.

Suddenly, the secret hall was filled with the air of heat and destruction, as though a fire had befallen.

Jacob rose from his seat. He placed his hand over his chest and lowered his head. “Welcome, Crown.”

The other apostles followed suit. Lucien did likewise while judging the power of the “Crown” at the same time. If “Crown” had released his aura without restraint to intimidate the initiators, then his strength was about level seven. However, his aura was extremely strange — It was not a suppression of spiritual power, or willpower domination, or even divine pressure. In fact, it felt like a mix of the three. Nothing about it was outstanding.

False God, incarnation, son of god... Lucien secretly thought that things are getting more and more interesting by the minute

For Lucien, the main goal of joining the Secret Praying Congress was to gather information and to avoid danger. Research had only been a secondary motive. However, the things that he had been exposed to kept tugging at his arcanist instincts. He found himself wanting to actively participate in the matters of the Secret Praying Congress.

Meanwhile, Lucien calculated in his mind: If “Crown” really is the sole incarnation of the Lord of Fire and Destruction, then the false god’s level should be at eight. For the Lord of War to allow him to escape, it appears that the Lord of War is not yet of the legendary level. Probably at the peak of level nine.

In the early phases of the War of Dawn, the sorcerers that survived the massacre of the Saint Truth Church did not know much about the false gods. But with the rise of Thanatos Vicente Miranda, the congress later obtained much information on the false gods from the South Church

Despite having limited knowledge about the false gods due to his limited access, Lucien knew enough to know that false gods were capable of using their power to create incarnations. The

incarnations will peak at a power one level lower than that of the original, and their numbers were limited at two. If more incarnations were to be created, their power level would need to be lowered.

Since the Secret Praying Congress had claimed that they were the main group worshipping Lord of Fire and Destruction, Lucien deduced that this incarnation of Avando was of the strongest type.

A young beautiful raven-haired man appeared from the shadows of the stone hall. He donned a pure white robe, and an olive garland sat on his head. The phantom flame covering his exposed skin gave his muscles a sense of beauty and strength.

Judging from the appearance, Lucien deduced that this incarnation was skilled at physical combat and equipped with some level of knowledge about magic. His skill set should be similar to a knight. Or rather, similar to a powerful demon from Hell.

“Crown” Ell looked at the seven apostles present and sat on the gold chair. He then lowered his right hand, signaling the apostles to sit.

“Our kingdom has been taken over by fiend, and our children hurt by the heretics. The number of those who stand with use is dwindling by the minute. Yet we still cling onto our bloodline and our Father. Hence our successors, devout young men, have continued to arrive. Leviathan, we hope that you can guard the gate of the Divine Mountain and spread the name of our god to fellow Barril men.”

Ell had acknowledged Lucien as the seventh apostle. After all, Erdo was under the strict control of Angonorma, and talents were hard to come by.

After Lucien saluted and thanked him, Ell said to the seven apostles, “I have gathered you to discuss the future. You should have noticed that the rebellions have dwindled, as are Barril men who place their faith in God the Father. Let me hear what you have to say about this.”

“They had forgotten about the majesty of the gods, and no longer fear fire and destruction. We must make them remember the fear that had been etched in their soul, make them remember the Fire Cleansing that will come. Only then will they fight for the great Avando.” Anheuse said sternly.

After seeing that the other apostles all agreed to Anheuse’s opinion, Lucien shook his head lightly. It appeared that this Secret Praying Congress was still rather primitive, relying solely on fear to spread their religion rather than combining with redemption and hope. It was not suited to the current times. If they continue with this method, their followers would only grow fewer until they are eventually eliminated by the Angonorma.

Ell’s eyes seemed to dance with fire. He said in a low voice, “it is our duty to spread the majesty of God the Father. However, I believe that it’s time we changed the method by which we do so.”

Lucien and the other apostles looked towards Ell. While others were confused, Lucien wondered if Ell was considering new ways of popularizing their religion.

Ell said passionately, “as of now, His children and ministers are suffering under the rule of the heretics. Fear would no longer bring us to their heart. What they need is salvation, a way out from the sufferings. We need to tell them they don’t need to fear death, where eternal peace and happiness awaited them in the Divine Mountain of God; Tell them that their sacrifice will help to build a Divine Kingdom free of war, killing, fear, and hatred for their offspring; Tell them only such Divine Kingdoms would escape the wrath of the Fire Cleansing.

“Of course, those who betrayed God the Father must be punished. After just judgment, they would be exiled to the kingdom of the dead to endure unimaginable suffering.

“God the Father will not only watch over the Barril. He is empathetic, benevolent, and willing to accept any race that is willing to place their faith in him.”

Lucien was stunned by Ell's words. These were concepts of mature religion. It evolved from that of a god reigning over a race or region towards a more abstract and encompassing god. Could it be revelations from the previous failure?

“But the great Lord of Fire's domain does not include salvation, peace, or judgment,” Jacob asked, puzzled. For the Barrils and Angonormians, different gods were in charge of different things, and there was no single omnipotent god.

The fire in Ell's eyes lit up. “God the Father's godhood was compromised as he had parted his power to other gods when he created them. However, the other gods had betrayed him in this war and caused his defeat. He thus decided to wage war on them and reclaim his godhood. If he manages to return to his initial state before he created everything, he would be able to defeat the fiend Antanas.”

Not only did he explain why the God of Fire and Destruction who created the world in the legends was defeated, but he also gave them a direction — to unite the forces within the pantheon.

“Right, the gods who betrayed the God of Fire also divided Barril. Respected ‘Crown’, who shall be our first target?” Anheuse was very much in agreement with Ell's idea, possibly due to anger towards followers of other gods.

Ell replied coldly, “Asin, the God of Moon”.

The God of Moon... Lucien suddenly felt something was amiss.

Ell suddenly stood up. “God the Father has made this decision merit of a philosopher from the east.”

He turned and said, “Mr. Francis, please advise the details as to how we should proceed.”

Francis? Lucien frowned slightly. Another man with black hair and eyes appeared from where Ell did earlier. He had a slender frame and his face was soft. He carried a sword on his back and wore a loose white robe similar to Ell’s.

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Chapter 468: The Mysterious “Philosopher”

“A philosopher from the eastern kingdoms?” The first apostle Jacob looked at Francis, confused.

Jacob wasn’t questioning this philosopher’s abilities or background — He had passed Avando’s test and won “Crown” Ell’s trust. Jacob had raised the question hoping to learn more to make a better judgment about Francis’ proposal. After all, he was the Secret Praying Congress’ main leader.

The other apostles shared similar concerns. Even Lucien bore a similar expression.

The situation of this world is rather special. False gods, including those that have Moon as part of their domain, are plenty. When the authentic God of the Silver Moon, Alterna, fell to this world, She would be attracted to those whose godhood is similar to hers. It was possible that she would try to reclaim her powers from them. After all, She was also the Primordial Ancestor of the Vampires and was able to harness blood and godhood.

The Congress of Magic's understanding of divine powers was extremely underdeveloped and Lucien's descriptions were largely borrowed from the Church. He had only a vague idea of what terms like "domain" and "godhood" referred to, but was unclear to what they were exactly.

With this in mind, Lucien thought to himself that if there are no better methods of finding the Alterna, one effective way to locate Her would be to control and monitor the false gods whose duties were related to the moon.

As for Francis, Lucien wondered which church was he from. He could be from the North Church, the South Church, or the Church of the false gods in the Northwest of the Dark Mountain Range. He could also be from the Congress of Magic or the Dark Congress... The only thing to be sure of was that he's definitely not a Druid or an elf.

Ell's words about a mature religious concept did not make identifying Francis' identity any easier, for Lucien was able to spew similar sentiments himself. If Francis was from one of the Churches, then helping the false gods revolutionize their religion seemed to conflict his own faith. However, for members of the Church's upper echelon and the high-ranking night watchers, it wouldn't be too big a deal to slightly bend one's faith for matters important as finding the God of Silver Moon.

Thinking about this, Lucien grew cautious and alert. Most of his magical items were damaged, and he would be disadvantaged in a long, drawn-out fight. It was also unknown whether Francis had any allies nearby.

Ell pointed at Francis and smiled. 'Mr. Francis had come from an oasis in the eastern desert. He has done extensive research on philosophy, divinity, and occultism. One night, he witnessed a star glow curiously bright for a short while before swiftly returning to normal. It symbolized the rising of God the Father, and Mr. Francis thus came to Erdo to pay religious homage and establish communications.

This quack... Lucien swore under his breath. His suspicion about Francis was growing by the minute. The astrological phenomenon that he had described was one indicating the fall of an "old god" for a new one to take its place. It had nothing to do with the rise of Avando.

Was he simply making things up or had he said it deliberately to taunt Avando and Ell who clearly knew nothing about Astrology?

Francis sat down on one of the silver chairs. Still wearing that faint smile, he looked at the apostles and said, "the great God of Fire and Destruction is no longer worshiped by Barrils, not only because the way of preaching was problematic but also was He indeed defeated by Antanas. The Barrils who had feared Avando realized that the God of Fire and Destruction was weaker than they had imagined."

"That's because the other gods betrayed Him!" The second apostle said loudly. He was unwilling to accept that the God of Fire Avando who was able to destroy the world was defeated.

Francis laid back into his chair leisurely. "Regardless, He was defeated. For the gods, defeat is even worse than death. As such, I suggest that we forget about Avando's image of the past, and embrace a new method of preaching. We can say that from the flames of destruction, Ell the Savior was born. The previous failure of Avando was only a test for His followers. Those who failed to pass the

test must repent devoutly, for only then will they receive redemption from Ell and harvest on the fertile lands after the fire.

“It will be a new god — Ell, the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. He will then gradually embody traits of Avando and assume the domain of Fire and Destruction. Then the followers will understand that Ell is Avando and vice versa. The two of them will be able to become a truly powerful god when They become one.

“Anything that happens after can also be explained as simply another test of god.”

The six apostles around the round table fell silent. Francis’ plan made sense. However, writing anything off as the test of the gods sounded rather blasphemous.

On the other hand, Lucien noticed that Francis delivered his words with no sarcasm but rather with an air of fanaticism, which made his words very convincing.

Lucien was more and more convinced that Francis was a “visitor” from the main material world. He wondered if Francis was really that great of an actor, or was he seeking the God of the Silver Moon for other motives.

The apostles remained in silence. Francis stood up, placed his hand on his chest, and saluted Ell.

“We mortals are incapable of truly understanding the minds of god. If anything goes wrong, it must mean that we have failed to understand enough and neglected His test.

“God has been around since the dawn of time and will continue to exist forever. God does not require our worship. However, we need to worship god for redemption.

“God represents truth, virtue, redemption, and every other positive value. He is the only true god in charge of everything!”

Ell’s expression became slightly excited upon hearing those words. The flames in his eyes danced even fiercer. Francis’ altered religious doctrine elevated his “divine throne” dramatically such that he was now distinct from the false gods that walked among mortals, which made it easier for followers to worship him wholeheartedly.

“Isn’t this the latest edition of the Church’s explanation of divinity?” Lucien silently cringed.

The Saint Truth needed to be on top of the advancements in arcana, as did arcanists require knowledge on divinity. Both sides knew well of the power of knowing their enemy.

This made it even harder for Lucien to determine Francis’ identity. Ironically, the chances that Francis is a member of the Saint Truth is the smallest. Even the pope would be accused of blasphemy had he applied the Saint Truth’s religious doctrine on false gods, unless he had ulterior motives.

“Great God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, please accept our faith and pardon our sins. Save us from this tainted world.” Jacob, the most experienced preacher was the first to recognize what they should do. He immediately started worshiping Ell and accepted the new “God of Fire and Destruction” on behalf of the other apostles.

Ell nodded contently. “My godhood has been passed onto me by God the Father, but it is still weak. We must wage war on the other False Gods who have similar domains to strengthen it. The God of

Moon Asin bears the duty of immortality, fertility, and peace. It is intrinsically tied to Resurrection, Fertility, and Redemption. He shall be out first target.”

Ell no longer viewed Asin as a god.

“Asin had betrayed the great Avando in the war against the fiend Antanas. She is currently spreading her religion at the Solna river valley. Other gods who also betrayed Avando are competing with her for the limited resource of faith. Fearing the great Avando’s revenge, their divine realms are ever more elusive. Our chances of winning, even with the great Avando at our side, are slim if we were to fight them in their own realm.” Anheuse frequently preached in the outside world and was very familiar with the state of the world.

Their blatant thirst for faith resource made Lucien ponder over the origin of divine powers. Lucien wondered if the source of divinity is indeed the power of faith, then does it mean that mental power exists or does it mean that mental power is a special form of spiritual power with a special frequency.

Francis smiled. “God of Moon Asin’s guard would be lowered if he faces Ell under the title of the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. On my way here, I learned that there will be a divinity debate taking place in the Solana river valley, where the temples could attract followers by boasting about the capabilities of the one’s god. Those who fail would be exiled from the river valley. The priest of the fiend Antanas would be there too. He seeks to ‘convert’ the false gods there to true members of the Angonormanian pantheon.

“We shall participate under the name of a new religion. During the debate, try to agitate Asin and lead him to the ambush.”

Ell nodded. “Let’s do what Mr. Francis says. When the time comes, Francis, Jacob, and I will kill Asin easily outside of his realm.”

“Mr. Francis too?” Jacob asked in surprise.

He was the leader of the apostle and received the most powerful “Seed of Spirit” from Avando, which was equivalent to the total of the other apostles. His strength was about level six, equivalent. What made Francis worthy to fight alongside him?

Francis smiled. “I was once blessed by the great true god. I managed to run into the death of a Hydra who had strength on par with false gods. After bathing in its blood and devouring its heart, I too have obtained strength akin to that of the divine-blooded.”

Bloodline knight? Despite the lie, Lucien understood what Francis was trying to get across and thought that if this was the case, he could not be a member of the Congress of Magic.

There were no bloodline knights in the Congress of Magic.

Jacob was taken aback and ceased his questioning to Francis. He turned to the other apostles. “Leviathan, it’s time for you to serve. Since you have yet to come into contact with other religions, you can represent the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. Anheuse shall aid you...”

“I will accompany you there too. It would be otherwise hard to win the debate and agitate Asin for someone untrained like you.” Francis added.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 469: The “Theology Debate”

Solna River flowed quietly, nurturing one-third of the creatures living on the Erdo Peninsula. Many river valleys formed alongside. In the valley named after the river, Solna Valley, there were a few city-states. Thanks to the plentiful water resource and rich land, Solna Valley became a very prosperous place second only to Politown.

In front of the newly-built temple for the Lord of War in the city of Husum, there was a spacious square, on which a stage had been built up. People wearing flax robes crowded around it voluntarily, supporting the different god they worshipped. The soldiers of the Angonorma Empire stood by lazily in their bronze armors, showing no care to the small conflicts between the followers, as if they wished that those heretics could just kill each other, which would save much trouble.

On the stage sat the eight chief priests, who were representatives of the remaining eight gods of Barril — the God of Moon, the God of Thunder and Lightning, the God of Storm, the Mother God of Earth, the Lord of Underworld, the God of Sun and Justice, the God of Wisdom, and the Goddess of Love and Breed. They waited for the start of the debate on the silver chairs. Should they fail to win victory in this debate and turn their god into one of the three deities, their god would be driven out of the valley by the Lord of War. Over time, the expelled gods would gradually lose their followers and eventually die or become an avatar of the Angonormanian pantheon due to assimilation.

Although they all knew it well that selecting the three deities was just the Lord of War’s strategy for dividing and better ruling them and that, in the end, all of them would be assimilated into Angonormanian pantheon, no one dared to speak against of it as this was the consequence of their own choice. Also, to them, there was still hope if they become one of the three deities — Once they survived, they could gather a great number of new followers in Solna Valley. Maybe, in the future, they would have a chance to in turn replace their counterpart in the Angonormanian pantheon.

Sitting on the golden chair highest above, the chief priest representing the Lord of War was a brown-haired beautiful lady. The slit of her white Angonorma-style dress reached all the way up to her waist, revealing her curves and long, graceful legs.

She was high priestess Nena, the second chief priest in the Temple of War in Politown.

“Salute to the great Lord of War, the master of all conflicts and destruction.” The sixteen leading priests of the eight gods bowed together, in the same way as they once bowed to the Lord Avando.

After performing the war dance herself to please the Lord of War, Nena was about to start the debate.

At this time, two black-haired men in white robes came in front of the stage and said to the guards aloud, “let us in! The God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption sent us here for the debate.”

“I never heard of this title. It must belong to a false god. Guards, expel them!” Nob, the priest of the God of Moon scolded.

The power of the God of Moon, Asin, was ranked in the middle among the eight remaining Gods. Thus, facing the competitors coming out of nowhere, the old priest was definitely not happy.

As the follower, Francis hurriedly eyed Lucien to deliver the prepared speech.

Fearlessly, Lucien looked right into Nob's eyes and said, "this isn't your decision to make. Only the almighty Lord of War can decide if we could join or not. How dare you speak before the chief priest of the Lord of War?"

Francis was a bit surprised. What Lucien just said was not the version they previously agreed on. However, it worked better. It seemed that this guy named Leviathan was quite good at improvisation.

Overwhelmed by surprise and fear, the chief priest of the God of Moon suddenly became speechless.

Lucien turned to Nena and said sincerely, "dear Lady Nena, the Lord of War told us that all gods preaching in the valley are qualified for attending the debate. Did I understand it wrong?"

"No," Nena answered coldly and briefly.

Lucien smiled. "Our Lord, the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption also has followers in this valley. Please allow us to join in."

"You must prove it." Nena did not refuse, as adding one more god to the debate would not hinder the Lord of Wars arrangement, but could instead intensify the conflict and provide an advantage for the future assimilation.

Lucien raised his right hand. Anheuse, who was hiding in the corner, started applauding. Hearing that, all of the secret previous followers of the Lord of Fire and Destruction began clapping their hands and loudly praising Ell, the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption.

Nob and the other chief priests exchanged a look. They didn't expect the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, whose name and titles they had never heard of, had already gained such influence.

It never occurred to them that the so-called God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption was in fact Avando, the previous Lord of Fire and Destruction. It had never happened before that a god would change his godhood, for godhood reflected a god's power and the possible spell collections possessed. Therefore, even though the name of the god was changed, their godhood would remain the same. Also, the change of the name mostly happened when a god had assimilated another god and wanted to create another incarnation in order to absorb the pre-existing faith.

However, Revival, Fertility, and Redemption seemed to drastically differ from Fire and Destruction. Thus, it was hard to realize that Ell was actually Avando's new identity.

Under the hostile gaze of the other priests, Lucien walked on the stage with Francis and sat down on the added silver chair.

Nena said to them, "today's debate is to tell the true gods from the fake. Only the true gods deserve people's faith. The Lord of War said that the universe came from the number three. Therefore, there will be three final winners."

That being said, no matter how the debate went, the Lord of War was always the dominator, since even the winner was decided under the Lord of War's oracle.

"My Lord is the sun. His radiance nurtures everything on the land and drives away the darkness, like the fire. He is the light, the power of punishment. The power of light brings us brightness and justice. Therefore, my Lord is the one who made the rules that restrain gods and human beings.

Undoubtedly, my Lord's power thus exceeds that of the other seven gods." The chief priest of the God of Sun and Justice spoke before everyone else, describing his god's power to attract followers.

The uneducated followers nodded. They did not know much, but they could see the sun hanging up in the sky almost every day. It brought them warm, which contrasts greatly with the darkness, so it should be very important. Thus, it seemed that the God of Sun and Justice should be very powerful as well, and it would do them much good if they worship him.

Seeing that, the priest of the Lord of Underworld took a step forward and said, "when there is life, there's death. No intelligent creature can escape from death. Life is short, but death is eternal. The almighty Lord of Underworld is the one you'll go to after death, the ultimate god that you'll belong to in the end. It is true for everyone. He is unquestionably more important than all the other gods."

Everyone was afraid of death. Imagining the darkness, coldness, and pain that one would suffer after death, many of the listeners were persuaded — maybe worshiping the Lord of Underworld is a better choice than worshiping the God of Sun and Justice. He appeared to be very powerful and important from the descriptions.

"The earth carries everything, including the underworld. Earth carries life, as well as death. Anyone who offends the Mother shall suffer from starvation, earthquake, and landslide." The priest of the Mother God of Earth threatened the crowd.

Now the afterworld sounded too illusionary and far from the listeners. Compared to the long sleep after death, they knew much better how it felt having an empty stomach, not to mention the horrible power of an earthquake. They no longer dared to deviate from the Mother God of Earth.

"My Lord controls lightning — Lightning powerful enough to punish gods, not to mention the mundane. Anyone who disobeys shall be struck by lightning and thunder." The priest of the God of Thunder and Lightning followed.

The priest of the God of Storm would not miss the chance either. “If any of you betray the God of Storm, He would send forty-nine days of storm. Ocean will gush into the cities and towns. Land will be overwhelmed with flood. No creature will survive.”

Gradually, most of the priests started to threaten the listeners, controlling them with fear as they always did. However, the priest of the God of Wisdom and the priest of the God of Love and Breed could not use the same strategy. They quitted the debate rather helplessly.

They never had much hope to begin with. Their words about love and wisdom were too pale.

Facing such a chaotic debate where the braggist one was the strongest, Francis felt quite uncomfortable. He sent a secret message to Lucien by controlling the wind in the air. “When it’s your turn, try your very best to exaggerate the power of great Ell. You know, using the cycle theory – create, control, destroy, and resurrect.”

“The silver moon witnessed the birth of this world. The moon is immortal, and has the power to drive away darkness but also absorb the power from darkness. It brings peacefulness to our mind,” said Nob with fine sweat beads on his forehead. Compared to the other gods, Asin the God of Moon had no advantage when it came to threatening others. The god who was best at this was the God of Fire and Destruction.

Finally, after one round, it was Lucien’s turn. All the priests turned to look at him, waiting to listen to his words speaking for the so-called God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption.

Sitting straight on the silver chair, Lucien said slowly, “seasons come and go; the sun rises and sets. In this world, when there’s birth, there’s death. But there’s also resurrection after death. And my Lord is the God of Resurrection.”

The priest of the God of Sun froze. He knew the meaning of the words — The representative of the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption was saying that the sun was solely a phenomenon, while resurrection was the underlying essence.

“Death isn’t the final end; different souls belong to different ends. According to what a person did when he was alive, a fair judgment is given. Those who are kind will jump out of the cycle of life and death and enter the paradise of my Lord, and thus enjoy eternal happiness. Those who are neutral will come to this world again as infants and keep going through the joy and pain of life. While, the vicious and the contemptible will be punished in the underworld, enduring endless suffering...

“However, the followers of my Lord, anyone who’s willing to make a heartfelt confession, will be saved by the Lord, and become the one’s enjoying the forever happiness as I just mentioned.”

The listeners had never heard of anything like this before. They’d rather believe in this young priest’s words than the horrible images described by the rest of the priests, because they could now see hope in their tough life, the hope for starting all over again and being saved!

Francis was very impressed by Leviathan’s talent, for Leviathan was able to construct a rather comprehensive theoretical theology system based on his simple cycle theory. He didn’t expect to find someone this talented in such a primitive otherworld.

The face of the priest representing the Lord of Underworld darkened. Such a theory had instantly degraded his Lord.

Seeing this, Nob made his decision. If he lost this debate, he’d lose everything anyway, so why not use the heretic myth to turn the tide.

“Your gods are all in charge of some specific functions in operating this world, but my Lord is the one who created this world as well as all of the creatures. My lord is the God of Brightness and Creation. In the primordial darkness, my lord brought brightness to the forever silence; he shaped the earth and the lives!” Nob cited one version of the creation myth, completely ignoring Nena’s expression.

The rest of the priests were all taken back — Now that the God of Moon claimed to be the god who created the world, how could their god overpower Him? They thought hard, trying to find similar myths of their god to use.

At this time, the priest of the God of Thunder and Lightning burst out laughing. “Alright, the God of Moon created this world and the lives, but my Lord is capable of ruining all of these. When everything sinks back into darkness, only my lord’s followers will be saved.”

He partially borrowed the theory of redemption from Lucien.

The priest of the God of Sun and Justice was unwilling to fall behind. “My lord is the god maintaining the functioning of the world and delaying the day of destruction...”

“My lord is the pristine darkness and peacefulness.” Sneered the priest of the Lord of Underworld.

“This isn’t a theology debate... They’re simply bragging.” Francis rubbed his forehead and complained to Lucien in a low voice. “I’m not good at this at all. It’s up to you now.”

Seeing that the other priests were gaining support, Lucien did not feel any pressure at all. “Our world is just a small world. The creation, development, and destruction of such a small world are of nothing special. Three thousand of small worlds like this are needed to form a middle world, and three thousand of middle worlds are needed to form a big world. However, there are countless big worlds as many as the grains of sand at the bottom of the Solna river.

“However, the boundless world that contains the countless big worlds is created by my Lord.

“My Lord said, ‘Let there be the boundless world’, and there was the boundless world.

“My Lord said, ‘Let there be light’, and there was light.

“When my Lord said, ‘Let all be destroyed’, and then everything annihilates.”

When it came to bragging, Lucien feared nobody.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 470: The Best Braggart Ever

All the priests and the followers were now very confused. They felt that the information was too much for their brain to handle. Things like the small world, the middle world, the big world, and the boundless world had never ever occurred to them. However, although they did not quite understand, they had to admit that the words from this young priest's mouth sounded very powerful and profound. Ell, the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, had become a level higher than the rest of the gods.

Anheuse, who was hiding in a corner, was also very confused.

“Are we talking about the same great Ell...?” He murmured.

Francis was a bit amused. He had to hold himself back from bursting out laughing. Indeed, this young man was quite gifted in terms of telling stories. Even if this young man could not become a real disciple in the future, becoming a bard and telling stories would also make him an epic figure.

Nob felt a bit dizzy from the blood rushing all the way upward into his brain. He felt that his imagination was being ground into bits. He could not believe that there was someone better at bragging than himself, but it was the truth.

Nob could not copy Lucien anymore. Although following Lucien's words, the bragging can never come to an end as Nob could say that there were also small boundless worlds, middle boundless worlds, and big boundless worlds. But it would be too obvious that he was stealing Lucien's theory in front of the listeners, which would make him lose the debate even faster, for it would give the crowd the impression that the God of Moon could only repeat the words of others and was lying all through the debate.

Similar thoughts flashed through the mind of the rest of the priests. Frowning, they tried their very best to find a new perspective to defeat Leviathan's view of the world. However, the religions they belonged to were still in the primitive level, even the simplest philosophy had not yet developed. With the priest's imagination limited by themselves and their era, there was nothing available to them to be used as a weapon.

As for the Mother God of Earth, the God of Wisdom, the God of Storm, and the God of Love, since they had already lost the debate in the previous round, they were now taking pleasure in watching the other priests' respond — If they were going to be expelled from the valley, they should all be expelled together.

Lucien took his time and continued. "My Lord creates the boundless world, maintains it, and then destroys it. But again, from the destroyed, a new boundless world is created by Him. My Lord is the Lord who creates, maintains, and destroys. He is the cycle; He is the resurrection."

... The rest of the priests were speechless.

"My Lord has also created an eternal fairyland outside of this endless cycle of life and death. This place is the ultimate joyous land for our most loyal brothers and sisters. My Lord calls it..." Lucien paused a bit, "... calls it the Pure Land."

Lucien was about to borrow the name 'Mountain Paradise', but he did not want Francis to feel suspicious.

The audience burst into an uproar. They did not expect that the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, with such great power and might, would still lend his hand to them! But the descriptions given by Lucien all linked together well, and they started to believe that the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption could really help them get out of such a vicious cycle and leave this world full of pain and corruption.

He was indeed the God of Redemption!

While Nob's face turned pale and could find no way to refute, Nena's eyes slightly narrowed, as if she was also thinking.

Suddenly, Nob sprang up from the silver chair and took a big step forward. He questioned aloud,

"Leviathan, let me ask you. How was it before the world was first created by your so-called God of Redemption! How did the boundless world look like in the very beginning? What did the Pure Land look like in the very beginning?"

Lucien did not expect that Nob could put forward such a critical question and was stunned for a second. However, he quickly realized what was going on: Nena's lips were moving very slightly.

This might escape from other priests' eyes. But Lucien was also a knight, so he could spot it easily.

It seemed that the priest of the Lord of War could not hold back anymore.

"There was nothing; there was chaos. There was the original point of space and time." Lucien decided to give Nob a chance on purpose. A perfect performance might lead to Francis' suspicion.

Nob burst out laughing. "Then let me ask you: Where does 'nothing' come from? Where does 'chaos' come from? And what is it outside of 'nothing' and 'chaos'?"

Nob's answer was ready — It was the almighty God of Moon.

The followers also became confused. They wanted to know the answers; they wanted to know if a greater being existed before and outside of the “nothing”.

Francis' eyes lit up, as he finally found the chance to fight back. After exchanging a look with Lucien, he stood up and said, “outside of ‘nothing’ is the ‘indescribable’, namely, my Lord!”

“Indescribable? What is it?” Nob and the other priests laughed at this response.

Francis said seriously, “the so-called ‘nothing’, ‘chaos’, and ‘the original point of space and time’ are all based on human understanding and are still within the human imagination. But the existence of my Lord exceeds any definition, meaning, concepts, logic, material, spirit, and language. It is indescribable; it is undescrivable.”

Francis' words were even more incomprehensible than that of Leviathan. All the priests, including Nena, could not find a clue at all.

Francis smiled, “I come from the country in the desert to the East. In my country, a famous wise man whose name is Lucien Evans once put it in this way...”

Lucien Evans, the wise man... Lucien almost burst out laughing himself, but he managed to force it back.

However, the priests and the listeners only caught the fact that Francis came from the East. They wondered if the power of Ell had spread across the East.

“He said that our observation of any objects in this world is based on our body and soul. Therefore, the information we obtained would never be comprehensive. For example, when we see light, we think light does not have a specific color. But if we see light through a bubble or a crystal, we know that light is in fact colorful. Therefore, our understanding is the mundane understanding. And our understanding can never describe the real almighty being, which is my Lord.

“Therefore, the existence of my Lord exceeds any definition, meaning, concept, logic, material, spirit, and language. Even the idea of ‘nothing’ is far from being capable of defining the Lord. In other words, any mundane attempt trying to define the existence of God is a kind of profanity.”

Francis’ words refreshed all the priests’ understanding of god. In the past, their understanding of god was too shallow to step out of the ordinary person’s mindset. But... their god, who made their presence and power felt from time to time, seemed to fail the standard of divinity.

Lucien also stood up and smiled. “My Lord has an existence, and also has not. My Lord is the nothing; he is also the everything. My lord shall not be defined by any means, no property, no difference, no shape, no space, no limit, no concept... My Lord is supreme by nature. My lord does not need faith or worshipping.

“But we human need faith. We need to be saved. Therefore, our perception of the true lord became the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption in a lower level of concept. He is the avatar of the true lord, an avatar that we can worship.

“We only need to worship the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. We make heartfelt confessions, and then we can be saved. We can never understand or describe the true lord, and the true lord does not need our understanding or description. We can never affect the true lord, neither will the true lord try to affect the world.”

Francis nodded in agreement. Leviathan's explanation was indeed very impressive, which showed that he was obviously a genius in theology. However, this explanation was still too complicated to be used in preaching.

However, Francis found this young man to be a bit suspicious and wondered if there was something wrong with him.

Lucien smiled to himself when he explained. An existence that would never be affected and would never affect anything, an existence that any discussion on which was meaningless — according to the Occam's Razor theory, such an existence didn't even need to exist. If the existence of god was really like this, Lucien could safely conclude that god was dead.

Anything that had an influence on this world must more or less left some traces, must could be explored and explained.

The confused crowd caught the main point in Lucien's words — No matter what, they had to follow the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. This God was very powerful!

Nena, the priest of the Lord of War, could not find any way to object. She felt a chill went up her spines, her right fist clenching tight. As a follower of the Lord of War, she was not good at smart articulation, however, she had got power to eliminate the enemies.

Lucien felt that the way Francis looked at him had changed, so he quickly switched the style of his talking. "Don't even try to pry into the real lord, or you'll be infected by this unknown power and be twisted into nameless monsters in forever pain."

The listeners, including the priests, subconsciously stopped what they were thinking immediately. It sounded so horrible!

However, after a second thought, they believed that a real powerful god should be just like this.

Francis slightly shook his head. This young man and the belief he represented still could not get rid of the use of intimidation commonly seen in primitive religions. He was still confined by his surrounding environment, such a waste of his talent...

From afar, Ell was looking at the debate stage attentively. The clusters of fire in his eyes flickered peacefully, carrying the power to purify.

He murmured to himself,

“Is that... me?”

“Am I that powerful?”

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Chapter 471: “Who Am I”

On the debate stage in front of the Temple of War, the other priests had all fallen into silence after hearing Lucien’s speech.

Lucien looked around in his plain white robe and then said to Nena peacefully, “respected Lady Nena, shall the results of the debate be announced now? It seems that no one else wants to continue anymore.”

Nena was a bit startled by Lucien’s question. She took a cold glance at Lucien and turned to the priests, “do you all agree?”

Nob was about to oppose, but he could not find a single reason. The only words coming up in his mind were those just said by Lucien.

His brain had stopped working. Without the guidance of the brain, his mouth had given out the words, “A... Agree...”

Depressed, the priests of the God of Love and the God of Wisdom who had lost in the first round also agreed.

After a short hesitation, the other priests agreed as well – There would be three winners today, so they still got a chance.

Nena lowered her eyes and hid her emotions. Then she said in cold voice, “according to the words of the supreme Lord of War, the winners from today’s debate will be three. Their Church will be awarded the right to stay in the valley of Solna and preach. They are...”

Unconsciously, she had applied the word, supreme, to the Lord of War.

Everyone all held their breath and waited for the final result nervously, including the listeners, as if one single breath could blow the good result away.

“... The God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption,” said Nena, announcing the not-at-all surprising result.

Seeing how calm Leviathan and Francis were, the listeners present started to more or less believe in the existence of God Ell.

The manner of a priest could well represent how much confidence he or she had in the god, as well as how powerful the god was.

“The God of Moon,”

Out of great excitement and joy, Nob kneeled down to the ground and kissed the floor while praying and praising his god.

“... and the Lord of Underworld.”

Volcan, the priest of the Lord of Underworld, cheered aloud, praising the Lord of Underworld and thanking the Lord of War.

The rest of the priests, however, all looked very pale now.

“Before tomorrow’s sunset, the rest of you must leave the valley. The followers must change their belief, otherwise, they shall be exiled as well!” Nena’s words were cold and cruel.

“...!” The priests and listeners looked at Nena in great shock and anger. Although they knew that they had to leave, they did not expect the fact that they could not even keep their own followers.

Solna Valley was a rich piece of land. Anyone willing to work hard should be able to feed themselves. Once leaving the valley, what was waiting for them in the wild was definitely not pleasant. Therefore, the priests understood that they were doomed to lose most of their followers now.

However, as priests, they did not have a second choice. They had to stick to their belief, or they would be devoured by the Seed of Spirit within themselves.

The many furious gazes did not bother Nena at all. She slowly lifted her right hand, and the soldiers instantly lifted their black-iron weapons. The swords formed a sharp and dense black-iron forest that reflected cold light.

The scene reminded the rest of the priests that Nena was almost as powerful as their god. Thinking about Politown, they lowered their heads and left the stage.

Here started the wandering.

Nena paid no further attention to the scattering priests. She said to Lucien, Nob, and Volcan, “your preaching must obey the law established by the Temple of War, or you will be exiled too.”

Then she simply turned around and left. There were no celebration nor encouragement.

Watching Nena walking away, Francis sent a secret message to Lucien and said casually, “it looks like the Dear Lady has already got the intention to kill us, or, I should say, the Lord of War has got the intention to kill us. Otherwise, we wouldn’t have been treated this way. Maybe our description of the almighty Ell made them feel insecure...”

The topic was rather serious, but Francis didn’t sound like he was taking it seriously.

Lucien was still playing his role well. With a slight amount of shock that suited his current identity, Lucien asked, “What shall we do then?”

“We’ll discuss later. The situation may change.” Francis directed Lucien to meet Ell, Jacob, and Anheuse in the hotel.

Lucien nodded seriously. He wondered if Francis was waiting for the rest of the priests to react.

They walked off the stage, and the followers immediately surrounded them. Their eyes were written with great hope for redemption.

They were all followers of the Lord of Fire, and Destruction. Hearing Lucien’s words, they preferred the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption to the horrible Avando, as what they longed for was the hope of ascending to the Pure Land, instead of being driven by the fear of the bloodthirsty Avando.

Francis smiled but did not say anything. He was waiting to observe Lucien’s response and he didn’t even try to hide his intention.

Lucien spoke in a soothing tone, “the almighty Ell always shows mercy. My Lord would never abandon this world full of pain. Instead, my Lord is willing to serve as a bridge, connecting the two worlds to save you all from the endless cycle of pain. Supreme as my Lord, as long as you pray and confess devoutly and act out of kindness, your wish will be heard by Him.

“This is also where the supremacy of my Lord lies: You believe, and then the Lord will be in your heart. I am not superior to any of you, instead, I merely heard the Lord’s instruction earlier than you. I will be your mentor, guiding you to see the almighty Ell in your own heart and then to be saved. I am not a priest, but an initiator.”

Lucien had his principle: He was never willing to make a fortune out of these followers. Although it was already not the first time that he used divinity to achieve his purpose, he never intended to turn himself into the biggest beneficiary.

If it had not been that Francis and Anheuse were right here, Lucien would like to share with them how he understood superego, ego, and the inner self.

Then Lucien wondered if he was addressing too much about the inner peacefulness. Perhaps, he was on his way shaping something like Buddhism.

Hearing Lucien's words, the followers almost burst into tears. Never had they heard something like this before from a priest — in most cases, they were frightened and threatened.

Francis was a bit amused. In his eyes, Leviathan was such an innocent young man who just joined the Secret Praying Congress but still had his own set of belief. Yet it made sense to Francis, as such a young man who made the previous speech should have his own understanding of divinity.

“Dear initiator, how should we pray? How can we see the almighty Lord Ell in our mind?” Asked one of the followers.

Lucien put on a soft smile, “Anheuse, our another initiator, will tell you the prayer later. Before you pray, you have to learn how to put aside all your emotions first, including your joy, pain, and worries.”

The specific prayer had to be modified after today's debate.

“Put aside...” repeated the followers thoughtfully.

“It’s simple. You take a deep breath and then exhale... That’s right, to release the emotions out...” Lucien showed them.

Lucien could not stay here for too long. Therefore, after leaving the followers to Anheuse, he went back to the hotel with Francis by oxcart.

“To save them, we have to save their mind first.” nodded Francis in the oxcart on their way back. He smiled and said, “I thought the debate was a chance for discussing divinity and humanity, universals and primary substance, a priori and transcendent, but it turned out to be for bragging. You did very well.”

“Mr. Francis, you taught me a lot,” said Lucien, “but since the Lord of War is involved, we cannot target at the God of Moon anymore.”

Francis shook his head. “This’s also a chance. You’ll see.”

When the oxcart almost arrived at the hotel, a paper wad was darted fiercely through the curtain. As fast as an arrow, it was just an inch away from Lucien’s face.

At this time, Francis raised his right hand and caught the paper wad rather easily.

Lucien slightly squinted — Francis was at least a senior-rank.

Someone on the street made a soft exclamation of surprise and then disappeared in the crowd.

As if Francis was exactly waiting for the paper wad, he did not even check it before opening it. After reading the message, he grinned. “Here it comes.”

Lucien took the paper over and saw the message on it:

“Nena, The chief priest of the Lord of War, has given order to the God of Moon and the Lord of Underworld, asking them to attack you tonight in order to force the almighty Ell to reveal His presence, so they can kill the almighty Ell. The one among us six which makes the most contribution tonight will earn the place left. However, I am much more willing to work with the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, as the Lord of War is such an unpredictable dictator. If the almighty Ell agrees, we’ll meet each other in the middle of the river outside of the city before dawn.”

At the bottom, there was a symbol of the sun.

“Cooperation? Or a trap?” Lucien asked, pretending to be both excited and confused.

Francis shrugged. “How should I know? Alright, let’s get in the room first.”

Lucien walked in the room and saw Ell standing beside the window covered in a white robe. His imposing manner was as great as that of mountain chains. Ell was somehow different now.

Ell turned around when Lucien was still a bit confused. There was no fire in his eyes anymore, instead, his eyes now looked as deep and black as death. Ell put on an easy smile. “Until today when I heard the debate, I finally realized that that Ell in the past wasn’t the real Ell. Now, I finally have woken up from the chaos and obscurity.”

Lucien and Francis were shocked.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 472: Speculation and Experiment

Lucien was speechless. He was just bragging.

That the other priests including Nena believed in his words was not surprising, for they had no idea what the truth was; however, Lucien could not believe that Ell himself had also been persuaded by the lecture.

In Lucien’s understanding, his lecture should be like a joke to Ell.

He tried hard to accept Ell's change, telling himself that Ell was one of the false gods who were stubborn and crazy according to the Congress' record and that the proper treatment for these false gods should be electrotherapy. However, Lucien still could not understand what happened to Ell.

Lucien wondered if Ell had even actually become more powerful.

It was not scientific, no, not arcanic to Lucien at all. Fortunately, he was more or less mentally prepared for any unusual changes within the divine realm. Calming himself down, he started observing Ell's reaction and taking down detailed notes in his spiritual library.

Lucien secretly looked aside at Francis and saw Francis also looking back at him with a confused smile. Obviously, Francis was also surprised, just like Lucien. Yet in the next second, Francis seemed to have already accepted it and was now keeping his eyes on Ell attentively with a slight hint of fanaticism.

Lucien could more or less understand what Francis was thinking. If Francis was really an expert in theology and philosophy like he said, changes of a god could certainly trigger his interest. And this was perhaps why Francis had chosen to present Ell using part of the theory of the God of Truth.

However, in this way, Lucien became even more confused about where Francis came from. Most of those who were both powerful and profound in theology came from the Church, but so far, Francis had been behaving like a sheer blasphemer.

Retreating his sight, Lucien asked in surprise, "great God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, I don't quite understand..."

Ell said calmly wearing the same smile, “to put it simply, I have found my true self. I have seen the undescrivable existence in excess of the universe and its projection in both the spiritual and the material world. Whether the Lord of Fire and Destruction or the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, they share the same origin. Based on what human beings see, know, and believe, the projection takes multiple forms, but there is only one ‘self’. I have found the true self, so now I am able to completely control the two forms — Avando and Ell — the two integrated forms.”

“My Lord, are you alright?” Francis asked out of concern. The corner of his mouth secretly twitched a bit.

“I feel fine. I feel better than ever,” said Ell in great confidence.

Lucien felt that Ell might need some medical treatment. In his eyes, the current Ell seemed to have created a third personality to govern the previous two.

Seeing that Leviathan and Francis still looked very concerned, Ell released a sigh inside — No matter how smart humans were, their intelligence was still far from matching the mightiness of gods, so Ell decided to show his strength to them.

Ell darkened the room, turning the space into the dimension of the dead. A dense black mist rose, and spectres were hiding within. The rotten brought rich nutrition to the soil. The several plants on the ground in the room grew wildly, while the atmosphere became tranquil and peaceful.

Resurrection, fertility, redemption... Ell was no longer an avatar of the God of Flame, instead, He had now become the true God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, whose power had reached level eight, equivalent to that of a radiant knight. But Ell was still in a poor state, so the power He could use right now should be around level seven.

Ell's godhood had changed. Was it because of Ell's own awakening? Or was it because the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption had started accumulating more devout followers?

Lucien carefully took down the notes, recording everything that he saw while making some comments beside,

"If it's the former, then this world is even crazier than I thought, as the change resembles that of one's cognitive world but seems to be more preposterous, and it means that there's still a long way to go for arcana; if it's the latter, then a theoretical system can be formed about this world with some of the untested hypotheses available, however, the key part is still missing. Be careful with further exploration. Arrogance leads to head explosion."

"If the former assumption is true, then this world might run under the Strong Anthropic Principle."

"If the latter is true, an assumption can be made here: Every human being has spiritual power, but some are stronger, while some are relatively weak. Those whose spiritual power exceeds the average level can use meditation to control and utilize spiritual power and thus become sorcerers; As for those who are not gifted in terms of spiritual power and cannot afford or find the power-trigger potion, they follow the uniform instruction and guidance from the Church and pray, so that when they pray, their spiritual power will be attuned to the same frequency and even gather together."

"If a god already has a separate entity, then this special spiritual power or better call it the power of faith, will gather together to the god. Different wishes create different godhoods, and different godhoods use the different special spiritual power to master the corresponding spell-like abilities and enhance their own power."

“This might be a proper explanation for why the Church needed followers. But if the God of Truth did exist, powerful as the He is, why would the Congress of Magic still be allowed to survive? Why did the God of Truth allow the Church to be split into two? Why did cognitive worlds exist? Why didn’t the God of Steam come into being despite the fact that there were so many dwarves as followers? Why didn’t the God of Truth have a specific godhood domain?”

“... According to the most shared belief in the Congress, spiritual power is a special kind of electromagnetic wave, in other words, it’s a kind of invisible light. Then why are souls able to emit special electromagnetic waves?”

“... The school of Necromancy and Electromagnetism have a rough explanation — This is due to the combination of some special electromagnetic fields and some elements...”

When he wrote this sentence, Lucien paused as a strange idea suddenly occurred to him—

One day, the God of Truth might have an exclusive radio channel.

“Welcome, this is FM xxx.x, the God of Truth...”

That was very, very weird.

Although Lucien had written a lot in his spiritual library, only a few seconds in the real world. The air surrounding Ell had changed again. Twirling fierce flames filled the space; the power of destruction withered the newly-grown plants.

“Flame and destruction, level eight, radiant knight level, but still in a weak state...”

More words appeared on the notebook in Lucien’s spiritual library.

“Although it seemed that Ell’s power did not actually increase, he had integrated with Avando...”

This had something to do with the mind, so Lucien believed that the change came from Ell’s sudden enlightenment. Lucien secretly thought that it was like curing a disabled person caused by psychogenic reasons.

As an arcanist, Lucien felt the enthusiastic desire to research rose in his heart. He longed for knowing more in-depth about the false god standing right in front of him. He had no idea whether capturing a false god, bringing it back to Allyn and cutting it up for research would yield any results. But he was certain that observing one closely in such an invisible way, giving stimulations, and recording changes were very effective.

To study wild animals, researchers should go into the wild. It was the same with studying false gods.

At this time, Lucien heard Francis’ gentle sigh. Francis smiled and praised, “my most sincere congratulations, my Lord! Your true self has been found, and my Lord, you’re now the one and only almighty true god!”

“The one and only true god?” Ell asked confusedly.

“You’re the projection of the true almighty, my Lord. Any other so-called gods are false ones in front of you. You’re the one and only true god, as your power spread across the world. Some false gods stole your power when you were lost, but now it is time to get them back and reclaim the supreme throne.” Francis praised passionately.

Lucien was also a bit lost. The one and only? Was Francis talking about the God of Truth?

Ell slightly frowned, “Are you saying that I should kill all of them and take away their divinity? Then no ally will be left.” He seemed to still have some sanity remaining

“It is not necessary, my Lord. The one and only almighty only needs servants. He shall grant part of his power to His servants, my Lord, and let them work and think for Him. But the servants will never be gods, neither do they possess godhoods. The gods who obey your commands can be given this chance, but they will be just half-divine creatures. You don’t have to kill them, my Lord.” said Francis.

“Intermediaries between God and humanity... What shall I call them?” Ell understood Francis’ words and asked full of interest.

Francis put on a flattering smile. “Angels. And there are different ranks of angels, so they have the chance to promote.”

The look on Lucien’s expression remained unchanged, but his heart suddenly skipped a beat when he heard Francis’s proposal. Francis was trying to make another God of Truth! Who was this man named Francis? Was he studying the secrets of the God of Truth? Or did he have other purposes?

“Good.” Ell burst into hearty laughter. “I am the one and only true god!”

While Ell laughed, Francis rubbed his brows gently with a mysterious smile on his face. Lucien looked away and confirmed his plan that he must carry on his secret experiment with Ell, to observe, stimulate, and record.

The laughter stopped, and calmness returned to Ell's eyes. "The priest of the God of Wisdom, the God of Love, and the Mother God of Earth sent messages. They have confirmed that the God of Moon and the Lord of Underworld will come and attack you tonight in order to lure me out, so they can find a chance to kill me."

"My supreme divinity has not yet recovered. We'll lose facing the God of Moon and the Lord of Underworld. Also, it is unknown yet if this is a trap." Ell could never forget how he was betrayed last time.

"In the debate, my true identity has been revealed, and now the Lord of War is afraid of me. If we still stick to the previous plan, it is going to be very dangerous. Shall we leave for now to wait for future chances? What do you think, Francis, Leviathan?" Ell asked.

"No!" Francis and Lucien burst out at the same time.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 473: The Cooperation

“Why?”

It was Anheuse who asked the question.

Anheuse had come back in disguise after finishing up guiding the believers. He was very concerned about the current situation, and the decision could lead to a major consequence. Although the almighty Ell’s true power had awakened, the enemy they were now facing was also much stronger than the God of Moon Asin.

Facing the enemy consisting of the Lord of War and the rest seven gods as well as their strongest priests, Anheuse did not believe it at all that Ell had a chance to win.

Therefore, although both Lucien and Francis were quite good at giving speeches, and Anheuse indeed felt quite encouraged, Anheuse would prefer to rely on his own judgment when facing this major decision, rather than blindly hoping for the great existence beyond definitions and imagination to bestow power on Lord Ell.

Hearing Lucien and Ell deny at the same time, Ell did not appear to be surprised at all.

“Say your reason.” He said slowly and firmly.

Lucien felt that whether it was because Ell’s psychosis became more serious or not, at least He now seemed more like a God. Ell was now calmer and more patient. Although they could not be optimistic at all facing the current situation, Ell’s current attitude was definitely more convincing than acting furious and worried.

Lucien took a look at Francis and saw he was just smiling. Obviously, Francis was waiting for him to reply.

Being very cautious, Francis was still testing Lucien.

Weighing the words, Lucien said carefully, “because... because it is a chance, a very good chance.”

“Chance? You mean the chance of being killed and entering the underworld?” Anheuse was quite pissed, thinking of the fact that their enemy was now at least eight times stronger than the previous.

He was pissed also because, in order to win the debate, Leviathan and Francis revealed the almighty Ell’s true identity, and thus incurred the anger and fear of the Lord of War. Anheuse suspected that it was the almighty Ell who purposefully told Francis and Leviathan his true identity to ensure that the plan could be carried out smoothly. Thus, Anheuse was even feeling a bit jealous — He had been serving the Lord of Fire and Destruction for more than twenty years, yet the Lord trusted the two youngsters who just joined the Secret Praying Convention more than him.

Lucien asked seriously, “why does the Lord of War’s priest want Asin and the Lord of Underworld to strike tonight? Why does the Lord of War want all of the churches to get involved?”

Ell nodded, as if He had completely understood what Lucien was trying to imply. He then turned to Francis and gestured him to elaborate.

“Because the Lord of War is afraid, afraid of the almightiness of our Lord, afraid of falling under the magnificent radiance of our Lord. The Lord of War wants to be very cautious. Before he could ascertain the current strength of Lord Ell, he does not dare to strike directly. If our Lord has awakened completely, such a dangerous move could lead to his death.”

Francis made lots of praises, but the core message was simple — He and Lucien boasted so far off that the Lord of War was shocked. He became concerned about the power of the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption and therefore decided to send the rest of the eight Gods and the priests to carry out this mission. If something was indeed off, the Lord of War could easily find an excuse and tell the followers that it was just a private conflict.

In the theology debate, Francis and Lucien described the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption as a lawful good god full of mercy and kindness. As long as there was no evidence that the God of War was directly involved in the assassination, the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption would have to show generosity and tolerance.

Meanwhile, according to the information they had, Lucien and Francis believed that the gods of the Angonormanian or Barril pantheon did not believe that there was an omniscient and omnipotent existence above, so many gods died of plotted murder and deception.

“I see...” Anheuse started getting some clues.

During the debate, Nena was acted rather calm, or at least relatively calm, during the debate. She had probably already got the plan at that time.

Ell slightly nodded, the corner of his mouth formed a imperceptible smile that disappeared in a second.

“But, our enemy is still very powerful. The eight gods, and their priests,” said Anheuse in great concern. “They are too strong for us now. We’d better leave. Our Lord the almighty Ell has awakened and he will become stronger in the time to go. We can wait in patience, instead of taking the risk for literally nothing.”

Lucien was a bit speechless. He wondered if he’d also start having mental problems if he continued to get around with them,

He coughed and said, “according to Mr. Francis’s description, our Lord can only gradually grow stronger by taking away others’ godhood. If we run away this time, the Lord of War and the rest of the false gods will find it out that we’re still weak. They’ll abandon any hesitations and keep trying their best to kill us outside of the valley. Then the situation will be even worse.”

Before Anheuse could speak, Lucien continued. “Think about it. Except for the God of Moon and the Lord of Underworld, will the rest of the gods really work together? Only one out of the six can win our position to preach in the river valley. This seems to be a very slight chance, so will they try other plans? Say, kill the God of Moon ‘by mistake’, or set up a trap, or... work with us?”

“They surely will,” said Anheuse with no doubt.

Ell remained rather calm, “This is indeed our opportunity if we know the right thing to do. But Leviathan, Francis, how do we know who really wants to work with us, and who schemes to betray?”

Francis grinned. “Why need we?”

Even Ell was a bit surprised this time.

“The situation is too complex, and the gods’ attitude changes all the time. It’s impossible for us to tell who really wants to be our ally. We can trust nobody,” said Francis.

Anheuse looked at Francis in confusion.

Lucien took over and continued. “I agree. Since their attitude is changing all the time, we should not waste our time telling who are our allies. Instead, we should focus on turning everyone into our allies!

“The Lord of War is afraid of your power, my Lord, so are the rest of the gods. They are waiting to see if you are that powerful as we said. As long as we are confident enough and show them the power, I believe that they will prefer expelling the Lord of War and sharing the valley with us to fighting for the single position left.

“Yes, the message might be a trap, but it also hints their hope. If we can show it to them, we can turn the trap into our opportunity to fight back; but if we retreat, we’ll lose the hope and turn the opportunity into a trap!”

Francis added just in time. “Of course, very likely they’ll wait and watch on the side until the situation settles, but that is exactly what we need – Kill Asin, the God of Moon, and take our time to leave!”

“Then what? They’ll know that we’re using them, and the Lord of War will find it out, too.” Anheuse understood Lucien and Francis’ idea, yet he was still quite concerned.

Francis asked, “why are we here in Solna Valley?”

“To kill Asin, the God of Moon, and take away His godhood,” answered Anheuse.

“Did the Lord of War show mercy to us before? The Lord of War was already seeking for a chance to destroy Avando a long time ago.” Lucien smiled.

Anheuse nodded, “That’s true. Fortunately, I am very good at disguising, or I would have been killed by his priests already.”

“Did we see any help from the rest of the gods?” Francis and Lucien in turns took turns to ask their questions. Their target was not Anheuse, but the mysterious Ell.

“No, not at all. They were helping the Lord of War,” said Anheuse bitterly.

“So, we’re going to achieve our target, and the consequence will not be worse than before. Why not?” asked Francis.

“The most important thing now is to have our Lord’s power recovered. Without power, even allies will turn into enemies.” Lucien concluded.

Anheuse remained silent for a while and finally said, “I’ve got no more question.”

When the almighty Ell took in the godhood and the power of the God of Moon, the rest of the gods would choose to be their allies themselves.

Ell smiled, “A very reasonable analysis. But what shall we do to demonstrate our strength, to make the timid be afraid, to make the plotters stand aside,?”

Francis proposed,

“Using the excuse that he profaned your glory during the debate, we will challenge the chief priest of the God of Moon to a duel. When we kill Asin’s chief priest right in front of the temple, Asin will definitely take actions, or He would be abandoned by the followers. In this case, when the rest of the plotters see that we are able to kill the God of Moon’s priest even without your presence, they’ll choose to be cautious onlookers, instead of directly being involved in this fight.

“If we can make a good plan and seize the best chance, we’ll have enough time to kill Asin and escape when He is unprepared and the others have chosen to step aside.”

His proposal was based on the premise that the divine circles of the Temple of War were still relatively undeveloped so that they could not cover the entire city like the circles in the main material world. Also, they were very close to the Solna River.

“Nob is the chief priest of the God of Moon, and his power should rival that of Jacob. Even if I give Leviathan the Seed of Spirit right now, he’ll not be able to adjust to the power and kill Nob,” said Ell, who had walked to the window with his hands behind. “Francis, you do it.”

Unlike Ell, Jacob did not have special power or speed matching that of a radiant knight. In case of any secret tracking, he was hiding somewhere else in the city.

“I’ll show my loyalty, my Lord,” said Francis.

Ell nodded. “I am impressed with what you have done for me, Leviathan. When I take in Asin’s power, I’ll give you the Seed of Spirit. But not now. At the moment I have to keep my power intact against our enemies. This is a bracelet made of Mision stone from Solna River. It enables you to breathe and swim like fish in the water. When the fight starts, go under the water immediately and leave. Wait for us at the promised place.”

Taking over the green bracelet, Lucien felt the slight amount of divine air it possessed.

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In the afternoon, a great stir broke out among the people in the city of Husum – Years after, another fight between two priests was finally going to take place.

A young, black-haired man mixing in the crowd was listening to the discussion attentively.

Slightly frowning, he wondered who was hiding behind this fight and what the purpose truly was.

He was the night watcher ranking no. 13 —”Body Controller” Ramiro.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 474: Blood Power

Solna River had become much fiercer after the rainy season. Roaring and rolling, the river currents marched forward.

In front of the temple that stood up high beside the river, Nob was waiting for Francis with a fine laurel wood staff in his hand and this very gloomy look on his face. He had never expected that the priest of the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption would challenge him to a duel. He wished it so bad that the duel could come one day later. After tonight, he would bear no more risk fighting against an enemy he knew pretty much nothing about, because all of them from that side would be dead by tomorrow.

Soon after the debate held in the morning ended, Nob received a secret command from Nena — The Lord of War needed the God of Moon and the Lord of Underworld to kill Leviathan and Francis tonight, in order to lure Ell out.

Therefore, he had spent the entire noon as well as afternoon sending secret messages to the God of Moon hiding in the nearby forest, and they had together worked out an almost perfect plan, including how to coordinate the priests to launch a sudden strike, how to rope in the other churches using the name of the Lord of War, and how to infuriate the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption by torturing and killing Leviathan and Francis in the most brutal manner.

However, when they were still celebrating their perfect plan and the near victory, a formal challenge letter was sent to Nob.

Nob was confused, but even more, intimidated.

And what horrified him the most was the look on the face of the God of Moon. Nob saw fear on the almighty God of Moon's face as well, fear towards the boldness of the priests of god Ell and the one behind them. In the past, no one had ever heard about Ell the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption; no one knew how strong he was, and they could only draw guesses based on the description beyond imagination given during the debate.

Nob tried his very best to postpone the duel to the second day, but he failed. In a theocratic society, it was impossible to turn down a duel challenged in the name of profanity, as it was directly associated with the fame and reputation of one's Lord. Nob had no choice.

"... It's okay. Very possibly, they are just liars." Nob murmured to himself as he watched the crowd gather.

In the Solna Valley, before the Lord of War came into power, fights between chief priests were quite common. Therefore, people in the city of Husum were already very experienced. They would like to see the fight but were also aware that they had to stay far away from the site, say, the other side of Solna river. After all, the fights between priests weren't as plain as those between commoners, as the sound and light could be heard and seen from far away.

"I'll say that Nob will return to the embrace of moonlight today. The God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption is so powerful, and, of course, so is his chief priest," said a young man aloud beside the river. He was a new follower of the Lord of Underworld, but now he was on the edge of switching belief.

“It’s hard to say. A debate isn’t a fight.” Refuted a devoted follower of the God of Moon.

Standing behind, Ramiro folded his arms and listened to the discussion quietly. He was quite confused as before he had never heard of the title “the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption”, although he had done quite a bit of research prior to arriving in Erdo. Since the target was the God of Moon, Ramiro wondered if this new god was a role played by Alterna, or that it was a guise of the other forces.

Ramiro had turned himself into an ordinary Barril man. Standing in the crowd, he was like a drop of water in the vast ocean.

At this time, two young men wearing a simple white robe stepped onto the stairs in front of the God of Moon’s temple. And the crowd instantly quieted down.

Carrying a heavy sword, Lucien stopped when he was about ten meters away from Nob. Standing on the closer side to the river, he said seriously, “today, we fight for the glory of our Lord, and we shall fight until the last breath. Are you ready?”

Until the last breath... Anger rose beside fear in Nob’s heart. He asked, “Leviathan, is it you, or Francis?”

“I am the blessed one of the great God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. I’m my Lord’s spokesperson and initiator. You, the priest of a false god, are far from being qualified to fight with me. Francis, send him to the underworld, and a just trial of my Lord awaits him!” Lucien tried his best to infuriate Nob.

“False god?! I’ll let you see who is the false one!” Nob, who had become infuriated, yelled furiously. He could feel the anger of his Lord in the temple behind him.

“After I kill Francis, I’ll challenge you! You can’t say no!”

Lucien smiled. “I have to remind you, priest Nob. A dead man cannot challenge anyone.”

“You’ll see!” Nob took a deep breath and tried to calm down at the moment. He had to focus on the fight against Francis, instead of losing his mind because of Leviathan’s evil words.

Francis drew the heavy sword from his back with both his hands and took a step forward. Gazing at Nob, he said, “on behalf of my Lord, I shall sentence you!”

“On behalf of the God of Moon, I will punish you!” roared Nob. Hearing this sentence, Lucien almost failed to hold back his laugh.

The priest from the Temple of War announced. “Let the fight begin!”

Holding the heavy sword, Francis thrust at Nob like a fierce blow. The heavy sword swept fiercely, its power could even cut off the wind.

A silver-white moon lit up in Nob’s eyes, and layers of illusions covered him, like the shadows cast by moonlight in the night.

The heavy sword hit the shadows and disappeared briefly as if it was lost in a haze.

Seizing the chance, Nob quickly pointed his laurel staff at Francis. The temperature within the range dropped significantly and a dense patch sharp icicles formed. The icicles formed a ball that trapped Francis within.

Nob was quite relieved seeing that Francis relied on the strength of his body to fight, instead of using magic. The icicles might not be able to hurt him badly, but they were totally capable of restraining him.

Facing the hideous spear-like icicles, a smile appeared at the corners of Francis' lips. He swept the heavy sword horizontally and, with a deafening roar, slashed it downwards. Surrounding him, all of sudden, eight replicas of him emerged. With the same smile, and the same heavy sword, Francis and his replicas hacked downwards together in the joint power.

But the nine heavy words had different colors — one was covered with electric currents, one with green acid, one with flame, one looked rusted and rotten, one looked colorful, one looked freezing cold... The swords were not just shadows but carried real power.

The icicles reached Francis and a thick layer of ice expanded across. However, under Francis's fierce strikes, the layer of ice instantly broke into pieces, yet there was not even a single shallow wound on Francis' body.

The nine swords slashed at Nob, who did not have enough time to cast the next spell nor was fast enough to dodge.

Nob's body broke into pieces like glass in the mixed colors of light.

From the shadow nearby, Nob appeared again. However, he looked rather embarrassed. All kinds of demi-divine spells reached Francis, however, Francis was not affected by them at all. Together with his eight replicas, he came right in front of Nob, and his sword was ready to taste Nob's blood.

Lightning, acid, flame, withering, toxin, ice, death, mental... Highly resistant to magic and divine power... Lucien was watching from aside analyzed Francis's blood power attentively. Without a doubt, it was the blood power called Hydra. Although Francis was only showing his power up to level seven, Lucien believed that he was at least a level-eight Hydra-blood knight. Therefore, Lucien was certain that Francis was neither a nobleman nor a knight from the Northland or the Dark Mountain Range. He was very likely a night watcher from the South or North Church, or from another secret religious organization.

There were a number of level-eight radiant knights in this world, but definitely not a lot. There was no way that a level-eight knight would pop out of nowhere. The Congress of Magic had information about most of the level-eight knights, except for those who were night watchers and those from other religious groups. Lucien carefully recalled the list, but could not relate anyone to Francis.

However, on the other side of the river, the look on Ramiro's face had changed.

It was him?

"Impressive... Such a powerful Divine-blooded..." Those priests who were hiding in the crowd could not help murmuring to themselves. They had believed that the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption was not a false god.

At this time, the Solna River suddenly surged. Waves over ten-meter high, driven by the gravity of the moon, were thrown at Francis with great momentum.

Asin, the God of Moon, finally took action!

Lucien did not hesitate. He started running very fast, but still within the controlled speed to hide his real power. After a few seconds, he had come to the cliff where was not affected by the waves. Then, Lucien jumped directly into the Solna River.

Francis' body leaned backward, and the eight shadows followed, like a hydra roaring at the sky. The lighting, flame, acid merged together and formed into huge black waves. The two different colored waves crashed right into each other.

The blood power of Hydra was also good at controlling water!

At this time, a slim glitter of moonlight lit up. Behind Francis, an old man with a white beard holding a bent blade appeared and was about to attack Francis. Covering in moonlight, the old man was Asin in the human look!

As soon as Asin's blade reached out, His movement paused. A long, black sword carrying a great dark power of destruction came from above and slashed at His back!

Avando's supporter? Asin was both shocked and furious. Then Asin recognized that it was Avando's chief priest Jacob.

However, all the defense spells that Asin cast beforehand were for resisting the power in the field of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. The spells would not do much help facing the black sword!

Lucien had no idea what was going on above the water. Before he jumped into the water, he heard Ell's cold and detached voice.

"I sentence you to death!"

The river water embraced Lucien. The bracelet worn on his right wrist brought fresh air into his lungs. Instead of swimming along the currents, Lucien went countercurrent like a fish.

The cold light spots drifted away from Asin's body as the power of moonlight was collected by Francis. When Ell was about to kill Asin with the next hack, a long black iron arrow suddenly pierced through Ell's chest with horrible power and momentum!

"You false god!"

A terrifying roar came from the Temple of War.

It was the Lord of War! Somehow the Lord of War not in the Angornorma Empire but was in the Solna Valley, and he had joined the fight!

What attracted the Lord of War here?

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 475: The Connection

Since this dimension was filled with half-solid space blocks, the speed of flying was greatly restricted. Also, since the world was relatively undeveloped, long-distance teleportation circles did not even exist. Thus, Francis and Lucien both excluded the possibility that the Lord of War would arrive and get involved in this fight when they were making the plan. After all, they thought that the Lord of War was still in the Angonorma Empire, which was quite far away from Erdo. It would take a legendary at least two days to arrive here from the empire. As for a false god like the Lord of War, it would at least take seven to eight days.

Also, no false gods would like to leave their own domain for too long. When Avando escaped after defeated by Antanas, instead of following up the victory, Antanas only asked the priests and the divine-blooded heroes to chase after Avando and himself went back to Angonorma Empire immediately. Unless facing a super serious issue, a false god would never show his full presence.

Neither did France nor Lucien expect this. The real Lord of War had used the level nine legendary power, and thus, the arrow pierced through Ell's chest.

Thoughts quickly flashed through Francis' mind:

The Lord of War must have left Angonorma Empire a week ago to arrive here now. Therefore, the impetus must not be the debate, but something else. Was the Lord of War here to eliminate all the false gods including the God of Moon? Was this debate a mere conspiracy?

But if this was the case, the Lord of War would not have to come here in full presence. An avatar of Him, plus a few chief priests and the divine-blooded heroes, would be more than enough to suppress the weaker churches. The reason should be more than this...

Only a handful of false gods in this world, such as the three Goddesses of Fate on the ice plain in the north, possess the gift of prophecy, the Lord of War was for sure not one of them. There was very unlikely that the Lord of War came was because He sensed some kind of danger, as Ell was not a threat to the Lord of War at that moment at all — Moreover, the almighty power of Ell only existed in their bragging. Even if Ell's power would grow rapidly in the future, no prophecy spells could foresee such a remote fact at the current time.

On the rushing Solna River, the shadow of the cliffs suddenly aggregated and fiercely rose up in the air. Ell took form in the shadow but was now even weaker. Obviously, the penetration from the arrow was bad. If it had not been that he now possessed power in the domain of redemption and evaded the fatal strike by blurring life and death, He would have been completely dead by now.

Ell did not have time to rejoice over His survival — the arrow had torn down his disguise, and the Lord of Underworld and the rest of the gods had known the truth. They were now no more afraid of or concerned about Ell's power — Ell was weak.

However, the biggest threat still came from the arrow. The iron arrow was free from the limitations of space and could arrive without any trace within a blink of the eye.

The Lord of War howled again, and the horrible power gathered one more time. The false gods hiding around were ready to take action. Francis flashed past the air above the Temple of War and turned himself into a dense black cloud, blocking the sky completely.

In the dark cloud, a snake as huge as a mountain lifted its nine heads, revealing the cold, sharp fangs.

Then the hydra dived fiercely and became nine flashing black blades, the black mist winding around carrying this great power of destruction.

All the powers of the rest eight heads joined in the one in the center. The ultimate power of devastation was formed!

Therefore, a radiant knight with the bloodline of Hydra often owned a title closely related to destruction and death, for example, the Eye of Hell.

Boom! Solna River had gone crazy. Huge waves dashed all the way up towards the sky. Those people standing on the ground could no longer keep their balance and stand on their feet anymore.

However, the Temple of War had been wrapped by the dark cloud. No one knew for sure what was going on in there, but there must be a very bad fight.

“It’s you, the Haze of Destruction...” Rocking back and forth just like those ordinary people, Ramiro was actually estimating Francis’ true power.

If it was Ramiro himself fighting against the Lord of War, he should be able to last over thirty seconds. If he was willing to pay for the cost, he would have a big chance of managing to escape. After all, although the Lord of War was of level nine, when it came to the real fight, His power could only rival a gold knight due to the lack of experience in real fights.

“The power of this blessed is even a bit greater than that of Avando...”

“Why was Ell so weak? Was his power still recovering?”

“Was Ell hiding his true strength?”

The rest of the gods hesitated again; they feared that Ell was indeed a powerful god in a weak state. If this was the case, Ell could still temporarily regain horrible power, and they did not want to be the one to face it.

Suddenly, the part of Solna River beside Ell became pale and full of the air of death. The Lord of Underworld, who was covered in a black robe, rose up from the water, surrounded and guarded by countless specters.

The Lord of Underworld had become the servant of the Lord of War and was allowed to preach in the valley, therefore, He had to take actions right now to prove His loyalty. Besides, the fact that the Lord of War came here in full presence gave the Lord of Underworld confidence. Thus, unlike the other six false gods, He made a prompt decision to attack Ell.

People screamed. The rotten specters around the Lord of Underworld were too intimidating.

Two red needle-like spots of light flickered on the Lord of Underworld's face, locating the still-weak El. Dragging the heavy sickle, the Lord of Underworld came directly for Ell.

Beg for mercy! Accept my sentence!

The Lord of Underworld could not be more confident facing Ell, who was just severely injured. Hatred generated from the debate in the morning rose in his heart.

Ell could feel the freezing cold air of death. Having only partially recovered from the arrow, Ell had to utilize all of His remnant power to use His most powerful spell.

“I command you, to die!” Ell spat out two ancient Baburian words in a tone of great authority. Ell learned this divine-like spell Command after obtaining the domain redemption. The power of the Command was always one level lower in both requirements of usage and power than the corresponding magic spells of the same level.

However, there was no way that the Lord of Underworld would just be killed by a single Command. The Lord of Underworld was not a fool.

The rest of the false gods were ready to join the fight as well. Obviously, Ell’s spell had failed to kill the Lord of Underworld, so Ell was not as powerful at all as his followers described.

Ell could feel the power of death from the Lord of Underworld and saw the two red light spots flickering excitedly in the two hollow eye sockets.

To be honest, Ell had tried the very best. The only thing He could do right now was continuing to cast Command. But he also knew that, due to the discrepancy between their power, His command would be of no use at all.

To Ell's great surprised, the flickering light spots suddenly disappeared. Silently, the Lord of Underworld disappeared in the air.

What was going on?

The fake gods hiding around were all more than shocked, including Ell.

The spell of Command did not have this kind of power — the power that could just dissolve the Lord of Underworld in the air, leaving no trace at all!

Confinement Spell! The looked on Ramiro's face suddenly changed as he recognized the spell. There must be an archmage hiding nearby!

This mysterious archmage hid the magic waves when Ell was casting the Command, thus neither false gods nor Francis noticed it. But Ramiro was standing right beside the river and he was quite profound in terms of knowing magic, so he still managed to notice the tiny difference. He knew that it was the ninth-circle magic spell Confinement.

The whole thing was getting increasingly complicated. Ramiro believed that he could use some extra support now.

Shocked but exhilarated, Ell burst out laughter. “I am the true god of this world. This is my true power! My power is even much stronger than I can imagine!”

The rest of the fake gods were greatly intimidated. They were glad that they did not rush to take any action. What happened to the Lord of Underworld was their best lesson. It seemed that Ell’s mysterious power could never be drained!

Obviously, Ell believed that it was His own power that killed the Lord of Underworld. Ell’s understanding was that when in face of the great danger, his almighty power somehow managed to gain some connection to the supreme version of himself above, and therefore, His long-lost power resumed.

But anyway, no matter to what extent Ell believed in this explanation, He must be confident enough to make others believe in him!

Hearing Ell’s laughter, the power coming from the Temple of War stagnated for a second. Seizing the chance, the nine black snakeheads joined together into a flash of sword light and fiercely chopped at the temple.

The ground trembled. Deep cracks appeared, from which black smog came out and devoured the temple.

“Leave!” Francis was still in the form of the black smog. Grabbing Ell and Jacob, who were still during the middle of the fight against the Lord of War, Francis fled away towards the horizon.

A while later, after the black smog entangling the temple suddenly dissipated, an extremely angry roaring came out.

“You all must die!”

.....

Putting aside Sun Staff, Lucien activated Transformation Mask and turned himself into a small fish. He swam downwards at a very fast speed.

Having a false god as an experiment subject was not something that happened very often. Lucien did not want to give up halfway.

After a while, Lucien suddenly stopped — He felt that he was being watched!

The feeling flashed past very fast. Lucien carefully checked around but found nothing. Instead, he felt a strong air of death. The fish nearby were both alive and dead — they were all rotten, but somehow still swimming.

No wonder the Lord of Underworld just emerged from the water; It seemed that His realm was hiding deep at the bottom of Solna River. As soon as Lucien figured this out, he swam out of the city of Husum following the currents, since staying here for too long would be very dangerous.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 476: The Seed of Spirit

In the far west, a bright star appeared in the dusk sky, indicating the arrival of the night. The mountains along the valley started looking darker and darker.

When Lucien arrived at the secret cave as agreed, Ell, Francis, and Jacob had already been waiting there. Even with winding a long distance to get rid of the tailing false gods and priests, they still managed to arrive earlier than Lucien.

“Why so late, Leviathan?” Asked Jacob in low voice, who was at the same time casting spells to make sure that no one was following Lucien.

Ell and Francis also had the same question, as this cave was not far away from the city of Husum, and Leviathan had left the city much earlier than they did.

Lucien explained, well-prepared. “I jumped into the river but got into a bit of trouble because of the tides and waves summoned by the God of Moon. It took me some time to swim away from the currents.”

“I see.” Jacob nodded, feeling more relieved when he ensured that no one had followed Lucien here.

Ell looked a bit pale but was still smiling in a good spirit. “Although Asin’s still alive, his godhood has been taken away, and the rest of the false gods are now all intimidated by my power. You all did very well, and you deserve good rewards.”

“Our great pleasure,” answered Jacob hurriedly.

At this time, Francis took out a small laurel box which revealed a slight air of divinity. The laurel box made the entire cave smell pleasant.

The box was given to Francis and Jacob by Ell, for collecting the godhood of the God of Moon. Without this box, the mundane could never see or touch the divine power, not to mention collecting it.

“Great God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption, this is the godhood of Asin, the God of Moon,” said Francis.

To Lucien’s surprise, Francis handed the box containing the God’s Glory to Ell just like this.

Ell was, by contrast, more in a rush. Ell eagerly opened the box right in front of Jacob, Francis, and Lucien. As soon as the box opened, rays of cool light burst out. They felt like water when touching the skin.

Without hiding his curiosity, Lucien gazed at the glory attentively.

In the wood box, the tiny fragments that looked like the silver moon seemed quite unreal, as if they were very, very far away from Lucien. Meanwhile, there were obscure images changing in the fragments, mysterious and divine.

The moonlight fragments floated in the wood box as if they were dead, occasionally contracting and expanding slightly.

... Lucien felt this scene to be rather familiar. He searched his memories, trying to recall where he once saw them.

“Guard me, you three,” said Ell in a low voice. He was in great eagerness, as He had been waiting for this moment for too long. Before Leviathan arrived, Ell was worried that there probably would be enemies following behind, so He did not consume the fragments. But now, the moment of taking in the godhood of the God of Moon and resuming power had finally arrived!

“As your command,” said the three followers.

Both Francis and Lucien were staring at every single movement of Ell with the same enthusiastic look on their faces.

Ell’s right hand was now covered in a layer of light that possessed the soothing power of both eternity and peace. With the light, Ell reached His right hand into the wood box and grabbed the floating silver moon pieces.

The tiny pieces started aggregating under Ell’s power. Gradually, they formed a small silver light ball, just like a small moon.

The light ball throbbed like a beating out, giving out an aura of indifference and divinity, just like the eternal moon watching indifferently from the night sky.

Lucien's mouth opened slightly out of great shock. He finally recalled the familiar scene!

In the reflection of the Sphinx Mausoleum in the World of Souls, there was a light ball stained by rust and blood floating above the Sphinx coffin...

In the inner part of Sun's King's underground palace, there was that white light ball floating above the palm of Thanos' statue...

Memories flashed by like the frames of a movie — clear, and shocking. Although the details of each scene were different, the aura of the power felt exactly the same!

Something struck Lucien, as if he had got a grip on part of the secret of gods and ancient demons. However, soon his mind was filled with more questions — The existence of Alterna, the silver moon, could date back to the time way before all living creatures came into being, and the birth of the powers in ancient hell and abyss was also prior to that of the most creatures. Then where did they come from? Why was there a great difference between the form of existence of the ancient seven demons and the gods including the false ones?

Was he thinking in the wrong way?

Obviously, the World of Souls still hid more secrets than Lucien thought. Meanwhile, Lucien wondered whether it was Sun's Corona or the laurel box that enabled him to see the godhood of the God of Moon.

The silver-white light ball slowly merged into the light covering Ell's right hand. The light joined.

Ell's face was distorted, as if the entire process was very painful.

Then the light suddenly expanded and embraced Ell within like a cocoon, throbbing like a heart.

After quite a while, the cold, divine light burst out from within the cocoon and quickly went into Ell's body. Now, the light was a part of Ell.

Ell opened his eyes and his pupils were now much deeper, like the starry sky, and the way Ell talked and behaved had also changed to the softer and gentler side.

"My three domains — resurrection, fertility, and redemption — have all been enhanced. My power has resumed. And now I have two new domains, specters and moonlight."

Now they should figure out a new title for Ell, with so many godhoods.

"Revival and the specters are all in the realm of Death; flame and fertility belonged to the realm of Life; Redemption and moonlight come from the power of spirit and material; while Destruction covers them all. Therefore, my lord, you are the dominator of both material and spirit, the lord of

life and death. You do not have to bother constantly changing your title, you're the Supreme Lord, the Saviour. As for assimilating Asin's godhood, all you need is an avatar named Asin, my Lord."

Obviously, Francis was still pushing Ell towards the side of being 'the one and the almighty', which the God of Truth exactly featured.

Lucien watched carefully, hoping that what he saw might be able to solve some of the questions in his mind.

"Good, this is the title that matches me," said Ell. There was light in his eyes. No matter he believed in it or not in the past, from now on, this would be the only target as his motivation.

"I'll take away the godhood of those fake gods, one by one," Ell claimed.

Obviously, taking in Asin's godhood had brought Ell a completely new experience, and Ell had become obsessed with it.

Ell turned to Francis and Lucien, "Both of you have proved yourself. I'll give both of you the Seed of Spirit to make you stronger and live longer."

Ell reached out his right hand, and a white light ball fell on his palm. Compared to God's Glory, this light ball seemed to be more approachable, but still carried great divinity.

This was the Seed of Spirit. Transformed by a god, the Seed of Spirit would be turned into God's Glory, visible to bare eyes. Lucien guessed that this was the origin of priests' power.

Although Lucien had had a rough idea of what the Seed of Spirit was, he was now even more confused. According to Ell, giving out the Seed of Spirit would reduce the power of a false god, then the number of the seeds give out must be severely restricted. However, there were thousands of pastors, priests, cardinals, grand cardinals in the Saint Truth, and all of them could exert divine power. What happened to the God of Truth? It seemed that the power of the God of Truth had way exceeded that of Alterna, making segmenting deity something more than normal and common that would not hurt the God of Truth at all. What was the difference between the God of Truth and the rest of the false gods?

"Francis, you have shown your power in the fight. It was you who helped me defeat the God of Moon. You're the one who made the biggest contribution and effort. Although this seed can only give you a chief priest's power, you can use divine power from now on. With the seed, you communicate with it using devoutness, and you'll be able to have it as part of you."

Ell was already rather good-looking. After taking in Asin's godhood, Ell's features now looked more feminine. As Ell was talking, the smile on His face was faint and a bit mysterious.

If Francis was planning on something else, he would not dare to take in the seed. If his faith fell, he would be devoured by the Seed of Spirit, both his spirit and body.

Lucien estimated that the seed would give Francis the divine-like power around level six. He carefully watched Francis, waiting to see how Francis would react.

"My devoutness is no inferior to that of anyone." Francis smiled and took over the seed. Holding it on his palm, Francis started praying to Ell.

Soon, the Seed of Spirit began trembling and buzzing, and then it dissolved into Francis's palm. Divine air covered Francis.

Lucien was so surprised that his mouth slightly opened.

Just like this?! There was no way that Francis was a devoted follower of Ell. Why Francis was not concerned at all?

Was it because Francis had his own solution?

In Lucien's mind, the secrets Francis had were no less than his.

"Leviathan, you are smart and brave. Your contribution should also be recognized. This is your seed, which will give you the power of a common divine-blooded hero." Ell was quite content seeing Francis's loyalty. He made another seed for Lucien. However, it was much less powerful.

It made sense because basically what Lucien did was just talking and talking. By contrast, Francis was the one who fought and fought very well.

Francis smiled, as he had become the onlooker. Ell, Francis, and Jacob watched Lucien take over the Seed of Spirit.

Lucien knew what happened to the ancient sorcerers who tried to borrow the power of divinity. He was well aware of the fact that the seed would bring stormy chaos to his cognitive world, and Ell, Francis, and Jacob would know.

The seed was too dangerous to Lucien. He could not just simply take it in like Francis.

“You are new in the convention, and you do not have Francis’ power. It might be hard to absorb since it’s your first time. You can try multiple times,” said Ell, in a tone both encouraging and urging, while Francis and Jacob were staring at Lucien and grinning.

Lucien looked down and held the seed with his both hands up to his chest. The seed touched the center of his chest.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 477: Lucien’s Saint Badge

In Lucien’s half-substantialized cognitive world, the bright Host Star of Destiny abruptly started orbiting. The black hole behind that seemed able to devour everything rotated to the front, bending the surrounding light. Even time seemed to slow down. Any prying into this space using basic senses became unreliable, as sight and light had deviated from its trajectory.

Praying, Lucien appeared to be rather serious and devoted. Suddenly, the Seed of Spirit began trembling like a hound that saw its bleeding prey. In the next second, the seed had dissolved into Lucien’s chest and burst out pure and cold light, enveloping Lucien within.

Ell was surprised to see that the power of the moon suited Leviathan so perfectly. The slight deviation in Lucien's cognitive world made Ell believe that there was nothing suspicious about what just happened, but only the proof that Leviathan was quite gifted and trustworthy. Ell nodded approvingly and retreated his sight.

Jacob was also a bit surprised and shifted his gaze as well. Their reaction made the speculative mysterious smile disappear on Francis' face. Once again, nothing here seemed to attract Francis' interest.

The light of the silver moon gradually dissipated. Lucien now looked even calmer and introverted. He took a swing with his fist, and, not surprisingly at all, it left moonlight shadows in the air.

"Your body took in the Seed of Spirit very well. The power of the moon suits you. The result is the best." What Ell wanted to say was that the result even exceeded his expectations. However, it suddenly occurred to him that as the Supreme, he could not admit his uncertainty about the specific power the seed carried, so he changed his words.

Jacob chimed in. "You have really become the seventh apostle now, Leviathan. It seemed that your power has reached that of a competitive divine-blooded!"

"This is the blessing from my Lord," said Lucien calmly. The seed seemingly brought calmness to him, so he was not in any wild joy at all.

Ell nodded. Next, Ell turned to instill power Jacob's Seed of Spirit, enhancing it to the limit of level six. Then Ell released a sigh and said, "It's a pity that I totally destroyed the Lord of Underworld, or I would've been able to find His realm and assimilate the godhood of death."

Ell looked rather confident, for He had managed to persuade Himself that it was His own power that killed the Lord of Underworld.

Lucien almost burst into laughter but held it back. Weighing his words, he said, “Great Lord, when I was in the water, the currents pushed me to an area which I believe is the Lord of Underworld’s realm... Maybe there is treasure left...”

Confinement Spell could seal the target in a space created by distortion. Unless the target was at least three levels stronger than the caster, there was no way the target could get out. The target would either be confined in the space forever or get lost in the space maze and finally be destroyed by the space storm.

The only chance to get out for the target was to send out a message asking for help. As long as the location was known or could be located through prophecy, the ninth-circle magic spell Freedom could be used to crack Confinement.

Therefore, when Lucien helped Ell by activating Sun Staff’s Confinement, he was well aware of the fact that it was the true self of the Lord of Underworld that was confined, not the avatars. The Lord of Underworld’s avatars would at most become weaker due to the reduced connection.

“His realm is at the bottom of Solna River? Wasn’t it in the Death Vally where the river originates?” Asked Ell in surprise. “Did the Lord of Underworld move for fear of the possible revenge from me? Such a pity, the Death Valley is the perfect place for the godhood of death and underworld... Or was there some kind of agreement between the Lord of Underworld and the Lord of War that made the Lord of War move there at ease? Maybe it has something to do with the arrival of the Lord of War in the city of Husum and the debate...”

Ell did not doubt that Leviathan, the “devoted” follower, would lie on this matter.

Having no clues for the answers to these questions, Ell said, “Although Antanas could never expect that we would go back to the city of Husum, there’s still no need for us to go back. The Lord of Underworld is dead, and the treasure is always there. When we find the realm of the rest of the fake gods after we kill them one by one, treasures are guaranteed.”

In the past, Avando had been obsessed with treasure and beauty. But now, Ell, after awakening the ambition and vision, was now able to control the desire. There was nothing more important than ascending the supreme throne again.

Ell smiled and then threw Lucien the laurel box that had started to rot. “If you like treasure, I’ll give you some, as your reward.”

Lucien took the box and saw a layer of fine silver powder lying at the bottom, which seemed to be the remainders after Ell consumed the light ball that was the godhood of Asin.

It was powder of the Stone of Moon God! Lucien was very surprised, as it was even more precious than top-quality Moonlight Stone or Death Stone. More importantly, the powder could be used to repair Lucien’s Ice & Snow Medal and Immortal Throne robe!

Lucien was about to use other materials to fix the medal and the robe, but now he had found this much better alternative.

The smile on Francis’ face became rigid for a second — He also wanted the powder.

Jacob said cautiously after hearing Ell's ambition, "we have to be careful. The false gods might join the Lord of War and use themselves as baits. We can wait for a while until the Lord of War's patience wore off, and then we can deal with them one by one."

"I know." Ell nodded and said, "Leviathan is smart and motivated, Francis is powerful and profound, and Jacob is cautious and well-organized. You three are my best servants."

After Francis, Lucien, and Jacob expressed their loyalty one more time, Ell continued, "Francis once talked to me about the ranks of angels, and I am satisfied with it. You three are the most powerful angels following me. Francis, you have the power of destruction, so you are the Angel of Death, and also the Angel of Justice.

"And you, Jacob, you are my first follower and you have ever been preaching my words. You are the Angel of Enlightenment, and also the Angel of Redemption. You, Leviathan, you are the new and youngest apostle, full of energy. So you are my Angel of Glory, the Morning Star, the Son of Dawn."

Lucien was a bit speechless. He wondered why the title "the Fallen Morning Star" followed him to this alternate realm.

"I will go back to my realm to enhance my godhood and stabilize my domain. Jacob, go back to Politown and get ready for preaching. Also, send some followers to watch over the false gods and to take down records in order to assist Francis for future plans. Leviathan, you go to the place we previously agreed on to wait for Anheuse and then go back to Politown with him. On your way back, start preaching but do it secretly." Ell gave orders to them one by one, leaving Lucien to wait for Anheuse because it was known that Leviathan could not fly.

"As your command, my Lord," answered the three in chorus.

After Ell, Jacob, and Francis all left, Lucien finally released a sigh of relief. They, Francis in particular, were giving him great pressure.

After waiting for another while to make sure that they were not somehow coming back, Lucien touched his chest and took out a patterned badge covered in a layer of moonlight.

Before joining the Secret Praying Congress, Lucien was told about the Seed of Spirit. The existence of it was constantly being mentioned afterward. Cautious as Lucien, he must have been prepared.

After reading through the materials, based on the features of the false gods and their power, referring to the design of Sun's Corona, Lucien made a semi-finished badge using the materials he had.

Although at that time he did not have the full grip of the structure that he learned from Sun's Corona, Lucien was still quite confident that it could absorb the power of the Seed of Spirit and turn into a complete divine item.

After knowing how God's Glory and the Seed of Spirit worked, Lucien was totally confident that his plan would work. Therefore, he took his time watching how Francis took in the power of the seed.

Then, as the Secretive, Lucien successfully deceived Ell and Francis, who never thought of thoroughly investigating Leviathan. Relying on the resonance from Sun's Corona, Lucien absorbed the Seed of Spirit using this badge and turned it into a level-three divine item.

The badge could improve the wearer's recovery ability, agility, speed, and strength to level three. If the wearer's Blood Power originated from the silver moon, then the level would be increased to four. But, since the badge did not improve the wearer's reaction speed, a real level four grand knight would still be more competitive.

Lucien left the message within the item and named it,

“Ell’s Saint Badge, level-three senior-rank divine item.”

...

“Perhaps, this badge is the truly devoted follower.

“From Lucien Evans.”

Hanging the badge under his robe, Lucien started fixing the two magic items using the powder. Then he would be meeting Anheuse.

.....

At the bottom of Solna River, among the currents, there was dim light emerging. The voice of the Lord of Underworld came,

“I’m finally free! I will kill you, Ell! I’ll put your soul deep into the underworld and lash it for ten thousand years!”

Somehow the Lord of Underworld had freed Himself from Confinement and returned to this dimension.

After the dizziness from teleportation disappeared, the two red light spots in the Lord of Underworld's sockets suddenly froze,

The Lord of Underworld saw no one around, but he thought that it was his avatar finding the Lord of War for help that freed him.

As soon as this thought appeared, a sword entangled with flame emerged out of nowhere, carrying an overwhelming power of destruction.

A deep crack appeared the body of the Lord of Underworld. The two red light spots disappeared easily, like candlelight that was blown out.

.....

“My sincere appreciation and gratefulness, my Lord. I did not expect this at all... It was all my fault.” After losing the power for maintaining the human look, Asin now had gone back to his real look — an old centaur. As Asin spoke, his white beard swayed fiercely. He was obviously very upset.

The Lord of War, whose appearance was a middle-aged man wearing an eye patch, nodded. “The enemy is too cunning, and the rest of the gods are too timid. You are the first one serving me in loyalty, and I will treat you well.

“This godhood is from a false god I killed last month. It suits you, so take it.”

A light ball was sent to Asin from the Lord of War’s hand.

It was a great surprise to Asin, as he never expected that the Lord of War would make such a generous reward.

“My Lord, this is... godhood of the Morning Star?” Asin stammered.

“The Star of Morning, the Star of Dusk, the Incarnation of Love and Beauty, the Secret Death and Resurrection. After you take in the godhood, you will become Ell’s main target,” Antanas said rather openly. The four duties coming from the godhood would be a great tempt to Ell, as nothing else other than the godhood of the Lord of Underworld and this one worked better for Ell to boost his power.

The Lord of War was using Asin as a bait, obviously. After a second of hesitation, Asin still took in the light ball. There was no other option.

As Asin absorbed the godhood gradually, His body started to change. Features of the centaur and the beard disappeared, the shape of human body resumed, but now Asin had turned into a gorgeous beauty with fine skin and blond hair.

“Good. From now on, you’re the God of Love and Beauty, the Star of Morning and Dusk,” said Antanas, satisfied, as he reached out his right hand and touched Asin’s face.

After Asin left, the hall became quiet again, and cold wind blew in. Antanas just stood there in silence for a long time.

Chapter 478 - Face to Face, But Not Able to Recognize

Chapter 478: Face to Face, But Not Able to Recognize

In city Husum of the Solna River Valley, there were soldiers everywhere searching for preachers and believers of the God of Revival, Fertility, and Redemption. The searching messed the entire city, and the mess extended all day long into the deep night.

However, the search yielded nothing. Most of the followers of Ell were the previous followers of the God of Flame and Destruction, who were experts in hiding in the crowd. Unless the clergies of the Lord of War and the other gods could match in number with that of the Saint Truth Church so that they could examine the people one by one on the street using divine spells, it was impossible that they could find a clue tracking the secret preachers.

As for those new followers of Ell who converted after attending the debate and seeing how Ell killed the Lord of Underworld within a second, they were of no value for the searching, as these new followers knew nothing about the initiators and priests.

“Send out these letters and do as said in the letters. This is the prepayment. When my friend sees the mark and finds you, you’ll get the rest,” said Ramiro who had changed his look again to a merchant.

The traveling merchant nodded hurriedly and took over the gold coins and the letters. The pay was too generous to make him say no!

He wished to hit the road right away! He was so lucky to run into such a wealthy man!

In fear of the mysterious ninth-circle archmage and the Lord of War, Ramiro decided to reach the three top night watchers who had arrived in Erdo with him, the five senior-rank priests, two gold knights, and six radiant knights investigating the meteorite incident that happened three years ago in the north to ask for help. Something going on here was definitely not right!

Because of the certain restriction in this dimension, the Church only managed to set up a few teleportation circles in the fully-controlled countries. In remote areas, they still had to rely on the most primordial methods to communicate.

Ramiro also decided that currently there was no necessity to report this to the grand cardinals and Varantine, the leader of the ascetics, who were investigating different things across the dimension. They were already short of hands, and aside from the unconfirmed existence of the mysterious archmage, there was nothing worthy of attention here

Three years ago, many places in this dimension witnessed meteor showers, making it impossible to know where Alterna and the mysterious existence from the World of Souls exactly ended up falling. Ramiro had to find a chance to approach the false god who took away the godhood of the God of Moon. Somehow, all the dimensions where human beings were living shared a similar length of

day and night and the length of a year like the main material world. In the dimensions not suitable for humans to live, it was the opposite case.

When Ramiro turned around and was about to leave, he heard the nearby people talking,

“I heard that the Lord of Underworld had been killed by the almighty Lord of Redemption. Keep it as a secret: The statue of the Lord of Underworld in the temple cracked right from the middle, and most of the priests of the Lord of Underworld had lost their power.”

“Really? I remembered that the almighty God of Redemption only said two words at that time!” Said another man. Ordinary folk like him could not understand ancient Baburian.

“So what the priests said on the debate is true. When the searching comes to an end, I’ll...” The man who was talking did not finish his words, as he could not fully trust the people he was talking to.

“Don’t say that too early. If Ell is that powerful, Ell would have killed Asin a long time ago. But now Asin had resumed his power and became the God of Love and Beauty, the Star of Morning and Dusk. Now, Asin’s priests are receiving the new power,” said another man, who was the follower of Bero, the God of Sun and Justice.

Ramiro was very surprised to know that so many things had happened. The Lord of Underworld had died! Who did it?

According to the Church, the temper of those false gods changed greatly as they took in different godhoods, and some of them ended up being driven by their desire and losing the ability of thinking. When Ramiro was thinking to himself, he noticed something unusual — When those people were talking, one of them was obviously absent-minded and kept looking around.

There was definitely something wrong with this guy. Ramiro believed that this man was not the follower of the Lord of Underworld, because the man was not interested in the conversation at all.

Ramiro decided to follow this short, young man. As an experienced night watcher, Ramiro was very sensitive to anything worthy of investigation.

In an ordinary mud hut.

Reis, the short young man, sneaked into the hut after carefully checking around. Anheuse was waiting in the hut.

Reis said to Anheuse, “my dear Initiator, the almighty Lord of Redemption and the rest of the initiators have left the city. The number of guards at the city gate has been reduced. I was also told that...”

Anheuse was left in the city to deal with the remaining issues after their original plan failed. Due to the strict search, Anheuse had been waiting for the chance leaving this city for quite a while.

Hearing Reis’ information, Anheuse drew a cross in front of his chest and said, “my Lord’s almighty power is profound. The Lord of Underworld tried to betray the true lord, severe punishment then ensues. You can leave now. When everything settles down, I’ll preach to you about the blessedness granted by the Lord.”

“We only follow the Lord of Redemption.” Reis also drew a cross in front of his chest and left in respect.

Watching Reis go, Anheuse locked the door and was about to put the makeup on to disguise himself. At this time, someone gently patted him on the shoulder, and he heard a low laugh just beside his ears.

“I’d like to hear about the blessedness granted by the almighty Lord of Redemption as well.”

.....

The silver moon hung high in the night sky. It was late and silent, and Lucien was waiting for Anheuse beside the river in the darkness.

After quite a while, Lucien finally saw Anheuse came stealthily.

“Are you here, Leviathan?” Asked Anheuse in low voice.

After he made sure that it was truly Anheuse, Lucien walked out from the darkness. “It’s late. You got in any trouble?”

“A bit...” answered Anheuse briefly. “Leviathan, I suppose you’ve earned the Seed of Spirit from the Lord, right?”

Lucien was a bit surprised to hear this question. The timing seemed to be quite bad. But he still answered, “yes, the almighty Ell gave both Francis and me the Seed of Spirit. Jacob was awarded, too. When you return to Politown, you’ll receive your award as well.”

“I see... is it powerful? How does it work?” Anheuse asked eagerly and looked a bit jealous.

Lucien understood how Anheuse felt, so he smiled. “It’s just for improving my strength, speed, agility, and the ability to recover. Plus my inherent strength, I can now fight against a divine-blooded hero.”

“Good,” Anheuse’s voice revealed a slight of his joy, as if he was glad to know that there was nothing special about Leviathan’s Seed of Spirit. “Alright, we should go now.”

Deep inside, Anheuse was indeed happy. Because he was, in fact, Ramiro the Body Controller. Ramiro had killed Anheuse after absorbing his conscious memories and body cells.

Ramiro felt so blessed for being this lucky. Finding Anheuse meant that he could now find Francis and figure out why they wanted the godhood of the God of Moon. When Ramiro found that he could not cast all of Anheuse’s divine spells and was concerned that this might be his major flaw, the apostle he found named Leviathan was not able to tell this at all, since the Seed of Spirit Leviathan received was just for improving his physical strength. What’s more, Ramiro could easily turn himself into Leviathan, and then he would be perfectly safe.

Ramiro was rather pleased with himself. He believed that this was because of his many years of loyalty to his Lord.

Glancing around, Ramiro was about to take action.

Lucien suddenly realized that there was something wrong with Anheuse's words!

If Anheuse was feeling jealous of the award that a new apostle received, and was concerned that the power of a new apostle might exceed his, why did he not ask about Francis?

Anheuse was a loyal follower of Ell. Then why did Anheuse not mention anything about Ell?

His eyes narrowing slightly, Lucien pretended that everything was fine, while he was ready to take action at any time. He wondered if Anheuse had probably been possessed by a false god.

Ramiro had made sure that no one was around. A creepy smile appeared on his face, and the inner part of his body started wriggling.

In Ramiro's eyes, Leviathan was like a vulnerable lamb that had no power to defend himself.

They were now out of the city of Husum. Ramiro could take his time absorbing Leviathan's memories and investigate him.

The smile on Ramiro's face became bigger. He was going to show this innocent lamb his horrible power.

At this time, suddenly, a person arrived and landed on the ground, stopping Ramiro before he could take action.

"Francis?" Lucien was now even more alert.

Francis grinned. "I'm interested in the treasure left by the Lord of Underworld. Leviathan, take me there."

Although Ell was deeply convinced that the Lord of Underworld was killed by his own power, Francis believed that, based on what he saw, it was Confinement or a maze spell. He suspected that an archmage had also arrived in the city of Husum and the archmage's target was the Lord of Underworld.

.....

In the realm of the God of Sun and Justice, Bero was pacing back and forth in the hall in annoyance. Although the Lord of War had withdrawn the order of expelling Them temporarily, if They failed to kill Ell within a year, more severe punishment would be waiting for them.

Considering this over and over again, Bero thought of the mysterious lady who visited the temple a few days ago claiming that she was selling secret knowledge.

Bero hoped that her secret knowledge could help Him become more powerful, so that not only Ell, but also Antanas... Bero had made up His mind.

After a long time, a gorgeous blond lady as beautiful and pure as an elf entered the realm, led by Bero's chief priest.

"Ms. Sophia, what secret knowledge do you have?" Asked Bero straightforwardly.

Sophia's jade-green eyes were clear and her smile was innocent and sweet. She took out a few books from her pouch and said, "it depends on what you want, revered God of Sun.

"I have the Book of Honesty, the Book of Order, the Book of Kindness and so on, as well as the ultimate one, the Book of Virtue."

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 479: A Good Place

The moonlight spread gently on the river bank, making everything look a bit fuzzy like it was in a dream.

Hearing Francis' words, Ramiro was quite surprised. He then purposefully put on a greedy look and asked, "the treasure of the Lord of Underworld? Can I go with you?"

In the city of Husum, when Ramiro first heard that the Lord of Underworld had been killed, he was more than shocked. The ninth-circle spell Confinement was not Command Death, it should not be able to kill a fake god!

Once, there was a demon count who had been confined for over a thousand years but was still alive. He was set free by the hard effort of his numerous followers when the power of Confinement started fading. Therefore, Ramiro seriously suspected that the ninth-circle archmage had just confined the Lord of Underworld and would release this false god at some point after he made enough preparations to kill Him swiftly.

Ramiro would like to further investigate this, but he knew neither where the Lord of Underworld was being confined nor where the Lord of Underworld's realm was. So he had temporarily put this aside and turned to investigate the godhood of the God of Moon instead.

Knowing that it was Leviathan who found the realm of the Lord of Underworld, Ramiro was very eager to go there and try to see what actually happened to the Lord of Underworld to make Him the prey of a ninth-circle archmage.

Because of the death of the Lord of Underworld, Ramiro had ruled out his last bit of suspicion towards Leviathan. Ramiro saw it with his eyes that Leviathan jumped into the water, and that was possibly where the Confinement was cast.

Obviously, there was no time for Leviathan to go back and forth between the several agreed places without attracting Francis' attention as both of the places were relatively far away from the city of Husum, unless Leviathan had the legendary level power.

However, if that was the case, there would be no necessity at all for Leviathan to hide around. Instead, he could just directly sweep over Erdo.

“A false god’s treasure must be very abundant, and I don’t mind you taking a portion, Anheuse,” said Francis with a smile. His main purpose of going there was also to figure out what happened to the Lord of Underworld. “You can help us, so we can finish our searching as soon as possible before the Lord of War notices.”

With the same smile on his face, Francis asked Leviathan casually, “Leviathan, don’t you want to go? I thought you were longing to go.”

“If it was me alone, I wouldn’t go for sure. Who knows what horrible things are hiding in the Lord of Underworld’s realm. But now since you two are in, I’ll definitely not miss it!” Lucien pretended that he was zealous. He had his own purpose for going to the domain – to investigate the mysterious sight he felt when he swam past it and the reason why the Lord of Underworld suddenly chose to move to the bottom of Solna River. Maybe he would also be able to find some good materials for fixing his magic items.

Ramiro frowned. “Then we must hurry. The realm would slowly collapse and disperse after the death of the Lord of Underworld.”

After they enter the realm, Ramiro could find a better chance to kill Leviathan behind Francis’ back to steal Leviathan’s identity. And then he could put all the blame onto the unpredictability and strangeness of the realm.

“Show us the way, Leviathan,” said Francis leisurely. In his knowledge, the Lord of Underworld was just confined, and his incarnations still existed, therefore, the domain was not going to disperse.

Lucien had the same opinion as Francis, but neither of them expressed it out. After all, Ell and his devoted followers were deeply convinced that the Lord of Underworld was killed by Ell.

Wearing the stone bracelet, Lucien took the initiative and jumped into the river, followed by Francis. Ramiro used his blood power to cast a divine-like spell on himself to breathe underwater and followed behind quietly.

Swimming against the currents for quite a while, after passing the old watergate, the three of them had approached the realm of the Lord of Underworld. For a second, Lucien sensed the weird feeling of being looked at again.

“It’s here,” said Francis, nodding when he saw the schools of half-rotten fish. Relying on his acute sense of the power of death, he started leading Lucien and Ramiro to swim down towards the bottom of the river.

Past the clusters of strange-looking, pale water reed, Francis purposefully hit a common-looking stone. Then, the stone quickly distorted and turned into a heavy, black gate that emitted a strong scent of death.

The stone gate was very dilapidated. The black paint was falling in tiny pieces, and the inner material was rotting.

“The Lord of Underworld died?!” Francis casual smile froze on his face — Wasn’t it Confinement?!

Both Lucien and Ramiro looked at Francis in confusion. “What do you mean? The Lord of Underworld died days ago.”

There was a hidden mocking in Ramiro's tone.

Although the look on Lucien's face was the same as that of Ramiro, Lucien was actually clenching his fists really tight, so tight that his nails almost sank in the skin. Lucien was, in fact, as shocked as Francis, if not more.

Lucien was the one who cast Confinement. No one knew about the situation better than him. However, now the Lord of Underworld had really died, but Lucien had no clue about this at all.

"Still... Seeing it with my own eyes feels different." Francis had resumed his usual calmness and casualness. He was not afraid of any suspect from either Anheuse or Leviathan, as, after all, he had taken in the Seed of Spirit, and he was the most powerful one among them.

Ramiro turned to look at the black stone gate and started looking for ways to open it. Later, if there was an opportunity, he could also kill Francis, which would be a good extra credit to him.

"According to the doctrine and the legends, in the Lord of Underworld's realm, there are seven stone gates outside of His palace. Every gate should be opened with an oblation, or one would be trapped between two gates until one's soul dissolves." Francis introduced briefly. "But now the domain is collapsing, and the underworld guards have fallen into sleep, we can use anything to open it."

Francis picked up a pebble and insert it into the big keyhole in the stone gate.

Within Francis's expectation, light burst out from the black gate and the gate silently opened for them. Behind the gate, there was bitter and painful groans and moans, and the wind came was freezing cold.

Francis did not hesitate and took the initiative to walk in. Lucien followed him in full alert. However, it wasn't until a minute later when Ramiro finally came in.

Standing in the overwhelming darkness, Ramiro hurriedly explained. "I've cast a couple of spells, in case the power of death is too strong."

Ramiro was extremely cautious about stepping into the domain of the Lord of Underworld. No one knew that if the ninth-circle archmage was here or not.

Francis did not say anything. He turned to walk to the next gate dimly lit up by luminous moss.

Suddenly, distorted pale faces emerged in the darkness, men and women, young and old. Floating in the air, they aimed directly towards Francis, Lucien, and Ramiro full of hatred and viciousness.

Dark haze rose from Francis's body and filled in the space. The pale faces immediately disappeared silently as soon as the haze reached them.

"The place is fading, and the specters are out of restrictions now." Francis reminded them.

He took out a silver coin and opened the next gate.

Then, the three of them run into all kinds of low-rank specters as well as mummies. With Francis, a radiant knight, walking in the front, the specters imposed no big threat to them at all. From time to time, Francis would miss a few, but level-four knight Leviathan and level-four priest Anheuse were able to handle them.

When the sixth stone gate opened, what was behind the gate was no longer pure darkness, but dim bright fog.

In the fog, many figures were moaning and writhing on the ground; many were starving to death, too weak to cry out; many were crying in fear, but were sent to the altar by the indifferent and cold crowd; some were being torn apart into pieces by beasts; some were killed by the fights between gods and priests; some were drowned to death because of the flood summoned by gods; some were dying on battlefields during wars; some were being slaved, being killed by beasts to please the nobles...

In the fog was real hell depicting the pain that ordinary people were suffering from in this world.

“Let’s go. We pray in piety, so we won’t be influenced.” Ramiro inherited part of Anheuse’s memory and knew what to do now.

Walking in the haze, Lucien could hear sounds of sharp screaming in agony. The thin, pale arms trying to grab him in desperation were like spreading tree branches. However, the sound and the scene did not cause a stir in Lucien’s mind. The arms directly went through Lucien’s body as if they were just shadows.

When they got out of the haze, two stone gates emerged in the front. Both of them were dispersing.

“Two ?” Francis asked Ramiro.

Ramiro shook his head, “No idea. But we’d better hurry. Let’s take different paths here. You’re the most powerful one among us, Francis, so you take one yourself. Leviathan and I will take the other.”

Like a wolf stalking a lamb, Ramiro knew that his opportunity was coming.

“Alright. Let’s split and hurry up, or we wouldn’t be able to search all the places.” Francis agreed and went into the gate on the right.

Ramiro turned to look at Leviathan with a smile on his face. “Let’s go.”

“Sure.” Lucien smiled back.

Behind the left gate was a corridor alined with stone pillars. The winding corridor extended into the far side. It was empty and silent, the perfect place for killing.

Seeing that Leviathan had lowered his alert, Ramiro was ready to take action after passing around the corner, when they were far from Francis.

After several minutes of walking, they turned right along the corridor. There were rooms along both sides, but still nothing around.

This was such a good place for Ramiro.

A ferocious smile appeared on Ramiro's face as he examined Lucien from behind.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 480: Twists and Turns

All the previous events had eliminated Ramiro's suspicion towards Leviathan and made him believe that Leviathan only had the equal to that of a level-four knight. Yet although now in Ramiro's eyes Leviathan was of no threat to him at all, he was still being very cautious. He was, after all, a high-ranking night watcher that had secretly assassinated and directly slain many powerful heresies. Except for the mysterious smile on his face, his behavior revealed none of his inner thoughts, for he needed to make sure that Leviathan would not be alerted so that he could kill Leviathan within one single strike.

Ramiro's guts and organs started melting into a pile of muddy flesh. Soon, Leviathan would be completely wrapped by the flesh, digested, and absorbed. To reduce the possible risk, Ramiro had decided to devour Leviathan directly without wasting time on interrogating him.

"Leviathan" did not sense the danger at all.

His ankle bending slightly, Ramiro was about to jump onto Leviathan. However, at this very moment, Francis' cheerful voice came from behind.

"Here you are!"

Damn it, it was the second time! Ramiro stopped himself in the last second, stumbling. Ramiro followed the momentum and turned around, his face a bit pale. "What, Francis? You scared me there!"

Lucien was also a bit startled. "Anything wrong with that side?"

Francis grinned. "Behind the gate is the Bridge of Soul. Both the Styx and the Bridge have dispersed severely and were in a terrifying state of voidness. I can't pass."

"Then we really have to hurry up. The same thing might happen to this side as well," said Lucien as he signalled the two to hurry.

Francis nodded and again walked in the front. Ramiro followed them, feeling quite frustrated. He wondered if his blessing had come to the end. It seemed that his luck had started to leave.

He prayed in his mind, hoping the proper chance that he could absorb Leviathan would come.

In front of the corridor, darkness resumed again. A grayish-white river where countless bodies and bones were floating appeared, winding to the unknown far end.

“Is this the Styx?” Lucien examined it curiously.

Ramiro nodded, “Yes. Every drop of the Styx came from a bitter and sorrowful soul. Even the gods would become crazy after touching it, the Lord of Underworld is the only exception.”

There was a canoe beside the riverbank, but the canoe-man had disappeared because of the collapsion of the entire realm.

“How was the realm formed? Consciousness and matter, which comes the first?” Asked Francis in the tone of a philosopher. The person he was asking was, of course, the experienced initiator Anheuse.

The first question was also a question shared by Lucien. He first thought that a realm was something like a sorcerer’s demiplane, but the collapse of a legendary sorcerer’s demiplane was not caused by the sorcerer’s death, but rather the destruction of the cognitive world.

Ramiro answered with a cold smile. “The power of faith gathered, and gods form godhoods from the power. The remnant power formed the realm depending on the god and the godhood. The power of a god can be greatly improved when the god is in His own domain. When a god falls, if his godhood had nowhere to go, or if the other god who takes away the godhood is unwilling to maintain the realm, the space will gradually collapse. The escaped power of faith will follow the guidance of godhood and come to it.”

The godhood with nowhere to go to would dissipate gradually.

“No wonder you are the initiator, Anheuse.” Francis smiled and stepped onto the canoe.

Ramiro thought to himself that the real Anheuse would have never articulated the idea as clear as he did.

When Leviathan and Anheuse were both on board, the canoe set off. On the surface of Styx, the canoe moved silently as if it was on a mirror.

When they reached the other side and got off the boat, they saw the magnificent palace enveloped in a haze right in front of them. There were huge stone columns supporting the giant domes. Everything consisting of the palace looked very real, not like those things they saw earlier, which looked illusory.

“This is the place where the Lord of Underworld lived. Five thousand ordinary men were sent here and labored to death as sacrifices. It’s quite something that the Lord of Underworld even moved such a huge palace from the Death Valley to this place,” said Ramiro.

Both Lucien and Francis had heard of this before, as it was recorded in the doctrine of the Lord of Underworld.

In such a primitive religion, fear was always the most commonly used method for ruling followers, and thus sacrifice was among the most frequently mentioned words. Some false gods, especially those who were greatly influenced by their godhoods, were obsessed with the blood rituals and live sacrifices, including the previous Lord of Fire and Destruction, Avando. However, after becoming the Lord of Redemption, Ell had greatly calmed down and had never shown this tendency again.

“This palace is huge. Let’s go separate,” suggested Ramiro again.

Francis agreed. They still had to save time for getting out. As for what they would find in the palace, Francis would be able to check them secretly later using his powers.

Lucien also agreed as he was seeking for Adamantine, Mythril, Orichalcum, Ice Iron, Soul Stone, and Meteoric Iron to refine the alloy unique to the Will of Elements for fixing his Holm prize rings. Of course, those materials for fixing his medal, staff, belt, and gloves were also his targets.

Pushing open the palace gate, Francis walked straight to the front, Lucien turned left, and Ramiro entered the left side of the palace.

A while later, Ramiro secretly came back to the main hall. He cast an alert look at the direction chosen by Francis. After making sure that there was no sign of Francis coming back, Ramiro’s sullen face disappeared in the darkness.

Silently moving in the darkness like a shadow, Ramiro was approaching his target.

A radiant knight’s velocity was amazing. Pass the corridor and the rooms, Ramiro soon saw Leviathan, who was searching every corner of this place cautiously with the sword in his hands.

At the end of the corridor, there was a black metal gate with a white skull and a river of blood drawn on it. The death power on it was almost gone after the falling of the Lord of Underworld.

What Lucien was holding was just a common steel sword, given by Ell as an award when Lucien left Politown.

Staring at the gate, Lucien grabbed the sword tight with both of his hands and hacked at the white skull in the middle. Then Lucien dropped the sword, letting the sword taking away the rest of the death power on the gate.

When the steel sword dropped on the floor, it sounded like a rotten piece of wood.

Lucien pushed open the gate, and finally saw the treasure left by the Lord of Underworld: Most of it was gold, silver, and gems, dazzling under the candlelight. In the middle, there were different pieces of metal, exotic items, and divine weapons.

Lucien saw Mythril and Soul Stone at first glance. Meanwhile, he became more alert and spread out his spiritual power, for he had no idea whether or not there were still any guards around. Also, it was possible that Francis and Anheuse would kill him to take away all the treasures, especially Anheuse, who seemed to be a bit strange.

Standing behind in the darkness, Ramiro thought that Leviathan must have been shocked seeing such abundant wealth. It was a great opportunity for him!

The opportunity that he had been waiting for so long!

Ramiro sprinted out from the darkness!

However, the minute when he jumped out, Ramiro sensed a stranger coming from the other side of the corridor.

Damn! Ramiro almost went nuts. It was just such bad luck!

However, he had no better options. Ramiro rushed into the treasury and sent a secret, silent message to Lucien,

“Hide! Someone’s coming!”

Lucien had sensed Ramiro’s presence when Ramiro was about to jump on him, as well as the stranger. Following Ramiro, Lucien went into the treasury and hid in the corner where nothing could reflect him.

Half a minute later, an elegant and fine-curved figure secretly sneaked in. Lucien saw the reflection on a piece of metal: It was a gorgeous, goddess-like beauty. Each of her movements was full of bewitching charm, but somehow Lucien felt the lady quite familiar.

He was a bit confused, as he did not remember seeing this lady before.

The gorgeous lady walked to the other side of the treasury. Then light like the first rays of the morning sun poured out from her body, and a secret gate was exposed.

However, there was nothing behind the secret gate.

“It’s gone? Didn’t He obtain a powerful thing from where Solna River originated...” Murmured the beauty to herself in a low, sexy voice.

Both Lucien and Ramiro recognized her at the same time and felt the godhood possessed by the lady. She was Asin, the God of Moon! How come He became female? It seemed that Asin had got some new godhood related to beauty and morning glory.

Since Asin was about level seven, and both Lucien and Ramiro had to avoid showing their true power to each other, they chose not to jump out. They watched Asin casually take away a couple of divine items and entering into another secret tunnel. It seemed that she could come back at any time for the rest of the treasure.

After a while, Ramiro walked out and smiled. “I was following Asin.”

Of course, Lucien did not believe him at all.

Seeing the serious look on Leviathan’s face, Ramiro grinned. “You don’t believe me? It’s okay. No one is gonna interrupt me now.”

Thank God. After three interrupted attempts, he could finally eat Leviathan in!

Ramiro's body started wriggling like there were no bones in it.

Lucien instantly recognized who he was. He forcedly gave up the plan of using Confinement and Maze, because Ramiro could get out at any time by self-explosion.

Like a pile of muddy flesh, Ramiro jumped towards Lucien, leaving Lucien nowhere to retreat.

Suddenly, Ramiro's mind paused a bit as he saw a flash of green light in Leviathan's eyes. Then he felt that his level of magic resistance had been greatly reduced.

Resistance Reduction?

He was a sorcerer?!

Ramiro saw dim light on Leviathan's robe forming a deadly grey ray shooting directly toward him.

Without any preparation, Ramiro was shot by the very fast ray. He felt that his body was full of this negative energy and his power had been greatly reduced by at least one level.

Weakening Ray? He was the ninth-circle archmage?

Damn it!

Ramiro had fallen into great depression and desperation. For a second, he even started doubting the God of Truth.

Why did his Lord not warn him of the great danger, and why had the blessing abandoned him?

However, he soon found an explanation:

He had been interrupted for three times. The God of Truth had warned him for three times. It was his arrogance that blinded his eyes!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 481: The Strange Encounter

Lucien Evans! He was Lucien Evans!

Although Ramiro's power had been reduced to level seven, he still recognized who this young man was as Lucien did not even try to conceal his magic waves. Ramiro had a much deeper understanding of what kind of danger he was now facing..

After twelve seconds, his power would probably be further reduced by one level. If that was the case, Ramiro would have no chance at all fighting against Lucien Evans who had numerous powerful magic items. Ramiro knew that Lucien Evans had a powerful magic staff inlaid with Sun Stone that could cast Confinement. If Lucien Evans got the chance to curse his soul or intervene with his destiny, it would be the end of Ramiro!

What was worse to Ramiro was that it was not his first time fighting with Lucien Evans, and Lucien Evans had for sure seen how he exploded but still survived. Now that his biggest secret weapon had been revealed to Lucien, Lucien would definitely take precautions against it.

Lucien Evans cast two magic spells successively. Seeing this, Ramiro believed that Lucien Evans was in the middle of the buffering time for the next round of casting.

This was the best opportunity for him to turn the tables. The longer he waited, the more dangerous it would be!

He had to make a decision, right now.

Lots of uncontrolled thoughts flashed through Ramiro's mind. But within a second, Ramiro, an experienced fighter, made the best decision based on the current situation — to explode himself!

Although it had been his second time exploding himself in the recent two to three months, although he had not recovered from the last self-explosion, although this might leave his body damaged for a long time and prevent him from reaching the next level, Ramiro still made the decision! Hesitation

would be the most powerful weapon he gave to his own enemy! If he died, his body would be damaged forever and he would never be able to reach the next level.

Bang! The deafening explosion turned the gold, silver, and gems nearby into ashes. The horrible power of the shock waves made a violent dash towards Lucien!

Ramiro did not expect that this would kill Lucien Evans.

But this would definitely interrupt and break off Lucien's next spell in preparation!

Ramiro's will seemed to fuse with this great explosion.

Lucien's buffering time for casting was a two to three times shorter than most sixth-circle sorcerers, as he had adopted the Wave-Particle Dualism meditation method, which was closer to the truth of the world. Also, more importantly, one of the first two spells he just threw at Ramiro was only fourth circle and the other was from the Immortal Throne robe. Therefore, it only took Lucien about a second to recover.

Ramiro expected that Lucien Evans would turn to cast a defense spell to protect himself against the explosion. It would win him a very short period of time for transferring his soul.

When overwhelming blast waves rushed from all the directions, self-defense was always the first choice.

Lucien recovered earlier than Ramiro expected and he was indeed about to activate Energy Absorption Field.

However, at this time, Lucien recalled what he had been warning himself repeatedly,

“If I can’t kill or confine Ramiro, he will tell the Church who I am. If that happens, I’ll definitely have no more chance to observe how a god is produced this closely, and I’ll be in great trouble if a Grand Cardinal decides to target at me.”

“I cannot let Ramiro get out of my control. I have to kill him or confine him!”

The consequences of letting Ramiro escape flashed through Lucien’s mind. Therefore, instead of protecting himself, Lucien seized the chance to activate one of his magic items.

A crystal-clear ray shot out from Lucien’s left chest and right into the dusty blast waves in freezing temperature.

Meanwhile, the horrible explosion hit Lucien, and he disappeared right on spot.

The next second when Lucien appeared again, he was already standing beside the entrance of the secret tunnel, with a layer of energy shield covering him.

Since Lucien first activated the magic item, the timing of opening the shield was slightly delayed. Lucien’s face turned pale, and there was blood dripping from the corner of his mouth. He had to

thank the protection from the Immortal Throne robe he was wearing, and also, the Short Distance Teleportation that removed him from the first and most powerful round of blast, or now he would have been severely injured again just like the time when he was thrown into this realm.

When the dust was settling down, Lucien took out a tube of Water Song and drank it all. His face now looked less pale.

Because of the freezing effect of Silent Coffin, the power of the blast didn't last long. It faded away completely after several seconds. On the ground was a layer of dust that was once gold, silver, and gems. Many divine items and materials were also destroyed during the explosion.

As Lucien examined his surroundings cautiously, he saw a crystal lying at the spot where Ramiro exploded. In the crystal, there was a strange shadow.

Lucien picked up the crystal using Mage Hand. He was sure that this was part of the Silent Coffin which had not yet completely melted.

When Lucien took a closer look at the shadow inside the crystal, he saw the pale face of Ramiro. The look on the face was rigid and hollow as if the face had been frozen in there for over thousands of years.

It seemed that both Ramiro's body and soul were very special. Before when Lucien cast the spell, Silent Coffin, neither one's body nor soul could survive in the end under the dissolving power. Lucien sealed this crystal piece using magic and then took out his Morning Light crystal ball. Through the crystal ball, Lucien tried to see if he could find any connections to the face frozen in the crystal and thus locate any separate flesh that Ramiro might use for his resurrection.

Lucien once saw Ramiro explode with his own eyes, and then he saw Ramiro alive right in front of him. There was no doubt that Ramiro had his own way to come back to life. Lucien guessed that it was because of Ramiro's creepy self-division and reproduction power.

Lucien did not know whether directly wiping off Ramiro's remaining soul would thoroughly eliminate him or not, therefore, he decided to find what was left by Ramiro first.

Ramiro's resurrection did not rely on any magic rites, so there must be some restrictions on space or time. Thus, Lucien believed that Ramiro's way of resurrection should be different from a lich's phylactery or Felipe's improved Life Hiding spell, which could allow its owner to resurrect regardless of the place and time death occurred.

Of course, if Ramiro's blood power was indeed powerful enough to exceed the restrictions of time and space, or if Ramiro's remaining body part was hidden in the Holy City Lance, then Lucien would have no other choices but to run for his life after leaving the realm of the Lord of Underworld.

In the crystal ball, there were two light spots, connected by a faintly discernible line.

It seemed like Ramiro's body part for resurrection was just by the entrance of the realm. No wonder it took Ramiro a while before entering here — He was setting up the things needed for resurrection. Lucien was quite surprised. Putting aside the crystal, Lucien hurried up to collect the remaining materials and divine items.

From the line shown in the crystal ball, Lucien knew that the resurrection had not started yet, because he had frozen Ramiro's soul.

Lucien collected more Adamantine, Mythril, Soul Stone, and Blood Steel than he thought. Although the Meteoric Iron left was not a lot, it was enough for Lucien. Also, Lucien found a precious flower called Annocheer for fixing his Health Belt. Now, all he needed was some Ice Iron.

Suddenly, the entire palace started shaking so hard that Lucien almost fell to the ground. Black miasma poured in, dissolving everything.

What did Francis do?

The domain had started breaking down!

The situation suddenly became very dangerous. Lucien hurriedly turned to his Host Star of Destiny to find a way out using prophecy.

The stars changed the order, and the light of the crystal ball pointed to the secret tunnel Asin went into.

Lucien was a bit surprised to see that the secret tunnel was not for digging into the realm but rather the way to exist. But now there was no time for him to think about other plans. Casting Speed on himself, he dashed into the tunnel.

Along the tunnel, there were specters trapped inside the walls. The distorted faces extended their pale arms, trying to grab Lucien, but Lucien was too fast for them. The specters left behind were soon devoured by the collapsion.

At the end of the tunnel, there was a hall, where a headless death knight rushed out directly at Lucien. The realm was collapsing, and the death knight had gone mad.

Lucien pointed at the knight with his right hand, and a jade-green ray shot out.

The death knight was too insane to dodge, and the green ray hit the death knight right in front of his chest. Instantly, its body dissolved into the tiny green light spots and disappeared.

The sixth-circle spell, Dissociation!

It seemed that the guards here had also been greatly weakened as the realm collapsed. Lucien wondered how Asin left this place. But since Asin even knew the existence of the secret chamber, He must have been well-prepared.

At the bottom of the palace, there was a huge black gate. The gate was so tightly closed as if nothing could open it.

Chasing behind Lucien was the overwhelming black miasma like waves, quietly devouring everything in its way.

Lucien started chanting silently. The invisible magic waves reached the gate and distorted it.

The part of the gate which had affected became translucent like it was a piece of black glass.

Lucien ran up to it and hit the glass with his right shoulder, and the gate collapsed like real glass!

The black pieces fell onto the ground, and Lucien used all of his strength and jumped out.

The sixth-circle spell, Dulag's Glass!

Lucien then felt the coldness of river water.

He looked back and saw that the realm of the Lord of Underworld had disappeared completely. He somehow had this feeling and took out the crystal containing Ramiro's soul and saw that the piece of flesh inside was wriggling, and the soul was swelling, as if it was going to explode.

Lucien was quite shocked and became quite anxious.

Not knowing what was going on, Lucien cast a spell named Sea Cloak and swam towards the place he located indicated in the crystal ball.

He could leave no chance to Ramiro!

The place was not far away, but before Lucien arrived, the crystal piece had melted, together with the soul and the flesh.

Coming to a huge rock in the river, Lucien approached the bank in great caution, knowing that Ramiro might have come back to life again.

Pushing the water plants aside, the look on Lucien's blanked out. He did not see Ramiro here. Instead, there was a young girl. Her blond hair was tied into a ponytail on the right and hung down onto her shoulder. Beside her was a long sword on black fire, and she was holding a strange-shaped tree branch, on which there was a dark piece of meat.

She was roasting the meat on the black fire of the sword.

"What are you doing here?" A strange feeling of intimacy made Lucien ask this question.

The young girl turned around. Her scarlet eyes looked at Lucien seriously as if Lucien just asked a question that was too obvious.

"I'm making beef jerky."

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 482: Hiding

“... Beef jerky...” Lucien’s expression uncontrollably twisted a bit. If his prophecy did not go wrong, that dark piece of meat was exactly a part of Ramiro’s body which he prepared in advance for his resurrection. However, it had now been roasted by this young girl.

Yet somehow, Lucien did not feel disgusted, only amused.

Lucien felt that Ramiro was still lucky to some degree. In the middle of the wilderness, his flesh could have been taken away by a jackal. Comparatively speaking, being made into a piece of beef jerky did not seem as bad.

The scarlet-eyed girl picked up the tree branch and munched on the meat. It did not take her long before swallowing it down. Then she patted on her belly, looking still a bit not fully satisfied.

“I’m starving...”

Lucien was about to prevent the girl from eating random things she found in the wilderness like this, but seeing the young girl’s good appetite, he did not know what to say.

Blond hair, scarlet eyes, genderless beauty, and the fact that she could easily digest the flesh of a radiant knight... Lucien believed that he knew who this young girl was.

“Alternat?” He asked cautiously.

If the young girl was indeed Alterna, it would explain why Lucien felt the strange sense of intimacy and why he felt that someone was watching him before.

The blond girl stood up, using the long sword wrapped with the black fire as her walking stick. She stared at Lucien as if she had known him for a quite long time and complained seriously.

“I’m starving.”

“What do you need? Blood? A radiant knight’s flesh?” Lucien wondered if Alterna was still during the period of recovery after the fall.

Hearing Lucien’s question, the young girl frowned slightly and recalled the taste of the ‘beef jerky’ she made. Then she shook her head. “Don’t like it.”

Lucien was again speechless, although he was facing probably the most powerful existence in this world. He asked in patience, “then what do you want? What can make you recover?”

The blond-haired girl looked both indifferent and serious. “I want the cheese you confined.”

Her red eyes lit up in eagerness.

Cheese? When did he confine cheese? Lucien was confused. But soon he realized what happened. “Did you kill the Lord of Underworld?”

Lucien had so far only used Confinement once in this world, and that was for restraining the Lord of Underworld.

The girl nodded elegantly. “Yes. I want cheese like that.”

“So you need godhoods? Any kind of godhood? Or only those related to the Silver Moon, Death, and Resurrection? How much power do you still have? How long can it still sustain?” Lucien had basically made sure that the young girl was Alterna, the Silver Moon, and he hurriedly threw all the questions out.

Alterna snuffled a bit, and her body became a bit transparent. “Only the cheese like that.”

Then her body started looking more translucent and wavy. Her red eyes were half-closed.

“I need some sleep. Watch out for the Single-eyed.”

Then she turned into a sharp flash of silver moonlight and sneaked into Lucien’s left hand before Lucien even realized it.

Lucien felt the will of Alterna — profound, boundless, and almighty. For a second, Alterna’s will overwhelmed Lucien, and his mind blanked out. When everything in his mind settled down and he

came back to his full consciousness, Lucien saw that there was a mark of the silver moon on the back his left hand. But soon the moon mark also dimmed and melted into his skin, vanishing finally as if nothing ever happened.

Lucien took a deep breath as he was shocked by how a demigod existed in this world. Alterna was now living in his own blood and flesh! This could never be achieved by any existing substances. However, if the form of a demigod was only soul, will, or spiritual imprint, why did the young girl, Alterna, look so real and how could she digest flesh?

Focalizing his spiritual power, Lucien carefully checked his left hand. After a while, he finally sensed the almighty will with the horrible power settling in his left hand.

Lucien tried to wake Alterna to know more, but there was no response at all.

Therefore, Lucien had to make his own guesses:

It seemed that Alterna was very weak right now. The fall had severely damaged Alterna and She would not be able to recover in a short period of time. Sleeping was Alterna's current method for sustainment.

It should have been a while since Alterna started watching the Lord of Underworld, or Alterna would not have been able to know the new divine realm of the Lord of Underworld. Perhaps, Alterna was the "thing" mentioned by Asin that was found and brought back by the Lord of Underworld. However, the fact that Alterna did not immediately consume "the tasty cheese" indicated that Alterna was either too weak to kill the Lord of Underworld or that She had been waiting for the chance to kill Him with one quick strike so that the attention of the other false gods wouldn't be attracted.

The latter seemed more reasonable as it should be Alterna who unlocked Confinement and killed the Lord of Underworld in the end. Therefore, Lucien guesses that after taking in the godhood of Death, and by falling into sleep for a while, Alterna could more or less accumulate some fighting power. However, if Alterna wanted a faster recovery or even to resume the power of the demigod, She would need abundant similar godhoods. Then, if Alterna could find the mysterious existence from the World of Souls and take in Its power, She should be able to recover in the shortest period of time.

Lucien knew that as long as the silver moon was still hanging up in the sky, the God of Silver Moon would always be able to return from “Nothingness”. However, it would take too long, even too long for the eternal God of Silver Moon.

But who was the Single-eyed? Lucien frowned, thinking over Alterna’s last words.

Suddenly, Lucien looked up at the direction where the Temple of War sat.

Lucien remembered that the statue of Antanas, the Lord of War, was a middle-aged, single-eyed man.

Was Alterna talking about the Lord of War? Had the Lord of Underworld told the Lord of War the situation of Alterna? It made sense, but... but there was no need for Alterna to warn Lucien about this. Lucien himself would never go and find Antanas to bring great trouble to himself. If Ell wanted to kill Antanas, he would always send Francis and Jacob first to the front.

Also, vampires were always proud and even arrogant. As their Primordial Ancestor, Alterna should be the same. Even if Alterna was now severely injured and might take caution in Her actions, Lucien did not believe that Alterna would admit it to him.

Unless there was a bigger story hiding underneath... The look on Lucien's face was very serious, and he believed that he had got the rough answer.

Shaking his head, Lucien calmed himself down. He stared at his left hand and wondered if from now on he should call this hand "the Left Hand of God".

At this time, the look on Lucien's face suddenly changed. He immediately activated the mask and turned himself into a fish hiding among the water plants.

From the almost fully-collapsed realm, a cluster of black haze flew out.

It was Francis.

Francis's face looked very pale. It looked like he was severely injured. However, he also looked very excited. Maybe it was because he had found something important in the palace.

Looking back at the ruins and checking around carefully, Francis shook his head and sighed. "Such a pity that the talented Leviathan died in there."

Obviously, Francis thought that both Leviathan and Anheuse had died in the collapse.

Lucien was not planning on reuniting with Francis at all. After the fight against Ramiro and running into Alterna, Lucien had decided to give up the identity of Leviathan and put himself into

the crowd, so he could hide better. The plan on watching how a god evolved had to be abandoned from now on.

Now that night watcher Ramiro had gone missing, and Ell had taken in the godhood of the God of Moon, the Church would very likely send more powerful priests here, probably even including a Grand Cardinal. Then, if Lucien was still one the apostles of Ell, he would definitely be closely investigated. What was worse was that, if Prince Dracula had also arrived here, there might be a connection between him and Alterna within a certain distance. That would put Lucien under great risk!

Therefore, Lucien decided to take the opportunity and hide in the crowd to be safe.

However, simply hiding would not work for Lucien for too long. The more hungry Alterna became, the more likely problems would occur. Also, the cities and villages were still too small for Lucien to hide safely under the investigation from a legendary like Dracula. Lucien knew that his following step of the plan would be turning the current situation into a big stir when the timing was proper, big enough to catch the Congress's attention. Once he could come into contact with the Congress of Magic again, he would be safe.

Even if the Congress would not be able to locate Lucien over such a great distance, once there were lots of night watchers and radiant knights chasing after him, Lucien would be able to catch one and get the information of which areas were under the control of the Congress through harsh investigation.

Facing the current circumstance and the underlying risks, Lucien temporarily gave up without hesitation his observation of how Ell grew into a true god.

After confirming that Francis had indeed left, Lucien turned him into a common man and sneaked into the city of Husum. With the help of magic, he became a legal resident of the city.

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“Did you hear that? A few days ago, there were black, grey, and white waves gushing out in Solna River. In the waves, there were monsters that don’t die! Rotten monsters!” Said a white-haired old man mysteriously to a few strangers in the early evening.

“Really?” Asked the strangers. Their life was quite dull in most cases, and thus they were especially interested in this kind of news and legends.

The old man said with great certainty, “I was told by someone else, but it was the priest of the God of Love the Beauty who saw it with his own eyes! Also, there was the true silver moon at the bottom of the river, not a reflection!”

“Which part of the river?” Asked a tough man who laboured on the docks.

The old man looked around and lowered his voice. “The part beside the Temple of War...”

The short man gasped. “Was it the Lord of Redemption? After taking away the godhood of the God of Moon, he’s coming back for the Lord of War?!”

The old man said alertly, “maybe.”

A while later, the old man found an excuse and hurriedly left to avoid attracting too much attention.

In the dark corner, the old man turned into an ordinary-looking man. It was Lucien, who had been hiding in the city of Husum.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 483: Who Is Behind

Lucien, who now looked just like an ordinary man, walked along Solna River to the slum, where many secret altars were located.

Those false gods including the God of Storm and the Mother God of the Earth were unwilling to give up this rich and prosperous source of believers just like this, thus they had left their secret preachers here. Lucien had been looking for them, in an attempt to find out how these false gods were doing, and thus he could infer how much Ell and Francis had progressed.

Lucien had been spreading out the story, half true and half fake, for over half a month. From today, Lucien was going to stop and leave the rumors to ferment on their own. The merchants and traders would carry the words to the rest of the places in this world. Those who were paying attention would notice.

Lucien planned to wait patiently from now on, waiting for a chance to get out of this dangerous situation.

Lucien felt the moist evening wind on his face coming from Solna River. At nightfall, the air had become cooler.

Suddenly, his left hand twitched uncontrollably. Lucien's head buzzed, and he felt coldness climbing up from his lower back.

Lucien was very concerned. This had not been the first time. And it was getting more and more frequent these days.

Lucien had thought that it was because Alterna was about to wake up after the half month's sleep or was hungry, and he was about to try to find a relevant godhood to feed Alterna. Yet after the repeated twitches today, he realized that the threatening coldness came from himself!

Lucien wondered if Alterna was trying to remind him something. Maybe Alterna had found something wrong with his body after sneaking into his left hand. Was it because there was something imbalanced between his body and soul?

No matter what, Lucien knew that the problem was from himself. He was very concerned, as he was well aware that there were countless cursing spells in the main material world!

He had to figure this out tonight.

Lucien put aside all his concerns and walked into the slum wearing his linen robe. This time, he disguised himself as a secret follower of the Mother God of earth.

“For your prayers?” Said a pauper walking past him in a low voice. The pauper cast a look at Lucien and showed him the direction.

Lucien whispered. “Yes, I’m looking for Priest Angrist.”

Following the way the pauper showed, Lucien walked down the shabby street and ran into a few more followers, who further directed him to an ordinary-looking mud hut.

Lucien touched his face, the face that did not belong to him. It felt nice to have a face that was recognized by the other followers — The first time when he came here, he had to use a series of mind spells to make his way.

Pushing open the door of the mud hut, Lucien saw a skinny old man who was kneeling on the floor and kissing the ground.

“Priest Angrist, sorry for my interrupting,” said Lucien politely.

Angrist’s wrinkled face was written with a big smile, “don’t mind it. I am very glad to hear that two false gods have fallen.”

Since the churches were now preaching secretly, the number of potential followers had been greatly reduced. As a result, the conflict between the six churches had become harsh and direct, and the relationship between local priests deteriorated quickly.

“What? Two false gods have fallen?” Lucien was truly shocked.

Angrist stood up. “When I was praying earlier this morning, the Mother God sent me the message, but I thought I misinterpreted it. Yet half an hour ago, it was finally confirmed that the statue of the God of Storm and the God of Love had cracked, and their priests had also lost the revered power.”

“The Lord of Redemption did it?” Lucien was surprised to see how fast Ell and Francis were taking actions.

Angrist nodded, grinning. “Yes.”

Seeing Angrist’s attitude, Lucien suddenly realized that some of the six false gods had betrayed Their alliance. At least, the Mother God of Earth sure had paid allegiance to Ell. The falling of the two false gods was the proof of the Mother God of Earth’s loyalty to Ell, or Ell and Francis would not have made such huge progress already.

“May the Mother bless us,” said Lucien.

Angrist drew a cross in front of his chest. “Now we should address Her as ‘the Angle of Earth.’”

Angrist’s behavior amused Lucien.

Angrist was not planning to hide the news from the followers. In such tough days, they needed good news to be exhilarated.

Lucien had expected this. He bowed again, smiling sincerely.

After leaving the slum, Lucien changed his look again in the woods beside the river. In the darkness, he returned to the same slum again from another direction. This time, his target was the secret group of Ell's followers, and his goal was to confirm what he had just been told.

As the previous initiator, Lucien knew the several liaisons in the city of Husum. Lucien got most of his information from them after his faked death.

When he was very close to the slum, Lucien heard someone pacing back and forth in the corner. Lucien turned his sight slightly and saw through the shadow a young man wearing a long linen robe.

No, it was a woman. Lucien's eyes slightly squinted. The woman in disguise triggered Lucien's interest.

Lucien had been secretly looking for suspicious outsiders recently, hoping to find a night watcher to get the information he needed. Obviously, the woman was the very target that Lucien would pay special attention to.

Lucien kept walking. He did not stop until he had entered the slum and found a dark corner where no one was present. Lucien then calmed down and cast True Seeing, then he changed his look again and walked out of the slum, pretending that he was in a hurry.

When he returned to the corner where the woman stood, Lucien pretended that he was just taking a casual glance, but his pupils were now deep and dark.

True Seeing was a powerful sixth-circle Astrology spell that allowed its caster to see through illusions, invisibilities, transformations, darkness, obscurity, reflections, secret doors, and a few special dimensions, and its validity depended on the caster's power. The woman's rank was much lower than that of Lucien, so her disguise was easily seen through by Lucien. She turned out to be one of Lucien's acquaintances.

She was Sophia.

Lucien instantly recognized that the woman who looked as innocent and gorgeous as a fairy was Princess Sophia of the Holy Heilz Empire. As soon as Lucien saw her, he recalled her horribly powerful father, Rudolf II, the legendary who undoubtedly had partially touched the secret of the seven ancient demons and primitive gods. It gave Lucien a headache

Thus, when Lucien first recognized Sophia, he immediately gave up the idea of capturing her and interrogating her on the information about the Congress of Magic's whereabouts. He had learned his lesson last time in the underground palace: It was possible that the mysterious Rudolf II had projected himself on his daughter.

Lucien slightly shook his head and sped up to leave.

Having no idea that she just got lucky, Sophia was still pacing in the corner. Feeling disgusted, she did not want to step into the smelly slum at all.

It was not long before Lucien ran into his second acquaintance after he left the slum. When the man walked out of the woods, Lucien recognized him immediately.

It was Francis!

And Francis walked to the corner where Sophia was at.

Lucien wondered since when Francis and Sophia had hooked up with each other. Lucien's wondering slowed down his pace, and Francis instantly looked over. Lucien had to restrain his thoughts and keep walking, pretending he was simply passing by. At this time, another man wearing a long linen robe walked out of the slum. He seemed to be gloomy and tyrannical.

Francis kept staring at Lucien's back until Lucien had walked out far away. Then, he finally looked back and nodded to the man and Sophia.

"Good, both of you're on time. Let's go to another place."

.....

After walking for a while, Lucien turned himself into a tiny river fly and flew back to the corner. However, Francis, Sophia, and the man were all gone, and there was no clue left.

Lucien sighed and canceled his plan on visiting Ell's follower today. He then returned to the place where he lived in the civilian zone.

Closing the windows and turning on the alert magic circles, Lucien ruled out all his thoughts on Francis and Sophia, focusing on only himself. He had to find out where this feeling of freezing coldness came from, or he would be very concerned day and night!

Since the feeling of coldness was very likely to have something to do with the power of evilness and death. Lucien decided to give it a try.

His body was instantly covered with a layer of silver moonlight, and his muscles bulked moderately, forming nice curves. The aura around him became oppressive and tense.

Sixth-circle spell, Baler's Transformation!

The spell was produced by the sorcerers in the ancient Magic Empire reflecting on their multiple failed attempts on blood powers combination. Baler's Transformation could transform a sorcerer into a knight of the same level in a period of time, and the power of the knight depended on the caster's own bloodline. Right now, no matter in terms of his strength, agility, velocity, or his willpower and the ability of dematerialization into moonlight, Lucien was now a real level-six radiant knight.

He took Pale Justice out from his magic pouch, took a few deep breathes, and slowly lifted the sword. But this time, his target was himself.

The ordinary-looking sword contained dreadful power. Before it reached Lucien's forehead, Lucien's heart was already beating very fast, and there was a power within his body that was urging him to stop immediately.

At this time, a feeling of coldness and repression came up from Lucien's left hand and refreshed his mind, strengthening Lucien's willpower so that he was no longer affected by the deep fear. With great determination, Lucien put the blade against his own forehead and cut in inch by inch.

A sharp pain came from Lucien's forehead, but he did not stop.

Suddenly, Pale Justice lit up in a metallic color. The power coming from the sword was more than warm and determined. Lucien heard a bitter scream, and his body and soul suddenly became relaxed.

Lucien instantly stopped cutting in. He could clearly feel the sharp, cold blade on his forehead.

Meanwhile, behind Lucien, a distorted pale human face vaped in the air, screaming in agony.

Someone left this in Lucien's body!

No wonder Ramiro could track Lucien all the way here!

This was by no means a coincidence!

Although Lucien was always very gentle and reserved, he looked quite angry now. Blood dribbled down from his forehead, making him look rather hideous.

The person who did this did not modify Lucien's memory. Maybe the person was afraid of seeing Lucien's many weird and absurd thoughts.

After all, what "the Headcrusher" was thinking was very likely to explode other people's heads at any time.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 484: Change in the Night.

The Congress' research in the field of space and time was lacking and had not yet formed a complete theory. Thus, it was impossible for the arcanists of the Congress of Magic to determine where Lucien would be teleported to after the disruption caused by Ramiro would. On top of that, Lucien himself is the Secretive. Due to its special abilities as well as this world's disturbance to long-distance magic and prophecy, Fernando and Hathaway had yet to find him.

Lucien concluded that this surveillance specter had fused with his body and soul before he had entered the Portal to Alternate Realm.

Otherwise, how was the man behind the scenes able to find him before Fernando and the Prophet, and let the wraith possess him before he recovered?

As another expert arcanist in the field of Necromancy, Lucien knew that since this specter could be “executed” by the Pale Justice, then his mentor Fernando must have been able to sense it when they met. Therefore, the wraith must have possessed him sometime after Fernando stepped into the Portal to Alternate Realm and before Lucien was forced into it.

It seemed that the most possible explanation would be that the man behind the scenes did something to Ramiro’s body so that when he self-exploded, the specter seized the opportunity and possessed Lucien. The explosion would also help to erase any trace, and since that Lucien had been forced into the Portal to Alternate Realm, even if Hathaway suspected anything, no trace was left to be found.

The man behind the scenes was aware of the exact time that the Portal would remain open. He was also able to let Ramiro carry out the assassination without knowing that he had been possessed. And finally, he is apt at this method of surveillance. Lucien wondered what Thanatos, the Demigod-lich or the Eye of Curse would want to know from him — Fabricating memory or strong hinting could both make Ramiro do things without realizing that they weren’t his own decisions.

Pieces of memory flashed in Lucien’s mind. He was trying to check if he had missed anything.

Suddenly, it dawned on Lucien:

“When I was passing through the underground ruins of the dwarfs, there was a senior-rank specter from the World of Souls that ambushed me. I had assumed that it was because Rhine’s plan had been discovered.”

“When Adol was captured by Thanatos and sent to Allyn, he did not have any memories about the fact that Maskelyne and Mr. Rhine were trapped in the World of Souls. I had assumed that Adol did not hold a rank high enough to know about the deeper secrets. Thinking back now, I’m sure I had misjudged the situation then. ”

“From the deep memories of that senior-rank specter one could see that, while it loathed Adol, it could only curse him to be cleansed by the Saint Truth. It must be that its rank is lower than that of Adol. Could have been his assistant or subordinate. If even he knew about the plans of Mr Rhine, then Adol must have known about it too.”

“If Adol really didn’t know anything, then why did the senior-rank specter ambush me? To avenge its master Felipe, whom he described with the word ‘dumb?’”

“The two events form a paradox. The best explanation would be that Adol did knew a lot. He knew that Maskelyne and Rhine were trapped in the World of Souls. He also knew how they were related to me, which is what caused him to target me. However, he no longer knew about these things after he was sent to Allyn. Someone must have erased his memory. ”

“Considering all these, His Excellency the Eye of Curse is not likely to be the man behind the scenes. As for Thanatos, even if he was not the one committing the act, he at least allowed it to happen. Is he planning to use my connection with Alterna or the mysterious existence of the World of Souls to find Them in advance?”

“No wonder Ramiro came to investigate at Erdo. No wonder he could find Anheuse so quickly. No wonder that he attempted to attack me time and again. That’s just way too many coincidences.”

Lucien took a deep breath and tried to remain calm. The idea that someone of legendary rank was keeping an eye over him made him feel very uneasy.

Admittedly, other grand arcanists could also be the suspect. If the specter had possessed him before Fernando had passed through the Portal and Fernando did not detect it, then Lucien's deductions would crumble. Hathaway who was guarding the Portal also had enough time and ability to tamper with such things. However, comparatively speaking, these two were very unlikely to have been the culprit.

Given Hathaway's character, her rather average Necromancy, and the bright future ahead of her brought about by "New Alchemy", given the times Lucien spent together with Fernando and the fact that Fernando's character has remained constant for several centuries, Lucien chose to believe them.

Now that Alterna of the Silver Moon has appeared, but neither Thanatos nor the Demigod-lich had acted. Lucien wondered if this meant that their main target was the mysterious existence in the World of Souls?

But Lucien quickly denied this thought. When he first passed through the realm of the Lord of Underworld, Alterna had already noticed him but didn't come out to meet him. Instead, She had entrusted Herself to his care, sleeping inside his hand as She is now. It probably wasn't because She was worried that Lucien would get in the way of her killing the Lord of Underworld though. Now that thinking about it, Alterna could have noticed that someone was spying on Lucien. The collapse of the underworld realm rendered the surveillance temporarily ineffective, and Alterna then suppressed the specter before showing up in Her true form. Otherwise, She would have hidden with that "beef jerky" and Lucien would have never been able to find her."

Lucien felt a chill down his spine once this thought occurred to him. It wasn't because the specter still lived, but out of genuine fear. He had recklessly slain the specter. The legendary that sent it must have noticed.

Lucien immediately jumped straight out of the window. He could only hope that the legendary is hiding in a faraway place in fear of alerting the silver moon and the World of Souls.

Lucien found himself in a gloomy forest. However, with his radiant knight transformation, he passed through it in a jiffy. He then jumped into a river and transformed into a fish, and swam with the currents for a while.

After a while, Lucien came up to the shore and used magic to erase his traces. Then he jumped back into the river and headed towards the place where the divine temples congregated. Lucien had made his decision — If the legendary sorcerer was able to track his movements, then Lucien would lead him into the Single-eyed that Alterna mentioned. It was a desperate attempt at survival.

After he had reached the divine temple area, Lucien deliberately slowed down. He focused on sensing the surroundings, focusing on any changes to his left hand. If he had been able to escape the legendary arcanist tracing behind, then there was no need for him to provoke the Lord of War Antanas, as Lucien was confident that his special abilities of the Secretive coupled with the Silver Moon's self-cloaking would be able to let him escape this conspiracy.

He continued swimming like that for a while. Suddenly, Lucien sensed intense shaking in the water, as though there was an earthquake nearby.

Poking his head out from the water reeds, Lucien found that the mountain ranges on the outskirts of the city were enveloped by thunder. The air of death blocked out the moon, and the towering mountain peak collapsed.

Lucien surmised that senior-ranks were fighting there.

Could it be that Ell and the rest are trying to kill the God of Thunder and Lightning?

Immediately afterward, Lucien heard an angry roar. A black arrow flew out from the Temple of War.

As the distance between was too great, Lucien was unable to sense if the “Arrow of Antanas” hit its mark. However, the air of death did seem to tarnish a lot.

Then, a cloud of smoke rose from the Temple of War. Accompanied by the smell of conquest and the sound of the horn, Antanas bolted towards the outskirts of the city. Within a few seconds, he vanished into the air of death.

At the same time, from the Divine Temple of “the Star of Dawn and Dusk”, a bright star rose and chased after the Lord of War.

However, when it tried to pass the Solna river, a terrifying black haze suddenly enveloped it.

The brilliant star flashed once more before falling from the sky, crashing into the riverbed and revealing a mature and sexy figure.

Asin asked in terror, “Francis?”

Before he could finish, A bright, clear silver moon rose from the woods and lunged itself at Him.

By a fraction of hair, Asin managed to avoid the main impact. He jumped into mid-air, and His face was even paler. The scimitar in His hand had been snapped.

“Ell?”

With his exclamation, countless starlights appeared around Ell, who was barely tangible. The starlights twisted into the shape of a cage, attempting to trap Ell inside.

A concentrated air of death oozed from Ell, dissipating the starlight cage. Ell said calmly, “Francis, help me tie him down. I will use the Command to take over his godhood. My incarnation, the Angle of Thunder and Lightning, the Angle of Earth, and the Angle of Wisdom cannot delay Antanas for long. After I absorb his godhood, I will be able to go toe to toe with Antanas.”

Lucien who was still hidden in the water deeply approved the incoming battle, for it would help him cover his tracks, and he would then wait for an opportunity to escape. Meanwhile, he secretly wondered if it was Sophia who had planned all this for the false gods to take Ell’s side.

As soon as Ell finished his sentence, a deep, rich sound asked, “Really?”

“Antanas?” Ell was shocked to see the towering, single-eyed man step out from the Temple of War. He carried a terrifying war hammer and gazed down at Ell with the steadiness of a mountain. Behind him was another well-built young man, the Sun God Bero.

Surprisingly, it was the true divinity of Antanas. He had sent out only his incarnation. What’s more, he had not even taken the opportunity to ambush Ell.

Antanas smiled cunningly. “Don’t pretend to be surprised. I know that Bero is lying to me. Your target is not Asin, but me. Come at me together, let me see what gave you your confidence!”

“What?” Bero took a few steps back in shock. His shield raised unconsciously.

He was indeed in cahoots with Ell. Pretending to be a double agent, he divulged to the Lord of War that Ell and his lot are plotting against the God of Love and Beauty, Asin. Bero told Antanas to use a special method to mix up his incarnation and his true divinity and hide within the Temple of War while waiting for the opportunity to give Ell and his lot a fatal blow.

The real plan, on the other hand, targeted straight for Antanas. As long as Bero could take advantage of the time when Antanas attacked Ell and let his guard down, He could land a fatal blow. Then, they would team up against Antanas. However, Antanas seemed to know the real plan.

Who had betrayed them? Why was Antanas so calm?

Francis calmed down. “The plan was simply there to make things easier. Since you have seen through our ploy, we would face you in honest battle.”

In the surrounding darkness, three silhouettes appeared. They were that of a gloomy man, an elder in white robes, and a breathtaking beauty who was wearing purple armor and equipped with sword and shield.

“Natasha?” Lucien, who was still underwater, almost cried out in surprise.

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Chapter 485: Pulled In

The dark purple Violet Guardian, the pure black battle dress, the small and exquisite yet dark and thick holy shield, the silver-white longsword etched with simple patterns, and her chiseled features coupled with resolute deep silver-purple eyes... At that moment, Natasha was totally different from her friendly hospitable self. Instead, she was emanating a foreboding air.

Suppressing his surprise, he wondered with mixed feelings of joy and worry why he and Natasha could run into each other at a place like this, and where were the Violet Duchy gold knights and radiant knights under Natasha's command. Under normal circumstances, the South Church would never let the order of knights to be jumbled up. The nobles were only faithful to their own masters. The senior-rank personnel could make arrangements for them, but they're by no means obligated to abide by them.

Natasha must have entered this alternate dimension as the leader of the Violet Duchy's gold knights and radiant knights, so why was she unprotected? Why did she leave her troops?

No, Lucien quickly corrected himself — there was still someone protecting her. Lucien noticed that behind Natasha was a silhouette that almost melded into her shadows. It was "Blue Tide" Camil in a black dress.

Ramiro did not see Francis as his ally, which means that he was most likely from the North Church. Why was Natasha collaborating with him? The elder in white robes was definitely a senior-rank priest, and the gloomy man seemed to the night watcher ranking nineteenth, level-eight radiant knight, the "Fire of Purification" Dannel. They would never side with Francis.

Lucien was puzzled. Natasha's brother had died in the war against the Northern heretics, which in turn caused her mother to pass away early. She would never ally with people of the North Church.

Many night watchers kept their bloodline, history, and real name under wraps. However, those with a high ranking were rather famous, and their code name and real name were known by most large organizations. As a result, Lucien had been able to find the identity of his attacker in the spirit library after Ramiro's self explosion. It mattered little whether Ramiro was his real name. That wealth of information provided by the spirit library also allowed Lucien to deduce from the aura and demeanor of the gloomy man that he was the Fire of Purification.

Two royal knights of the South Church, a senior-rank night watcher, a senior-rank from the South Church, and a radiant knight who seemed to belong to the North Church's Executioners — this combination seemed quite strange to Lucien. Maybe it was Sophia who brought this band of people together to form this temporary alliance? Lucien remembered Sophia who had remained out of sight so far. There was for sure something fishy about her father Rudolf II. She herself was not a devout follower either. Coupled with her nobility, she was a prime candidate to become a strategist.

The battlefield was quiet for a short while. Francis and his lot were scared and confused by the strange behavior of the Lord of War, while Antanas looked at them with a mocking smile. He surveyed the surroundings before taunting. "Just the lot of you? Come at me together!"

He raised the huge war hammer, and the surroundings were instantly transformed into a gory battlefield. Knights on horseback and on foot swarmed out from behind him. They looked fanatic, battle-ready, and terrifying. In a mere second, he had assembled a banner of knights of at least grand knight status.

Everyone killed by Antanas and his subordinates who had died in battle would enter his semi-illusory frontier of war and participate in endless crusade until even their souls perish.

The key difference between the gold knights and radiant knights was that of the semi-illusory willpower frontier, which could span for several hundred meters. Antanas was undoubtedly developing his powers in the direction of knights.

“Kill!” Antanas roared.

“Kill!” His cry was echoed by the countless knights behind him. Their cries converged into a deafening cry, their lust for battle was so imposing that even senior-ranks took a step back involuntarily.

I am the Lord of War, I am the Leader of Armies!

Antanas and his men charged towards Natasha. As a divine-blooded who honed his skills on the battlefield, he could easily sense that she was the weakest among the enemy

Flags waving, spears raised, and divine spells flew. Francis, Dannel, the senior-rank priest, and Camil all felt their willpower robbed, causing them to react a split-second slower than usual.

Natasha was instead visibly excited. She did not avoid the brunt of the charge, rather, she jumped directly at the war hammer head-on with her shield raised high.

Bang! A small but horrifying crack appeared at the point where the black shield collided with the war hammer. The space around them seemed to congeal and solidify. With the point of impact as the center, shockwaves radiated relentlessly outward, and divine powers and spears from outside the sphere could not penetrate the solidified space.

Natasha's features were tense. She looked so lonely, yet so determined.

"Doesn't she know to dodge! Daring to fight a level-nine gold knight front-on when she's a mere level seven! Even if she had the replica of the level-nine Shield of Truth, she shouldn't be this reckless!" Lucien cursed silently. A part of him wanted to drag Natasha back from the battlefield.

Although she had risen to level seven last year, the difference in power between her and Antanas was still immense. Further, there were plenty of level eight radiant knights around to protect her! She should really take a lesson from Sophia, who was not even showing herself in a situation like this after receiving Rudolf II's teachings.

A tome of heavy divine aura appeared in front of the white-robed elder. The pages turned rapidly while divine light flashed. A huge column of light connecting sky and earth then struck at Antanas.

A layer of what looked like rust and blood appeared on Antanas' body, shielding him from the Sunstrike. However, the knights who were charging with him were evaporated.

He attempted to strike at the elder, but Natasha would never let an opportunity like this to slip away. Her silver-purple eyes were cold, and she struck with her longsword. An otherworldly crack that looked like it could sever anything appeared in front of the swing.

Antanas's gaze tightened and forcibly changed his direction, evading the strike. Then, he struck a flurry of blows at Natasha with the warhammer. In the surrounding frontier of war, the spirit knights materialized once more.

At the same time, the darkness in the sky turned into the sea, crashing down on Antanas.

Simultaneously, silent white flames rose from the ground and lunged at Antanas.

The pages of the Cannon in front of the elder were flipping rapidly, and lights kept flashing. They were continuously buffing Natasha with divine power, blessing, war tide, and the like.

Their only chance of winning was if she could bind Antanas with her replica.

After Camil and Fire of Purification joined the battle, Natasha found some room to breathe. She shook her shield and readjusted her form. It looked like the relentless barrage of attacks by Antanas had turned her body numb with pain.

Francis looked at Bero, and communicated to him via a divine spell akin to Soul Connection. “If you can help them bind Antanas, I will then assist my lord to kill Asin. After my lord absorbs the “Hidden Death and Resurrection” godhood from Asin, he would rise to the level of Antanas and the situation would be under our control”.

“No Problem.”

When the Lord of War appeared, the God of Love and Beauty Asin’s face was filled with heartfelt joy. Upon seeing that Antanas was tied down by his enemies, her expression changed a couple of times. Taking advantage of the fact that Asin was still trapped by the starlight cage, she tried to flee.

“It would do Antanas the most good for me to not be captured!” She thought to herself.

“Come back here!” Francis, who had been keeping an eye on her, transformed into a Hydra, and a thick black mist enveloped the surroundings.

Starlight shone but immediately dimmed. Knowing that it would be difficult to break out directly and not wanting to fight with Francis, Asin suddenly plunged down and tried to escape via the Solna river.

“I command you, freeze!” Ell had managed to escape from the starlight cage and used the Command that he had newly acquired after absorbing the God of Storm.

Starlight radiated from Asin’s body, and her eyes turned lifeless for a while. The controlled plunge suddenly lost direction, and she fell into the river.

“Chance!” Ell and Francis both rushed towards the Solna River.

Lucien looked at the scene resignedly. Asin had landed right in front of him!

Just as Lucien tried to transform and escape in an effort to remain hidden, His left hand raised involuntarily.

Lucien seemed to have heard something similar to “Cheese!”

This isn't the time to be thinking about food! Lucien cried silently. However, his left hand betrayed him and his transformation failed. his left hand pulled him towards Asin.

Asin had barely recovered from the freezing spell before she saw a handsome man with black eyes appear from the river. His aura was so great and powerful, it caused even the false god to tremble. It was a feeling of meeting one's natural predator.

Driven by fear, Asin unleashed a torrent of divine powers. However, the hand that was reaching towards her was unaffected by the attacks. It penetrated the protection sphere and landed on her neck.

All divine powers disintegrated upon contact with Lucien's left hand!

Ell and Francis halted halfway in their rush when they saw the flashes of divine power in the river. Asin seemed to have unleashed her potential, and a scary one at that. They slowed down, guarding themselves against a possible final attack as well as making sure that she doesn't escape via other routes.

The flashes finally died down, and they were greeted with an unbelievable scene. The beautiful and sexy Asin was held at her neck by a handsome young man, and her godhood was being slowly extracted from her.

"Who is he?" Ell and Francis were gob-smacked. Who on earth was this powerful man?

Lucien's eyes met with theirs. He shook his head resignedly and greeted them casually.

“Good Evening.”

Can he say that he'd been handed the wrong script?

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Chapter 486: Take Actions

“Lucien?”

“Lucien Evans?”

Natasha, Camil, the Fire of Purification, and the rest who were sieging Antanas had all noticed what was going on here. Some were surprised and some were confused. But all the mood swings only lasted for less than a second. Facing s false god, they had to be fully devoted to the fight.

Francis, however, did not recognize Lucien immediately. Judging from how the young man grabbed Asin, Francis assumed that he was a mysterious and powerful knight. Therefore, Francis first tried

to search among the names of those radiant knights and gold knights in the main material world for a match.

Power flowed into Lucien's left hand; It was the godhood of death and resurrection. Lucien felt that Alterna was slowly awakening.

However, when the part of the godhood which was related to death and resurrection had been absorbed, and Asin's remaining godhood of "incarnation of beauty and love" and "star of dusk and dawn" had just started emitting, Lucien sensed that Alterna had terminated the intaking process and pushed Asin away. Alterna did so to avoid the possible conflicts with the cognitive world, and what was more important was that absorbing this part of godhood would possibly result in turning to a female.

Having no idea what just happened, Asin felt that there was such a mess in Her head. When the mysterious, black-haired man grabbed Her throat, Asin thought that it was the end of everything. But why did he let Her go after taking away only part of her godhood?

Alterna was obviously being very picky about her food.

Lucien then sent Natasha a message using Whispering Wind.

At this time, Ell had recovered from the great shock and was extremely angry seeing that his own prey had been taken. With anger and greed, Ell said in his cold and resounding voice,

"I command you, to die!"

The running river water quickly turned pale, the life force of it leaking away. However, the Command spell failed to hurt Lucien at all. It seemed that Lucien's left hand had this creepy power which turned Ell's spell completely invalid!

What was going on? Ell took a step back, unable to believe what just happened. Ever since Ell was able to use Command, although sometimes the spell might not be able to directly kill the target, the target would at least be more or less affected. However, this time, it was totally different. It even seemed like Ell had never cast the spell!

In Ell's eyes, the young man standing in the river was as quiet as a demon hiding in the darkness.

Suddenly, the demon in Ell's eyes moved. Its muscles bulged as a layer of moonlight covered him. As it fiercely jumped out of the river, the demon's left hand reached out, targeting directly at Ell Himself!

Lucien was not the kind of person who would only sign and complain when things went wrong. He knew that since he was now exposed, trying to run away would become totally useless when facing Antanas and the possible legendary sorcerer hiding around. He had to seize the chance to feed the relevant godhoods to Alterna and help Her recover, as this was his biggest hope to survive!

This time, Lucien's action was not driven by the hungry Alterna. Instead, he had taken the initiative and turned himself into a radiant knight to launch against Ell, for Ell's godhoods of resurrection, eternal life, moonlight, redemption, and destruction were exactly what Lucien wanted!

An almighty and supreme will spread out from Lucien's left hand. Ell's mind became slow as if the will was born to be invincible for Ell. Ell was just standing there, unable to give an effective response.

“Idiot! He’s driven crazy by his own godhood!” Francis was pissed off seeing that Ell just launched such a reckless attack at the mysterious knight in the river. He was hesitant with whether he should help Ell.

But as soon as he saw Lucien jumped out of the river. Francis had made sure that the man was just a level-six radiant knight. It was probably just that he had a special blood power that could refrain godhood and divine-like spells.

Francis grabbed the heavy sword and jumped down, aiming at Lucien.

Instantly, a huge swirl seemed to appear on the ground, pulling all the black miasma in. The miasma joined together and formed a black hydra. With its mixed power of lightning, toxin, acid and so forth, the hydra fiercely charged at Lucien.

Left hand in the front, right hand grabbing Pale Justice, Lucien dodged the huge black hydra which was big enough for blocking the entire sky and then quickly sprang up from the ground. His left fist, swung by his muscular arm, punched in the miasma.

As if something just snapped, when Lucien punched in the miasma, the black miasm quickly dissipated. And the silver moon in the night sky reappeared.

The heavy sword, now covered with cracks, dropped onto the ground. Francis stumbled backward. He could not believe it.

Stamping against the ground, Lucien dashed at Francis as quickly as a flash of moonlight.

With no time for more actions, Francis hurriedly swept the heavy sword for defense.

Lucien instantly lowered his body and avoided the sword, then he punched in Francis's chest using his left hand.

Seeing this, Francis's body twitched and clusters of black miasma were released. He was trying to counteract the power.

Bang! The miasma could not stop Lucien's punch! The clusters of black smog suddenly became pieces of flesh!

Francis's rib bones snapped. Blood spurted out of his mouth. It was such a powerful strike that Francis was directly blown away.

Francis's bones had all broken, and his guts were severely damaged as well. Everything he could see was now covered in spots of red. He could not even move a single finger now. Yet compared with the damage on his body, the great shock and fear towards that left hand were even clearer in his mind: The power within this punching was so horrible!

Seeing that what the demon had done to Francis within a few seconds, Ell's mind was also filled with shock and fear. But at least Francis had won Ell a few seconds, so as soon as Ell got rid of the confinement from the almighty will, He turned himself into a flash of moonlight and was about to escape.

Suddenly, an elegant left hand appeared in front of Ell's eyes, on which there was a layer of cold shine. Then the hand clenched into a fist and punched at Ell's face.

"No!!!" Ell was no longer able to maintain his dignity under great fear. His face had become more than twisted because of the desperation, and many divine-like spells were activated. Ell cast some of them, and the rest of them were triggered by the divine items Ell was carrying. There were transparent force fields, flame shields, silent darkness, billowing waves of death, and swirling specters.

However, none of them could stop Lucien's left fist. With the blowing fierce wind, Lucien punched into Ell's face.

Bang! All the spell shields were cracked as if they were no more than a piece of paper.

Ell burst out a ground-shaking, bitter cry. But the cry was suffocated by the blood gushing out from his mouth, nose, and eyes. The center part of Ell's face had been punched in. Blood splashed everywhere, together with some white tissues.

Lucien grabbed Ell's head as if he was grabbing a half-cracked watermelon. Ell was indeed a false god, as He was still alive after such a strong strike.

However, suddenly, Ell's body became shadowy and he flashed away from Lucien's hand, appearing again about ten meters away on the rock in the darkness. Lying on the rock, Ell was trying his best to maintain his life.

Lucien looked up in great alert, knowing that this was not Ell's own power. Someone saved Ell!

Antanas looked at Lucien with a creepy smile on his face. Ignoring the siege against him, Antanas took off his eyepatch.

Under the patch, there was a light ball whose color was a mixture of black, white, and grey. The colors seemed to be interacting as if they represented countless changes, while at the same time seemed to be silent and still as if they carried the secret of the origin of the world.

The muscles on Antanas's face started rotting away very quickly. The yellowish, festering flesh turned pale. The bones underneath were revealed, with the rotten flesh hanging on.

Around him, the world started to twist. All the colors and sounds faded away. Only eternal silence and the colors of black, white, and grey were left.

In such a world, Natasha, Camil and the rest of them's movement became extremely slowly, like small insects being trapped in a drop of pine resin.

"I was about to let Ell take in Asin to reach level nine, so I can save some trouble. But what a surprise, here you are."

Antanas' voice was as harsh as a piece of iron covered in thick rust.

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Chapter 487: Ups and Downs

Lucien's face was grim. He did not say a word but lifted his left hand. His fingers stretched out straight, and his left arm and hand were like a sword.

Suddenly, the environment around him started to twist. The darkness retreated and cold moonlight enveloped him. The silver moon in the sky, however, disappeared.

"You've recovered to some extent after taking in Asin's godhood of death, but it's not enough." Antanas' harsh voice sounded like a sharp claw scratching a piece of rusted iron sheet. He lifted the warhammer covered in the grey flame of soul and fiercely swung it at Lucien.

The hundred-meter distance between them seemed to have vanished, and the hammer instantly came in front of Lucien. The realm of black, white and grey followed the track of the hammer and extended like a paintbrush, yet instead of adding colors, the realm took away the color and sound of all the objects on its way, burying them in everlasting silence.

Lucien watched Antanas coming for him in great calmness. All the motions were colorless and silent. Suddenly, a huge silver moon rose behind him. The moon was so big and bright as if it had descended from the sky. In Lucien's left hand, black flame suddenly burnt up and formed a sword of black fire.

Lucien swung the sword at Antanas using all his strength. His robe fluttered up in the wind, while dazzling light beamed from the silver moon. The moonlight crashed together with the concrete black, white, and grey.

The whole world seemed to become obscure. There was no color, no sound, no time, and no space.

The illusion lasted for less than a second. Natasha and the rest saw a small crack appearing on the color of black, white and grey, and then more cracks followed. As the cracks grew bigger and bigger, colors and sound came in.

All of a sudden, the world of black, white and grey collapsed. The world had recovered to what it was supposed to be. However, Natasha and the rest of them still felt great numbness and could not fully control their own movements.

They, however, had seen the result of the fight.

Antanas was floating in the air. The temple cliff below him was gone. There was a giant deep hole in the ground, and huge swirls of river water gushed into the deep hole of voidness, trying to fill it up.

Pieces of rotten flesh were falling from Antanas' face and body. The bones revealed were covered in the color of rust and blood, which was dyed by the godhood of war. The light ball of black, white and grey now looked much more transparent and rigid.

Obviously, Antanas was badly injured.

However, compared to Lucien Evans, who had been blown away to the other side of the Solna River, Antanas' situation was still much better. When Lucien got struck away, he crushed down

countless trees and river rocks before finally hitting on the ground. Lucien was now not able to move at all, and his left hand now looked pale and grey.

“I told you. Not enough!” Antanas’ hoarse laugh could drive anyone crazy.

When the mysterious existence from the World of Souls was still recovering, Alterna interrupted it. Therefore, now it was still the Lord of War’s side which was dominating. But under the influence of the mysterious existence, Antanas had become even crazier.

Antanas took a step forward. Looking at his enemy lying on the ground and struggling, Antanas’s mind was full of joy and pride. “Your power will help me recover. Although I can’t kill you now, I can send you to a long, long sleep. Alterna, take your time to come back!”

Antanas lifted the hammer, and the power of black, white and grey became contagious again.

Lucien could hear the death knell ringing for him.

Suddenly, the world of black, white and grey was lit on green flame and instantly collapsed.

Antanas appeared again, surrounded by a grey and white of death and silence, which was very different from his own black, grey, and white. It was the power of decay, and there were bitter souls and spirits howling and swirling.

“Ahh!” The bitter cry came from Asin. In great agony, Asin’s life force was taken away by the power in the air. Within several seconds, His face had become extremely pale and His two green eyes had now become two flickering clusters of red flame. The air of death was emitted from his body.

The same thing happened to Ell, whose head was broken like a crushed watermelon, Ell released several painful moans and then stopped bleeding. What was now coming out of his body now was the light yellow corpse fluid. But maybe it was due to his godhood, the speed of life force leaving his body was much slower. He had not yet been turned into a walking dead.

Surrounding the Temple of War, within the radius of two hundred meters, countless Husum trees withered and rotted. The power in the air was absorbing their life force. The rich and moist soil had instantly lost all of its moist and become full of cracks. As soon as the water of the Solna River flowed into this area, it became deadly pale and awfully smelly.

One of the senior-rank priest exclaimed, “Life Ritual? The Demigod-lich?!”

As soon as he finished the words, the divine light surrounding him attracted the attack of the power of death. As if there was some kind of horrible alchemical reaction between the death power and the pure light, a horrible explosion occurred. This at least level-eight red robe cardinal exploded, and his life force was thrown into midair.

The death power also attacked Danniel, the Fire of Purification. The shield of white flame surrounding him was now much dimmer. He had to lean against his sword to prevent himself from falling down, and his life force was also quickly leaving his body.

Natasha was the first to realize what was going on. She ran to Camil and lifted her duplicate of the Shield of Truth in front of them. There were already tiny cracks on the shield.

But even the black shield was losing its color, as if it was losing life force as well. Natasha knew that the shield would become decayed in a minute or two, but she had no other choices.

Bero the God of Sun's eyes lost their focus. While His life force was being taken away, Bero's whole body was slightly twitching.

Lucien struggled to stand up. His left hand now looked completely grey, and he was having a hard time breathing.

Francis, lying on the ground and unable to move, tried hard to turn his neck. Looking at the area which now resembled the Skeleton Land, he felt lucky that the mysterious knight just threw him so away from Antanas that he was not in the cover range of the dreadful power.

Within the range, filthy dark clouds gathered in the sky. A black bolt of lightning lit up, and then it started raining. The horrible rotten smell made the severely injured Ell directly pass out.

The polluted greyish-white raindrops fell onto the ground, and the ground suddenly turned pale. Countless skeletons and bodies buried deep underneath broke out from the soil and slowly stood up. Showering in the rain, their death power became greater and greater.

Anything that the raindrops touched, including Daniel's fire of purification and Natasha's Shield of Truth, started rotting. But fortunately, they were not the main target, therefore, the raindrops falling on them were not heavy. However, the rain poured over Antanas, polluting everything and eating into his realm of black, white and grey.

Antanas lifted the hammer again, but his power had been reduced.

However, as the mysterious existence in the World of Souls, Antanas' hammer could still make the spirits, specters, and walking deads acknowledge allegiance to him.

When Antanas was almost out of the confinement, a cold voice came from the sky,

“Spirit Confinement.”

The broken souls and spirits surrounding Antanas twisted into the flashes of soul light and quickly sneaked into Antanas's body. Antanas' whole body swelled bigger and bigger. Grey and white liquid flowed out from the corners of his eyes, and Antanas could only stand there still like a stone statue.

“Life Ritual.” The cold voice came, again.

The polluted clouds collapsed onto Antanas. Meanwhile, countless undead rushed towards Antanas and became part of the clouds.

Antanas' life force was fiercely pushed out of his body. Losing the inner support, Antanas' tall and strong body became saggy. The warhammer dropped onto the ground, and Antanas' skull snapped into pieces.

The solidified light ball of black, white and grey went out of his eye socket, fell onto the ground, and broke into a few equally-sized pieces.

The pieces still had the almighty power of eternity and supremacy, but it felt that the pieces had lost the soul and will within it. The black, white and grey slowly spread out from the pieces, dyeing the surrounding objects, but now the process was totally meaningless and purposeless.

An illusionary Mage's Hand appeared in the air, trying to pick up the light ball pieces. However, the hand directly went through them, as if the pieces were not in this dimension.

"Hm?" The voice sounded confused.

A lich in a black cloak appeared in the sky. His head had no flesh at all but just a white skull. In each of his two hollow black eye sockets, a fine, needle-like red light spot was flickering.

It was him. Congus, the Demigod-lich. Lucien released a sigh in his mind.

Congus was not in a rush to collect the broken pieces from the mysterious existence in the World of Souls. Instead, Congus turned to look at Lucien. He would never leave the chance to Alterna to recover. Alterna was his only threat on the spot.

"Life Depri..." Congus said two strange words. They were the most primitive magic words.

Congus was not going to underestimate Alterna by any chance. He directly used a legendary spell to eradicate Lucien and his left hand.

However, before Congus could finish the second word, a flash of bright light hacked at him from behind. The light possessed this very positive power that reminded Lucien of all the good characteristics including order, honesty, kindness, and so on.

The magic defense spells automatically triggered dissolved under the light. But Congus had flashily moved to another spot. As a legendary sorcerer, he was constantly prepared for sudden attacks.

The two needle-like red spots turned to look at the attacker. It was Bero, the God of Sun, who supposedly had lost all his power under Life Ritual.

However, now Bero was standing up straight in the air and spoke in a commanding tone.

“This is just a reminder.”

“Who are you?” Asked Congus. He felt the power coming out from Bero rather familiar, but it wasn’t Bero’s own power, and Congus could not recall who it belonged to.

Bero did not answer the question. Countless white wings spread out behind him. Bero said to Congus in a solemn tone, “anything that dies must fall into the eternal sleep. This is the order of life. You filthy, evil creature, face this sentence!”

Then a scale, the left side white and right side black, appeared in front of Bero. After several swings, it reached its balance. The grey and white and horrible pale clouds then instantly disappeared, but the polluted land and the dying trees still remained the same.

“The Scale of Justice! You’re Rudolf II!”

Congus did not have a clue how Rudolf II came here, but nevertheless he quickly cast the legendary spell on Rudolf II.

“Life Deprivation!”

Congus believed that this was just a projection of Rudolf, so he was positive that even though Rudolf had brought the Scale with him, the projection was still not a match to Congus himself.

Silently, Bero’s face aged as if time passed by on him very fast. The wings behind him closed, converging into a streak of light.

“Comply with the order, Congus.”

“The Light of Order!”

The streak of light rapidly expanded, filling in every corner of the world, carrying the power to dissolve anything that was unnatural in the space.

Meanwhile, Congus opened his mouth big and let out an awful howling — Demigod-lich’s Howling!

Natasha's eyes lost focus again, and she had also lost the ability to hear or smell. The Shield of Truth in front of her cracked rapidly.

At this time, under the cold and bright moonlight, Lucien rose up into the air across the river. Wearing his long black coat, Lucien lifted his left hand up high, the flame of destruction twining it.

Francis and Camil thought that Lucien and Alterna had used up all of their power.

However, this was not the case. Before taking in the godhood of the Lord of Underworld, Alterna was already able to launch a full round of attack. Now, after absorbing one more godhood, plus the half-month sleep, how could Alterna lose the ability to fight after only one single strike?

Lucien came to the Temple of War on purpose. To get out of the trouble, he was trying to make the legendary archmage who had been watching him all the time and Antanas fight against each other. Before this fight, Lucien had taken Congus' arrival into his consideration, therefore, he did not use Alterna's full power.

Facing Alterna who had been severely injured, and the mysterious existence from the World of Souls who was still able to fight, Congus would definitely deal with the latter first.

Lucien would let them fight first.

Also, since Lucien happened to see Sophia around, and he knew that the Emperor had touched the secret behind the seven ancient demons, Lucien had also expected that Rudolf II would also get involved in this.

The power of silver moon had quickly repaired Lucien's body. When the huge moon rose again, covering the real silver moon in the sky.

Shocked, Congus and Rudolf II saw Lucien bow slightly. And then Lucien dropped his left hand down, and the moonshine suddenly expanded and filled up their vision.

Was it because Lucien was smarter and more sophisticated than them?

No, it was simply because Lucien knew much more information than Antanas. Lucien knew that there was a legendary hiding around and that Rudolf II was able to arrive at any time. Therefore, he could draw up the best plan.

The information gap was Lucien's advantage!

The silver moon tonight was so bright that Congus and Rudolf II would never ever forget this scene.

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Chapter 488: Ups and Downs II

In the endless silver moonlight, a fine black line appeared and grew bigger and bigger.

It was a long sword covered in black flame. The black fire blazed so brightly that it seemed like it could devour anything.

Francis who was at a distance could only feel that the black was drawing in all the light. Even time was slowed down and become solidified in it.

But he soon realized that this was simply his illusion, as he saw the dark green and greyish white colors as well as bright and rigid light coming out from the darkness.

In the end, the darkness overwhelmed everything again and retreated within a second.

When the silver moon rose up again, under its brilliant rays, Lucien was floating in the air. His Pale Justice had been thrown to the other side of the river and was now stuck in the ground beside Natasha, his left hand was hanging beside his body weakly, and his face was as pale as a piece of paper. This one strike had consumed all of the power that Alterna had accumulated as well as Lucien's blood power after transformation. Now Lucien had gone back to the original shape of his figure.

The Temple of War and the peak where the temple once stood on were both gone. Congus stood still in midair, while Rudolf II had fallen to the ground. His black-and-white scale was gone as well. Maybe the scale was also just a projection.

The night breeze blew lightly. Congus's black magic cloak and robe fluttered and turned into tiny pieces. The white skeleton inside was revealed, and then as if the skeleton was melting, drops of white liquid fell to the ground, taking away the last slight of life force from the ground.

Congus' whole set of skeleton had broken down. When the skull cracked, the two needle-like light spots instantly died out. However, underneath the white skull, a smaller delicate golden skull was revealed. It possessed an extremely horrible power. In the eye sockets of the golden skull, the needle-like red spots lit up again.

"You'll never be able to run away." Congus, who was now only a golden skull, said to Lucien gloomily, the two lines of teeth opening and closing.

Then the golden skull also cracked. Inside the skull, there was an ancient ring. In the next second, the gold skull and ring disappeared together.

Lucien's heart suddenly sank. Congus had a resurrection spot nearby!

Lucien did understand that it was impossible for Alterna to kill Congus and Rudolf II using one strike when Alterna was still recovering. However, since he was now facing the projection of Rudolf II, Lucien was still hoping that Alterna's power could completely destroy this body of Congus so that he could only resurrect in his phylactery in the main material world. This would win him some precious time. However, things did not go as he wished.

But Lucien did not panic. He was the Secretive, and he had reunited with Natasha. Lucien just needed to carefully hide himself and find the Congress of Magic, then he would not need to worry about Congus anymore. It would at least take Congus half an hour to return. And what was more important was that...

Lucien's sight shifted to the solidified pieces of black, white and grey floating in the air — Once Alterna absorbed the pieces, Congus would definitely try to stay away as far as possible.

When Alterna's power further recovered, Alterna would be able to completely wipe Congus out!

A creepy smile crept onto Sun God Bero's face, and He suddenly collapsed onto the ground into a pile of ash.

Ell, Natasha, Camil, Francis, Dannel, and the rest of them had all either became unconscious or lost all their strength, while Asin had become an undead creature, yet it still kept some consciousness and knew that Lucien was definitely the one it should stay away from.

"I'm starving..." Lucien's left hand reached out and pulled Lucien up. It pressed against one of the pieces in the air, and then the rest of the pieces were also gradually pulled over and blended together.

Suddenly, the sound of wind disappeared in Lucien's ears, and colors disappeared in Lucien's eyes. All he could see was a space filled with black, white and grey. Anything that was over a meter away looked completely blurry. Lucien felt that he was in an isolated space, and even his mind had slowed down.

Francis tried hard to look up at Lucien, who was floating in the air still. He saw that, on Lucien's left hand, the color of silver was fighting against a mixture of black, white and grey. Lucien's eyes had lost focus as if he had lost his soul.

At this time, Danniel the Fire of Purification turned his neck. A mysterious smile rose on his face. Then he slowly stood up and flew towards Lucien with the sword in his hand.

“You know that my projection wouldn’t die easily, but you have still turned to take in the essential pieces. Have you become too pretentious?” Danniel spoke, but the voice definitely belonged to Rudolf II!

However, the power from the projection was lower than the legendary level. It seemed that the power of the projection depended on the host.

“Huh, Lucien Evans knew that the projection would not die easily? How did he know?” In the noble district of the city of Husum, Sophia was sitting on the bed, staring at the black and white scale in front of her. She was watching the fight at the Temple of War using the divine item and the connection she had with the projection. However, her father’s words confused her.

She would never forget what happened in the underground palace of Sun’s King three years ago. She had looked for the mysterious sorcerer for a long time to take her revenge but had not gained a single clue. Later, she gradually put this aside and started focusing on improving herself.

Before leaving the Congress, Lucien had submitted the two magic spells which he used in the underground palace. Because the principles of the two magic spells were quite simple, many sorcerers had also created similar spells based on the principles. As a result, the intelligence section ignored this, and Sophia thus missed the most important clue for tracking the mysterious sorcerer.

However, as a legendary, Rudolf II had instantly recognized Lucien Evans. After all, Lucien was not trying to hide his spiritual power at all.

Rudolf II talked to Lucien first to show that this was not a sneak attack. Then, lifting the long sword named the Fire of Purification, Rudolf II hacked at Lucien against the moonlight.

The sword was quick. The sword reflecting the silver moonlight seemed to possess many virtues, such as honesty, kindness, order.

When the white sword inlaid with the patterns of flame was only an inch away from Lucien's head, an ordinary-looking long sword came horizontally and blocked its way.

The clang of the blades was crispy. The Fire of Purification bounced back, and so did the ordinary-looking sword.

"You're still able to move?" Rudolf II said in astonishment to the beautiful young lady with a determined look standing in front of him.

Although it was not surprising that Natasha was still alive since she was not the main target of Congus's Life Ritual, it was indeed a miracle that she could still fight.

"Because, from the very beginning, Lucien had reminded me that the power of a legendary was coming, so I was prepared." Natasha's silver-purple eyes stared at Rudolf II tightly. "Although two items were destroyed, it was Aunt Camil's power that was consumed. I was not injured much, and even took the chance during Life Ritual and slightly recovered from the previous fight."

Holding Pale Justice in her hand, which was thrown to her side by Lucien on purpose, Natasha stood between Lucien and Rudolf II. Her duplicate of the Shield of Truth and the level-eight Sword of Balance had been destroyed. Pale Justice survived because of its special property against Necromancy power.

“So he knew that Congus would come...” Rudolf II sighed.

Then he lifted the sword and launched a new round of attack as fast as raindrops in a storm hitting the ground. The area around him started to become hotter and hotter as if all the filthy things in the dimension have started burning.

The power of Dannel, the Fire of Purification, had been improved to the level of a gold knight with the projection of Rudolf II.

Natasha, however, was only focusing on defense, and her defense was perfect.

The metal blades were clanging like a string of notes.

Natasha was a level-seven knight, and even with Pale Justice, her power and defense had only reached level eight. However, her fighting skills and supreme blood power had compensated for the gap between the power of Rudolf II’s projection and hers. Also, Rudolf II himself was not good at fighting as a knight as he had chose the other path of balance, and he was now not capable of casting many spells because of Alterna’s previous strike.

After a minute, the two sides were still fighting, with no one showing any dominant advantages.

“You’re indeed very talented among the younger generation.” Rudolf II nodded and said, “but if you keep staying in my way, I’ll kill you.”

Natasha sneered. “Have you ever seen a real knight running away from the battlefield?”

“Then I’ll let you die as a decent knight,” replied Rudolf II.

The white wings spread out behind Rudolf II again, but this time, the feathers were less abundant and much dimmer.

Luminescent spots flew out of the wings and joined together. A thick book began to take its shape. Rudolf II hacked his sword down, and the book turned itself to a specific page.

The Angel King! The Prothonotary in Mountain Paradise!

Smile disappeared from Natasha’s face. With a very serious look on her face, Natasha immediately swung her sword. As if the sky just cracked, a number of illusionary gaps appeared around her. Acting like a shield, the gaps blocked the attack from the Fire of Purification.

Bang! The sound was so loud that Sophia, who was watching far away, could not help covering her ears.

Sophia saw that Natasha’s hands were bleeding hard. However, the pair of hands were still holding the sword tight, and the owner of the pair of hands was still standing at where she had been. Sophia was very impressed. She knew that her elder brother had a secret crush on Natasha, and now she had understood the reason.

Then, in great astonishment, Sophia saw that, behind Natasha, Lucien's eyes rolled and then his whole person came back to life!

However, what shocked Sophia the most was the staff inlaid with the big Sun Stone that Lucien was now holding in his hand and pointing at Rudolf II.

"It's him!" Sophia burst out. Her body was slightly trembling. The deep fear was still in her mind.

"That Bastard!"

Lucien felt that he just woke up from a long, long dream after a few years. His soul had reached the seventh circle. However, nothing around him changed. Lucien remembered the situation that he was facing. Therefore, Lucien quickly calmed down and lifted the Sun Staff to cast Confinement.

A flash of light sparkled. Rudolf II's fierce attack continued. Natasha could barely have the time for taking a breath.

To Lucien's great surprise, Rudolf II was immune to Confinement!

Lucien did once learn that some really powerful legendaries were immune to spells like Confinement and Maze, but he had never met one before. He had not expected to meet one today. But it might be also because what was standing in front of him was just a projection of Rudolf II.

On Lucien's left hand, the silver light suppressed the mixture of black, white and grey, but it would take quite a while for Alterna to fully take in the power. Therefore, without hesitation, Lucien took out a colorless tube and started chanting.

"It's that spell...!" Sophia hurriedly shouted, as if she was trying to remind her father. Her forehead was covered with a fine layer of cold sweat.

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Chapter 489: More to Come

Inside the translucent tube was a frozen colorless material that emitted extreme coldness. Even looking at it would make one feel frozen to bones.

As Lucien was casting the spell, the material in the tube started to boil and the tube seemed that it was going to break at any time.

Seeing this, Rudolf II slightly shook his head. He knew what Lucien was going to do, and he also knew the greatest problem with this spell —The chanting time was too long, so long that he could easily break it off.

The pages of the book behind him turned its pages and threw a deceleration spell at Natasha. Meanwhile, Rudolf II flew to the other direction and left the range where Lucien's spiritual power was locked on.

Rudolf II had seen Lucien cast this spell, Snow Goddess' Whip, before. He knew what the advantages and disadvantages were.

As a ninth-circle ice and snow spell which could create a temperature extremely close to the absolute zero, the spell itself was perfect when its caster was an archmage. However, if the caster was not yet level nine, the casting would take at least three to four seconds, which was too long to truly imperial a radiant knight or gold knight in a real fight.

Dragging the sword named Fire of Purification, Rudolf II flashed to midair and prepared for the next round of attack. He knew that he should never leave any gaps for Lucien, otherwise as a senior-rank sorcerer, Lucien would seize the chance to cast a series of helping spells on Natasha. Rudolf II was using Dannel's body, and he knew how much power he could use. When Natasha's power was strengthened by senior-rank spells, she would have a great chance to defeat Dannel, whose power had only just reached the bottom line of a gold knight — This was why a senior-rank sorcerer could be very threatening.

Also, if the fight went on for too long, when Alterna fully absorbed the pieces of Essence, or when Congus returned, there would be no chance left for Rudolf II.

Rudolf II's wings flapped, but at this time he noticed that Lucien's casting had stopped.

He realized that something was wrong when he saw the smile on Lucien's face. There was a silver coin in Lucien's right hand, and his body was covered with long, snake-like electric currents, while the space around him was distorted by the magnetic field.

The colorless material in the tube was the same as before. The tube fell down, shining in the darkness of the night.

It was a lie! Lucien was just pretending to be casting!

Rudolf II was furious, for as the “incarnation of the virtues”, he absolutely hated to be deceived.

However, Lucien, at this time, instantly finished casting Lucien’s Electromagnetic Gun since this spell was engraved into his soul. In the next blink, Rudolf II was under the heavy bombardment of the thick electric beam. It was so fast that he had no time to avoid it!

Rudolf II’s face was grim. His wings folded together as a shield, covering his whole body under layers of white feathers.

Bang! The blast was deafening!

The burnt feathers twirled to the ground, revealing the hole in the middle of the wings. Even Rudolf II’s chest was severely battered; his body trembled slightly and he temporarily lost the ability to move.

Yet the power of this sixth-circle spell was still not strong enough and could not cause fatal damage to a gold knight’s body.

However, Rudolf II's temporary inability to move was all that Lucien needed. Lucien activated the Ice & Snow Medal he was wearing and a freezing ray instantly darted at Rudolf II's wounded chest.

With the wound as the center, layer of ice immediately froze over Rudolf II's body, as if a man-shaped ice coffin was specially made for him.

Lucien was planning on casting Resistance Reduction first and then Silent Coffin. However, when they were actually fighting, Lucien found that Danniel's armor had already been severely damaged by Congus' Life Ritual and Filthy Rain.

The light of the silver moon lit up the ice coffin. As if the moonlight had a temperature, the ice coffin quickly melted down, together with Danniel's body and the projection in it.

At this moment, Lucien grabbed the tube of solidified helium with Mage's Hand. Throwing it up in the air, he started casting again.

This time, the tube broke into pieces while Lucien was halfway through his chanting. The colorless material turned into a dim ray and bitterly whipped on the half-melted coffin following the gesture of Lucien's right hand.

The ice coffin lit up in blue light. The remanent part of Danniel's body became an ice statue. Then, the statue melted into raindrops and evaporated.

Suddenly, Natasha crossed the than ten-meter distance with a leap and hacked at the vapor fiercely with Pale Justice.

An illusionary face formed in the vapor and split into pieces under the attack.

Without a body, the projection was the same as a specter. The blade of Pale Justice was its invincible opponent.

“What a tough fight...” Lucien murmured.

When the specter disappeared, Sophia started trembling at a long distance away from the battlefield. Again, she realized how deceitful and unpredictable Lucien was. In her eyes, Lucien was a demon taking the form of a human being!

It took Sophia a while to calm down. She felt lucky that this time she was just observing this remotely.

She wiped off the cold sweat on her forehead and sighed. “A grand-arcanist-to-be, a great musician... He’s much more talented than a demon.

“No wonder even Natasha would fall for him. Brother, there’s no hope for you at all.”

...

Putting aside the sword, Natasha carefully examined herself, both body and soul. The power of Rudolf II was so weird that she had to be extremely cautious.

“Don’t worry too much. He has been severely injured by the strike from Alterna. The projection has lost the power to possess a body or a soul again,” said Lucien to Natasha in a comforting tone. Meanwhile, he also checked himself to make sure that his soul remained intact.

Natasha nodded but still checked again carefully and also asked Camil to do the same. Only after then did she finally smile and said, “it never occurred to me that Alterna is right now in your left hand. Is it affecting your activities somehow?”

Lucien found Natasha’s smile rather meaningful. He lifted one eyebrow and asked, “what activities?”

“Like when you need your left hand...” Natasha pretended to be very serious but then burst out laughing. This made Lucien feel warm in his heart. That they could still discuss gentlemen topics together made him feel that everything was still the same between them after several years.

Natasha then suppressed her emotions and looked around, “this isn’t a perfect place for joking. We gotta go before the Demigod-lich returns.”

“Tell me where the Congress is. I’ll go on my own,” said Lucien.

Natasha lifted an eyebrow and rubbed her chin.

Seeing this, Lucien hurriedly explained. “My Host Star of Destiny is special, plus that I am with Alterna, so Congus can’t find me. If I go with you, it brings danger to both of us.”

Natasha nodded and accepted this reason. She said to Lucien decisively, “to get to the controlled area of the Congress of Magic, you should head east, cross the desert, and then cross an ocean. The continent you’ll arrive in is the one the Congress of Magic is searching through. This area is supposed to belong to the Church, but they haven’t come to the west yet. Take care. Don’t trust the rest of the grand arcanists except your teacher and granny Hathaway.”

“I’ll hit the road right now,” said Lucien. “Here, you keep Pale...”

Natasha cut Lucien off, smiling. “I keep Pale Justice with me? I’d love to. But I prefer to have it next time. Pale Justice should be protecting you right now until you are safe. I’m also heading for the same continent. If I can find granny Hathaway and the Lord of Storm before you do, I’ll ask them to come and find you.”

Natasha did not conceal her liking for Pale Justice, but she also did not hesitate when she handed it to Lucien.

Lucien nodded. When he reached out his hand to take over Pale Justice, a strange feeling suddenly struck him. The mixed colors of black, white and grey covered his body, and the aura of the World of Souls came out. Meanwhile, the silver-white light on his left hand was trying hard to keep the situation under control.

Natasha raised Pale Justice and swung it at Lucien. With a dim flash, the concrete black, white and grey started to collapse and was again controlled by the silver-white.

“What is it?” Asked Natasha concernedly.

Lucien took a while to feel Alterna's will in his hand, and he sighed. "Alterna's taking in the pieces, but it's a hard process. The situation that just happened may happen again from time to time. But generally, Alterna's still in control, so it's not a big problem."

"How long is this going to take?" Natasha frowned. "If this keeps happening, Demigod-lich will definitely be able to find you. He knows you're heading for the east."

Lucien took a deep breath and said, "about a week."

Although a week was long and dangerous, Lucien somehow had this strange feeling — How Alterna fully absorb the mysterious existence in the World of Souls in only a week? Maybe there was something unusual going on.

"That's... too long. What about this? I'll go with you, and we can hide in the mountains in the north. It's easier to hide from the Demigod-lich in the forests." Natasha suggested seriously. "Aunt Camil will head to the east to seek help from granny Hathaway and the Lord of Storm. I can also use Pale Justice to help you control the conflict between the two powers. Since I'm helping you, I think Alterna should be willing to help me cover up my power and destiny track, right? It's not going to cost a great deal of Alterna's power..."

Lucien remained silent for a few seconds and then felt the power in his left hand. Finally, he said,

"Alterna said yes, but I think you should go to the east and let Camil stay with me."

“This is my business. Camil should not be involved in this. Also, aunty Camil had used up most of her power. Even with the potions, it will take her at least half a day to recover. And Demigod-lich won’t wait for half a day to come here.” After taking a glance at Camil, Natasha said to Lucien in great determination.

Lucien looked around. He knew that the time they had was rather limited, so he didn’t waste his words.

“Alright, let’s go.”

Natasha nodded. She flew to Camil and talked to her for a while. Obviously, they had an argument. Camil’s cold blue eyes stared at Lucien full of anger, but finally, she put aside her weapon and stumbled away.

Natasha and Lucien then used all kinds of methods to remove their traces, and then they headed for the north.

After a while, Francis, who was lying on the ground far away from where they fought, started feeling strength coming back to his body and his broken bones healing. When he finally was able to stand up, Ell’s smiling face suddenly appeared in front of him.

Ell’s shattered head and face had recovered. He now looked even more gloomy and mysterious than before.

“You have proved yourself again. We shall leave this place temporarily.”

Francis was shocked that Ell had recovered this fast. But smart as he was, Francis did not ask but lowered his head and said in the great but pretended respect, “I will only follow you, Your Almightiness.”

Ell nodded in satisfaction. He vailed his eyes, blocking the mixture of concrete black, white and grey within.

Then Ell and Francis hurriedly left the city of Husum.

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Chapter 490: The Trip

After heading to the north along the river valley for several minutes, Lucien told Natasha that they had to change the direction and head toward the east. Using Advanced Flying, Lucien and Natasha flew as fast as they could in the new direction. Meanwhile, Lucien removed the layer of dim moonlight on Natasha.

“You’re attracting Demigod-lich’s attention so that aunty Camil can leave the city of Husum and go into the desert in the east in safety, right?” asked Natasha. She did not complain at all when Lucien suddenly changed the plan, instead, she accepted Lucien’s decision and realized his plan right away. They had gone through fire and water multiple times together. They knew each other well.

Natasha knew that on the east side of the desert was a secret liaison magic circle set up by the Congress of Magic. The magic circle could send voice messages across the ocean to the areas under the control of the Congress.

Once knowing where Lucien was, Fernando and Hathaway could go back to the main material world first and then open another Portal to Alternate Realm to the northern mountains in Erdo Peninsula. This was the fastest route, although it would still cost them a day to come.

If a radiant knight was familiar with all the semi-solidified space barriers in this dimension, he or she would be able to get to the liaison magic circle in the desert within two days; if not, it would take three to four days. Unfortunately, Camil belongs to the latter.

Flying at a high speed in the sky, they could hear the wind howl as it thrashed the coldness into their bones. Lucien smiled. He nodded and said to Natasha via the telepathic bond between them, “it Demigod-lich can’t find our traces when he returns, he will definitely go after Camil, who is the closest person to us that survived the fight. When he gets aunty Camil, we will lose all our hope of waiting for Hathaway and my teacher’s help. What’s even worse is that he will for sure use aunty Camil to threaten us. We must eliminate this potential danger.”

“That’s true. If Demigod-lich can lock on our trace, he will come after us.” Natasha agreed. “Thus, as long as aunty Camil can hide properly, she will have enough time to recover.”

“In this dimension, even a legendary’s spiritual power field only has a radius of three hundred meters. At that time, aunty Camil will have already left the city of Husum. By then, Demigod-lich will have a very difficult time if he still wants to find her. And we all know that following one’s track of destiny isn’t very accurate.” Natasha added. “Within a day, aunty Camil will be able to get in the mountains in the northeast, where His Excellency Varantine is patrolling. Unless he loses his mind and wants to challenge the Church right now by himself, Demigod-lich will have no choice but to give up tracking down aunty Camil.”

Natasha, who was flying in the air like a sharp arrow, completely understood Lucien's plan. She told Lucien where Varantine was, in case he would run into Varantine.

To escape by fueling a fight between Varantine and Demigod-lich was not a possible plan, because Varantine could always inform the Church, and then Lucien would have to run away from the entire Church's hunting. The situation would be much, much more dangerous than what they were facing now.

"So we have to keep distracting Demigod-lich for a whole day," said Lucien seriously.

Natasha lifted her left eyebrow, "You are not worried that aunty Camil might tell His Excellency Varantine about you?"

"There's no perfect plan facing such a great danger," said Lucien honestly, "but after seven days, when Alterna finishes absorbing the pieces, I might be able to survive even facing the Pope. And, I trust you."

Natasha lips curved into a smile,

"I told aunty Camil that it would only take Alterna four days to fully absorb the pieces. If she chooses not to sell you out and successfully sends the message to the Congress, the Lord of Storm and granny Hathaway will come find you even earlier than you planned. If she indeed sells you out, when the Pope sends the priests here, it will have been three days later. His Holiness will definitely consider how big is their chance of winning when facing Alterna, who will have recovered to the level of demigod. I don't think he will take the risk, especially when he's currently unable to cast God's Arrival."

Lucien tilted his head and examined Natasha up to down. He was quite impressed. “I thought you were always very straightforward, no matter when fighting or dealing with things. I didn’t expect it at all that you could also be very sophisticated. But... aunty Camil has been protecting you for so many years, won’t you feel bad lying to her?”

Natasha grinned. “Hey, I gave aunty Camil the wrong message because you deceived me in the first place. A dignified knight like me doesn’t lie.”

After the joke, the look on Natasha’s face became more serious. “Although I do like to solve problems on my own, as the future duchess, I’ve always been living in great caution, or what happened to me last time with my cousin Verdi would definitely happen again. I trust that aunty Camil will never betray me, but I am not so sure whether she’d also not betray you. Maybe in her eyes, sending you to the gallows is the best way to protect me from the danger of being hunted by Demigod-lich. I can’t count on anybody by simply saying ‘I trust her.’”

Lucien saw a true duchess in front of him — decisive, determined, and cautious.

What was even more important was that Natasha still knew what she really wanted.

Lucien smiled lightly. “We’ve done this much, and the rest of the things are not within our control. We should head northward and eastward in turns, so that Demigod-lich will believe that we’re heading for the desert in the east following an irregular route.”

At this time, the concrete colors black, white and grey climbed onto Lucien’s left hand again and then covered his entire body. The flying spell was interrupted, and Lucien instantly fell from the sky.

With a dive, Natasha clutched Lucien. Then she pulled out Pale Justice and swung it at the mix of black, white and grey.

However, this time one single strike turned out to be insufficient. Natasha frowned and kept hacking at it. After three times, the mixture of colors finally retreated.

“Are you alright?” Asked Natasha in concern.

Lucien said calmly, “don’t worry. The fight can get quite intense. When the absorption process approaches the end, there’ll be a big one.”

“You gotta ask Alterna some rewards when Alterna recovers,” said Natasha half-jokingly. “You’re taking such a huge risk.”

Lucien answered thoughtfully, “In fact, I think I’ve got some rewards already. Every time when this happens, the world around me stops working, but meanwhile, my soul is still growing stronger together with my cognitive world. When I first got struck by it, it felt like that I directly skipped two years. The two-year growth has turned out to be a great boost to my soul. Now, the power of my soul is at the seventh circle. When I finish analyzing a seventh-circle spell, I’ll try to advance.”

“This is not fair. We are at the same level again!” Natasha exclaimed in great surprise. “... I was working very hard to be a level higher than you. After this ends, you have to reward me as well!”

“I will, as long as you’re not asking me to wear weird costumes,” Lucien revealed Natasha’s secret thoughts.

Natasha shrugged. “Alright, then you’d better get up.”

Lucien finally realized that Natasha had been holding him in her arms all the time during the conversation. With a shy smile on his face, Lucien cast Advanced Fly again.

...

Half a day later, Lucien and Natasha arrived at a small town in the northern mountain range. Now, they were hiding in a mud hut and taking a break.

“The outbreak is happening so unpredictably! Before, we could still handle it, but after Demigod-lich sent out his specter minions, we are now under great pressure,” said Natasha.

Natasha’s eyes were fixed sharply on Lucien’s left hand, where the one to blame was residing. The only thing that could comfort her now was that according to Lucien, Alterna was a cute-looking blond girl. Thus, Natasha could still put up with Alterna. She also wondered why Lucien was always caught in big troubles.

Lucien could do nothing about this. “It’s completely out of my control. There’s no pattern in this at all.”

In the past hour, they had run into two teams of senior-rank specters. Many thanks to the fact that Pale Justice was the great bane of the specters, they were able to escape. Otherwise, they would have already been caught by Demigod-lich.

Natasha was about to say something to relax. Suddenly, the monotonous colors of black, white and grey haunted Lucien again.

She looked rather alert and serious. Pulling out Pale Justice, she hacked at the color layer from an angle as the many times she did before.

This time, the colors faded away immediately. But Natasha did not have time for celebrating. The next moment, Natasha leaped forward. Clutching Lucien, who was still not able to move, she rolled out of the mud hut.

Bang!

The mud wall was penetrated by a huge piece of stone. After a few shakes, the hut collapsed to the ground, raising dust everywhere.

Natasha held the sword and stood in front of Lucien. She saw the disgusting, rotten monster.

It was a group of huge apes two to three times tall as a man. But they had no skin, thus the green, rotten muscles and tissues were all revealed. In each of their hands, there was a huge stone.

“Only a group of middle-rank Rotten Looters?” Natasha sneered. Her movements were so fast that the series of piercing and striking only took her a couple of seconds.

When Natasha returned to where she was standing earlier, the huge apes had all collapsed to the ground one by one. Their huge bodies quickly dissolved into piles of pus and then disappeared.

“There must be a high-rank undead creature as the leader behind! Let’s go!” Lucien reminded. Besides, he did not want to get the innocent residents nearby involved.

After casting Speed on themselves, Lucien and Natasha ran into the mountains, changing their directions aimlessly.

A few seconds later, Natasha suddenly took a wide leap onto the big tree beside them and pierced through a huge animal. It was another Rotten Looter.

“We’re still being followed,” said Natasha seriously.

Lucien looked back and frowned. “Something’s tracking us. We have to find it out, or Demigod-lich will be coming for us soon.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 491: The Lunatic

“How?” Asked Natasha. Although she was an expert in anti-tracking, she knew that everything was different in this dimension where everyone’s spiritual power and willpower were both restrained, so she asked for Lucien’s advice.

Sorcerers were known for their multiple spells serving different and specific purposes. This was another advantage that they had over knights and clergies.

Lucien took out his monocle and covered his left eye with it. Images and scenes flashed through his left pupil. Meanwhile, electromagnetic waves spread out from his eye and his body to every direction, then providing feedback to him from time to time.

Using the fifth-circle spell Eye of Thunder and Lightning, Lucien was now like a radar in human shape.

“The feedback from over three hundred meters is weak and chaotic somehow... Is this the special suppression of this world? It feels like magnetic pollution.” Lucien said to Natasha through the telepathic bond between them. “But don’t worry. Let’s keep moving forward. You keep pretending that you’re still seeking around but have found nothing so that we can lure it closer to us. We gotta hurry up, there isn’t much time left for us.”

“Alright.” Natasha agreed.

Clenching onto Pale Justice, she walked deeper into the forest with Lucien.

Lucien then cast True Seeing on Natasha and himself, pretending that they were still on great alert but could find nothing.

After a minute, Lucien and Natasha quickly exchanged a look and suddenly accelerated. Like two flashes of shadow, they sprinted towards the end of the path, ready to turn left.

At this time, Lucien stopped without any signs and cast Move Earth, a sixth-circle spell!

The ground within a hundred meters started shaking fiercely. Invisible waves spread out, and trees fell one by one.

From the thick crown of an old tree, a black figure lost its balance and fell onto the ground.

The blackness of the figure could absorb in most electromagnetic waves including visible light, thus generating an alternative sense of invisibility. Without True Seeing, Lucien and Natasha would not be able to see it or sense it at all.

Natasha dashed forward and wielded Pale Justice downward in great momentum.

The black figure turned out to be a human-shaped monster with the head of a white tiger. The aura of death surrounding it was extremely dense. Its power should be able to directly manipulate low-rank and middle-rank specters.

Fast and agile, it dodged to the side in midair and avoided Natasha's blade. Then the black claws came for Natasha like sharp blades. Meanwhile, its power waves spread out — it was going to use its ability to cast magic-like spells!

However, the tiger-head monster suddenly lost its strength and fell right onto the blade of Natasha's sword.

Pale Justice was a legendary-level sword when facing evil creatures. Without much effort, the sword penetrated through the monster's body. Black miasma came out, and the body started rotting very fast.

"It's a senior-rank evil beast, good at tracking and assassination," said Natasha to Lucien through the telepathic bond. "Did you create this spell on your own? I've never heard such a powerful senior-rank spell that can interfere with gravity to such a degree."

"Yes, I did. It's called 'Gravity Chaos', a spell of the field of Astrology," said Lucien. He accidentally came up with the spell during the derivation of the Special Theory of Relativity.

Natasha was simply being curious, so she didn't ask further. "We gotta hurry up and leave — Watch out!"

Before she finished her words, a huge rock twice the size of the previous one that destroyed the mud hut rushed out of the woods towards them fiercely, stirring up a very strong blow.

Natasha stepped forward and swang Pale Justice at the huge rock. This one single strike slowed down the rock a little bit and slightly changed its direction. Lucien made the best use of the time and shot out a ray of green light at the rock.

The ray was so thin compared to the size of the rock, like a toothpick on a desk. However, the huge rock instantly broke down into tiny green light dots and scattered to the ground.

Something in the woods burst out in an extremely bitter howl. The howling was so sharp and miserable that one's mind could very easily be disturbed.

Natasha held Pale Justice in front of Lucien and herself. As soon as the evil howling touched the sword, it split into two halves from the middle just like a rushing flood around a small isolated island, thus Natasha and Lucien were not affected at all. However, the wild beasts nearby were all panicking under the great evilness.

Stamping on the tree trunks, a giant over five meters tall cut its own way through the woods and walked out.

The giant's skin was nearly black, and it had a pair of eerie orange eyes, pointy ears, but no hair. Its dirty nails were also orange. The most disturbing thing was that it was surrounded by a cluster of spirits forming a cloud. The horrible howl that they just heard actually came from the spirits.

"A Dead Gaint! At least level seven!" Lucien immediately recognized it. "There are two kinds of spirits surrounding it. One is those that came from the enemies it killed before, and they can be easily killed by Pale Justice. But the others came from the Dead Giants themselves and are passed down the generations as guardians. These spirits are not evil, so Pale Justice won't work well. We have to kill the giant to destroy the spirits!"

"Be careful with its Unholy Blight and Flame Strike."

Through the telepathic bond, Lucien told Natasha the basic information about the enemy.

Natasha grabbed the sword and said, “help me so I can approach the giant. Let’s finish it as soon as possible.”

With many years of hard training and a powerful weapon, Natasha was not afraid of the giant at all. All she wanted was to save more time.

“I’ll use Exorcist Halo to suppress the spirits,” said Lucien. Although he had many options, he believed that Sun’s Corona would definitely be most effective in this situation.

Natasha was ready. She bent her knees and was ready to strike.

However, at this time, a layer of concrete black, white and grey suddenly covered Lucien. He had totally lost his ability to move.

“Damn!” Natasha could not hold back the swearing. She knew that she had to stop the giant first.

Yet the Death Giant had already made its move when the colors first appeared and had now arrived right in front of Natasha.

Spirits howled and cried. Natasha, who was not yet fully prepared, was knocked off into the air by the giant. Meanwhile, although the eerie shadows surrounding it had dimmed, the giant still launched its second attack.

Pale Justice kept colliding with the evil spirits, yet much of its power was restrained due to the guardian spirits.

When Natasha was defending herself, the Death Giant found the opportunity and rushed at Lucien, who was completely incapable of fighting.

Natasha's silver-purple eyes became cold. She turned back a somersault and came back to Lucien. Then using all her strength, she sprang up and swung the sword at the Dead Giant's chest.

The Dead Giant had to stop its attack to defend itself from the fatal attack. The spirits formed a black shadow that blocked Pale Justice, and its sharp orange nails came straight to Natasha.

Natasha, however, had given up defense. She let the nails sink into her rerebrace, and meanwhile, pulled the sword and slashed across the neck of the Dead Giant.

The giant grabbed its own neck with its hands, trying to stop the black blood from bursting out.

Natasha would leave it no more chance. Stepping on the ground, she was ready to leap up again and launch her second round of attack.

At this time, a beam of holy light came from the sky and encased the giant within.

The giant lost all of its life force. The surrounding spirits were finally released and slowly disappeared in the light beam.

“Are you alright?” Lucien flew to Natasha and asked concernedly.

Natasha coughed and pointed at her left shoulder. “You gotta fix this for me later.”

There was a deep crack in her violet rerebrace. Her left upper arm was injured, and traces of black blood came out from the wound.

Lucien hurriedly stopped the bleeding and said to Natasha, frowning, “there’s death curse in a Dead Giant’s nails, and there’s also toxins. Although as a radiant knight and with your top blood power, you won’t die like the others. But your power will be reduced to below senior-rank. The best solution is the seventh-circle spell, Pure Blessing. A fourth-circle spell called Remove Curse shall also work, but it must be supported by some potions.”

Natasha smiled. “So... you do not have the materials to brew the potions now, right? — Wait, are you also injured?”

Lucien did not look good. His face now looked abnormally dark. Obviously, he had been affected by Unholy Blight — When struck by the colors of black, white and grey, he was not able to defend himself at all.

Lucien did not realize it until Natasha pointed out. He hurried cast a spell on himself to prevent the situation from getting worse. “I didn’t notice it. This also can only be completely removed using the corresponding spell and the potion called Heart of Sun.”

Natasha grinned. “You didn’t even notice that your own injury. You do care about me a lot, don’t you?”

Honest and straightforward as usual, she did not feel shy at all.

Lucien, on the other hand, felt a bit shy, so he switched the topic. “I do have most of the materials of the potions. But there’s one missing called Bloody Family. It’s a kind of red flower that is everywhere in the main material world. So I don’t have them with me.”

“Let’s go then. This world resembles the main material world, so it shouldn’t be too difficult to find the flower. We can also ask people living in the nearby small town.” Natasha stood up.

Lucien nodded and cast the spells to take away the giant’s heart, nails, and the piece of skin on its chest. In the future, he would use these materials to make the senior-rank magic items Dead Giant Belt and Curse Dagger.

Luckily, Demigod-lich had not caught them up yet.

...

It was a small town in the mountains where residents relied on hunting and logging.

Lucien, whose face was still abnormally dark, found nothing about the red flowers after asking the passers-by. By now, Natasha was already having difficulty lifting her left arm.

Lucien walked to a very old man and asked, "Sir, may I ask you something?"

"What?" The old man pointed at his ear.

Lucien took out a couple of copper coins used by the locals and tossed them. "Sir, I'd like to know if you know someone good at telling plants nearby."

The old man's eyes lit up. "There is one."

Lucien smiled and handed him the coins. "More specific?"

"Sir, if you just need a guide, you don't have to go to Nika the Lunatic. He's filthy and cruel, obsessed with cutting plants, animals, and beasts into small pieces every day. He says he's looking for the secret of gods. He's gone nuts..." When mentioning Nika, the old man was obviously full of disgust.

"The secret of gods?" Lucien and Natasha asked at the same time. Their left eyebrow lifted at the same angle.

The old man nodded hard, “Yes, he keeps telling people that the blessed power comes from the strange patterns on the horrible monsters. He wants to understand the patterns! Trust me, he’s gone nuts. He’s been acting weird since he was a kid. Things around him were always on fire or got broken. He must have been possessed by a demon!”

Lucien was very interested, “Where is he?”

“You’d better think twice...” said the old man, but when he saw the shiny silver coin in Lucien’s hand, he hurriedly added. “... Well, people did not like him, so he had moved deep into that mountain. Follow the path and you’ll find him.”

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 492: The Pioneer

After the previous several rounds of outbursts, it seemed that Alterna had temporarily come into control of the situation. It’s been more than half a day since the last time the creepy colors crept out. Therefore, Lucien and Natasha had a relatively easy morning, which was a quite good thing to them as they were both injured.

Now it was already afternoon, and it was very hot. The sun was hanging up high above in the sky. Streams of sunlight fell through the leaves, casting bright light spots on the ground.

Natasha looked around and grinned, “I thought our injured looks would attract robbers, especially after you showed off the coins you have in front of the villagers. But the morning was quieter than I thought. That was much less fun.”

“This is a world with no knights and sorcerers, remember? Although you’re injured, the set of armor you’re wearing is definitely a great threat to those who are interested in us. In their eyes, only the Divine-blooded and the Blessed can afford such a set of armor. They’re not out of their mind...” Lucien grinned, and then he added casually, “also, compared to wealth, your beauty is for sure more appealing to them. I saw a couple of guys secretly tracking you in the town.”

Natasha shot a glance at Lucien and said, “how could you be so sure that their target was me? By the way, look at the castle. It isn’t bad, is it? I wonder if the guy named Nika had stepped onto the path of the ancient sorcerers.”

In the front, where the black willows grew the thickest, there was a castle in the shape of a fortress covered with green vines and withered leaves. Although the color of the construction was hard to tell through the layers of plants, the pointy end of it had much resembled that of an orthodox sorcerer’s magic tower. To the earliest generations of sorcerers, the pointy ends pulled them closer to the sky, as well as the truth of the world.

When they heard the anecdotes about Nika, both Lucien and Natasha related them to the origin of sorcerers.

Perhaps in the Age of Mythology and the Age of Steam, when dragons, elves, and werewolves ruled the land, it was because of the efforts of those lunatics like Nika that human beings were able to ascend to the power throne. However, because those ancient sorcerers had later gone down too far along the crazy and cruel path, they finally got their karma.

While in this world which was still ruled by divine right, magic had sprouted inevitably. Maybe Nika was not alone here in this world. Maybe in other places, there were more “lunatics” studying and researching just like Nika.

“Nika never learned meditation, nor is he able to cast any spells. But simply by using the incidental surges of his spiritual power, he could already move things and light things on fire. This means that his spiritual power had reached the third or fourth circle, and he’s for sure much more talented in magic than I am. I’m afraid only a few sorcerers in the Congress such as Mr. Brook could rival him before learning magic systematically. He’s such a genius. With so many years of hard work, it’s sensible that he has made such an achievement.” Lucien commented objectively.

However, being talented in magic did not necessarily mean being successful. Among the several geniuses that Lucien that mentioned, only Brook managed to reach the legendary level. In the history of magic, there were pioneers who were probably even more gifted than Nika, but none of them ascended to the senior-rank. However, it was because of the foundation they laid that the following generations could go further and further.

Talking, Lucien and Natasha approached the lonely castle.

A white, unusual-looking bird landed on the stone pillar in front of the castle.

“This’s Nika’s castle. Mr. Nika, the Wise, does not welcome any visitors.” Chirped the little bird with its head held up high proudly.

Lucien smiled. “We wish to visit Mr. Nika the Wise, because we were told that he is an expert in plants and monster patterns. I’m also studying those, so I’d like to exchange some ideas with Mr. Nika.”

“Umm? You’re not another mocker?” Said the bird surprisedly, “you said you’re also studying the secrets of the gods, but how could there be two lunatics? I don’t know if you’re lying or not. Hmm, I gotta test you first. Do you know what I am?”

“You’re the only white crow in the world, Mr. Nika’s pet, and you’re intelligent,” said Lucien smilingly.

The bird flapped its wings, content. “Great answer. But I gotta ask Nika first to see if he agrees to see you, another lunatic!”

After the bird flew into the window above, Natasha asked Lucien, “it’s white because it’s feathers have been dyed, right? There’s no white crow according to Creature Encyclopedia.”

“So it’s the only white crow in the world. Other crows don’t dye themselves.” Lucien grinned.

Natasha realized and shook her head, smiling. “Alright.”

A few minutes later, the castle gate squeaked and slowly opened. Behind the gate, a blond boy in a short, white robe said to them politely, “my teacher wants to meet you in his research room.”

“Teacher? Are you Mr. Nika’s student?” Lucien asked. He was having a difficult time believing that such a well-known lunatic would have a student, a boy who was only around eight or nine! Lucien wondered if the boy was kidnapped by Nika to use for human experiments.

The little boy was very familiar with the look on Lucien’s face, as he had seen it many times before. “I AM Mr. Nika’s student! Mr. Nika is not crazy, but a truly wise man! He knows those gods’ secrets and has extraordinary powers. People say bad things about him because they are afraid of him!”

Then the little boy turned around angrily before Natasha and Lucien could say anything.

Lucien first checked around as usual and made sure that there were no magic defense circles, then he held Natasha by her right arm and walked in with her together, as Natasha's left arm had become completely paralytic.

Walking through the shabby hall and then up the stairs, they came to a dark corridor. Just as they entered the corridor, the little boy who was still angry at them suddenly spoke. "Mr. Nika is not crazy, really. He's been cutting up the plants and monsters because he wants to study them. Those hunters also kill, and they are used to blood, but they accuse Mr. Nika of being cruel. They just don't like the scenes of the experiments."

He was trying his best to defend Mr. Nika, hoping that the two visitors would agree with him.

"I understand." Lucien nodded. As a sorcerer, he was also familiar with anatomy. Meanwhile, Lucien also appreciated the little boy; he is a good student.

When he heard that Lucien said he understood, the little boy was encouraged, so he continued. "The patterns do hold the secrets of the gods. It's true! Mr. Nika has figured out how the power works, so he can manipulate flame and ice. He can also put people asleep and slow down a fall from high up. He's even more powerful than the Divine-blooded and the priests!"

"Really?" Natasha also tried to be supportive.

As the conversation went on well, the little boy became quite cheerful. “Really! I also know a little about it. Look!”

The little boy murmured some weird syllables, and his expression became rather serious. Some slight amount of magic waves emerged and formed an invisible hand. The hand then took down one of the candleholders from the left side of the corridor.

“It’s a primitive version of Mage’s Hand,” said Lucien to Natasha through the telepathic bond.

The spell had not been simplified yet, and the boy was mimicking the language of the monsters.

“It’s cool, right?” The little boy raised in the candleholder in pride. Seeing that the two visitors were nodding approvingly, his face glowed with excitement. “Mr. Nika is way, way more powerful than I am! We have neither the divine blood nor the power from gods. It all comes from hard work!”

“Mr. Nika said that we human beings have to rely on ourselves to get rid of the control of the false gods. Others don’t understand, but I do. He’s a truly wise man. He’s even smarter than the gods!” The little boy exclaimed full of admiration.

“Indeed, a great pioneer,” said Lucien seriously.

The little boy’s effort to persuade the visitors was adorable. After being encouraged, he kept talking and talking, unconsciously letting out many secrets of his teacher and the place.

Soon, the three of them came to a door covered with grey beast skin, on which were complicated magic patterns.

It was a Stoner's skin. Lucien slightly frowned. It seemed that Nika was even more powerful than he thought. Although a Stoner was not as stout as a Stone Lizard, it was still a senior-rank creature as it was able to cast the sixth-circle spell, Petrification.

The little boy knocked at the specific section of the door and said, "Mr. Nika found it in a valley. But the patterns are too complicated, so he's still trying to figure out their secrets. Mr. Nika uses the skin to protect the research room."

Then the door opened. The smell of blood that came out from it was overwhelming. The entire room was like a showroom of organs.

In this world, glass had not been invented. The weird-looking hearts, eyeballs, guts, and chunks of flesh were randomly placed everywhere. The windows in the room were narrow, so the entire space was quite dark. It's normal for someone to feel scared when staying in this room.

A middle-aged man whose black hair was all messy was concentrating on drawing something. On the operation desk in front of him lied a very terrifying monster. The upper part of the monster was a naked woman, and the lower part consisted of eight giant, black spider legs. The naked woman body was covered with mysterious patterns, and its mouth was protruding.

Lucien slightly nodded. It was a woman-spider.

The little boy felt a bit sorry as his teacher completely ignored the visitors. "Mr. Nika is always fully devoted to it when studying the patterns. He will ignore everything else, whether its eating, sleeping, or teaching me. It won't take long, though."

Lucien and Natasha exchanged a look, for they were in a hurry. Then Lucien turned to look at the parchment sheet in front of Nika.

There was a very complex pattern on the sheet and a rough coordinate system. Nika's eyebrows were twisted together. It seemed that he was facing a serious problem.

"(25, 78, 39)," Lucien suddenly spoke.

Nika unconsciously followed Lucien's instruction and traced his quill pen to the spot, then his eyes opened big and he turned around.

"You know this?"

The little boy was totally lost. Was this visitor teaching Mr. Nika?

"To analyze this kind of pattern, you must break it up. One of the coordinates is..." Lucien gave another pair of coordinates.

Following Lucien's instruction, Nika finished the analysis of part of the pattern. He stared at the numbers for a couple of seconds, and then his expression changed to a mixture of excitement and mania. He suddenly strode to Lucien.

“How did you figure this out?” Nika’s voice was dry and hoarse.

Lucien did not answer him directly.

“When you’re studying the patterns, you also need to look out at the world. The patterns are indeed mysterious and full of secrets, but what about the world? The sun and moon rise and fall; water flows from a higher position to the lower. What are the secrets behind them? Why is it when we jump up, we always fall back to the ground? Why don’t we float up toward the sky?”

“What’s about it? It’s normal. We must fall back. It’s the ground.” The little boy chipped in.

Nika, however, was shocked.

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Chapter 493: The Sage

Seeing that Nika was thinking hard but still couldn’t find a clue, Lucien hurriedly cut him off. “It’s the power of the earth. We call it gravity.”

“Power of the earth?” Nika was still very confused. In this world where everything was still in the rudiment, even the concept of the four elements earth, fire, wind, and water was not yet proposed.

Lucien nodded. “The power of the earth attaches us to it and keeps the stars, the sun, and the moon revolving. Birds have to keep flapping their wings to resist the power and fly freely...”

As he was speaking, Lucien cast Gravity Chaos, making the gadgets on the operation desk rose into the air and then suddenly drop.

Nika threw a random monster’s heart up into the air and watched it fall down to the ground. After the muffled sound of the pile of flesh hitting the floor, Nika repeated to himself, “The power of the earth...”

The boy’s eyes opened big in surprise. “Sir, are... are you a wise man, too?”

The boy’s voice dragged Nika out from his own thoughts, and Nika stared at Lucien in great enthusiasm. “Can you explain it to me in detail? And how did you break up the pattern...”

“We’re in a hurry. I’ll leave some books to you later,” said Lucien, pointing at Natasha’s injured left arm. “Mr. Nika, do you know a kind of blood-red flowers that can catch small animals?”

Having no idea how people in this world call Bloody Family, Lucien described its appearance to Nika.

Nika was slightly stunned. He frowned and said, “are you talking about the Gronin Flower? Aki, fetch one for this gentleman.”

The boy named Aki hurriedly walked to the storage room next door.

Nika finally noticed that both of the visitors were injured. He calmed down a bit and asked, “are you here for cures?”

“No. I know magic,” Lucien shook his head. “I just need the flowers to make some potions.”

“Magic?” That was another new word for Nika.

Lucien slightly raised his chin and smiled. “That’s how the power you have is called.”

Nika remained silent for a while. In his eyes, the visitor was beyond mysterious.

Natasha, who was feeling fatigued from the injury, was just smiling and listening to their conversation.

Aki, at this time, had come back with a big red flower in his hand. Lucien saw the flower and took it over from Aki. He turned to Nika and asked, “this is the flower I’m looking for. Mr. Nika, can I borrow one of your spare rooms?”

As a sorcerer, Lucien always carried his alchemy hut with him.

Nika was not good at socializing. When he heard Lucien's words, he quickly nodded, completely forgotten that the flower belonged to him. "Aki, go and find them a spare room."

Lucien put his right hand on his chest and bowed lightly. "To show my appreciation, I have some gifts for you, Sir. Please give me enough parchment rolls or papyrus."

Nika shook his head. "You're my guest. I should help you. I don't need gifts, but later we can discuss..."

"The gifts are books about magic." Lucien cut him off.

The look on Nika's face abruptly changed.

"Aki, go and grab all my parchment sheets here!"

"Ha, Lucien, you sorcerers can be really straightforward sometimes, in a cute way," Natasha commented through the telepathic bond, laughing. "Just like that that you've never kissed a girl yet because you've spent all your time in your lab, haha!"

Seeing that his teacher was in such an elation, Aki, although he did not understand what magic was, also became very excited. He dashed for the study and then came back with a pile of parchment sheets almost as tall as him.

“From Magic Basics to Model Construction, The Significance of Modelling, Basic Magic Geometry, Element Equations behind Magic Formula, Basic Element, Low-rank Meditations, Basic Alchemy...” Lucien produced a long list.

Every time Lucien finished replicating a book, Nika read out the name. His eyes lit up with great excitement light the bright stars in the night sky. His body slightly trembling, Nika had completely forgotten everything else in the world, except for only the names of the books.

Lucien copied the elementary level books in his spirit library and translated them into the Baburian version. He said to Nika, smiling, “when you finish reading all of the books, you can organize and simplify your own knowledge and gain a deeper understanding.”

Lucien was going to lead Nika to the Congress of Magic. After all, Nika was such a genius.

“Thank you, thank you!” Nika kept repeating the same words. Just from the names, he could figure out the value of these books. Then Nika said to Lucien a bit shyly, “sir, what about the power of the earth you just mentioned?”

Lucien thought it for a while. Seeing that there were still lots of parchment sheets left, he put his hand back on the pile again and copied another three books for Nika.

“These three books... One talks about theories of gravity and provides better calculation tools, one is a classic work in electromagnetism, and one introduces the latest theoretical system of Element and Alchemy. Although you won’t be able to understand them in a short period of time, reading

them will help you build your knowledge system from a higher perspective, so your theoretical framework will be more complete.”

“Math Principles in the Philosophy of Magic, Electromagnetism, New Alchemy...” Nika could not move his eyes away from the three books.

Aki had got lost with the piles of books on the desk. He asked excitedly but also confusedly, “what are they, Sir?”

Before Lucien and Natasha left for the spare room, Lucien asked. “Mr. Nika, do you have any iron ores that look like crystal here?”

Lucien hoped that he could also fix his Holm Crown rings, so he could be more prepared for what was coming for them.

“I do! Take as much as you want!” Said Nika without any hesitation, who had already started reading one of the books.

...

The sun sank in the west, inside the castle had become darker and darker.

The door of a guest room opened with a creak. Lucien and Natasha walked out full of energy.

“Your left hand really behaved itself for the entire afternoon. I hope the rest of the six days are all like this.” Natasha joked.

In the past several hours, Lucien made the potion called Heart of Sun, removed the cursing toxin from their bodies, fixed his Holm Crown rings, and partially fixed Natasha’s armor called the Violet Guardian.

Lucien replied on purpose, “it’s always very peaceful before a storm arrives.”

“No worries. I am on full alert.” Natasha pulled out Pale Justice to show that she had fully recovered.

At this time, Nika pushed his door open and dashed out. Rather exhausted but thrilled, Nika said to Lucien with a book in his hand, “although there are lots that I don’t understand, I have felt the profound knowledge and the great value in the books. My distinguished guests, please tell me, where are the great sages Derrick Douglas, Edwyn Brook, and Lucien Evans? I have to find and follow them!”

Natasha burst out laughing. Lucien cleared his throat a bit as his protest.

“You can understand some of it?” Lucien was surprised. Although he knew that Nika was very gifted and talented, it was still hard to believe that Nika can understand part of the three books without having any foundations previously.

Nika rubbed his hands against each other, and his face flushed slightly. “Just a tiny bit. I first read some of the basic books and understood the terms, and then I turned to the three books. Also, I’ve been thinking of some of the questions discussed in the books. Now I finally understand what element, atom, gravity, and lightning are!”

“I see.” Lucien nodded. Nika definitely had a very good foundation for learning magic, it’s just that he had never touched upon the theoretical section. Then Lucien switched the topic. “Sir, do you know any special spots nearby?”

Lucien hoped to know more about the northern mountain range so that they could hide from Demigod-lich more easily.

Nika hardly talked to people, so he was basically following Lucien’s words to keep the conversation going. “Special spots? Well... I’m not sure what kind of special spot you’re looking for, but I know a valley down below a nearby cliff, where many dangerous creatures live. The skin on the door was found there...

“... If you go over the mountain, you’ll see a very creepy forest. I’m not able to spread out my spiritual power there. Besides the forest is a very, very big lake. And it’s incredibly deep. There’s a secret cave at the bottom of the lake that is connected to the other side of the mountain. I found it when I was hunting a water creature.

“Behind the dark forest, there’s a valley filled with greyish white fog. Ghosts and specters cry in the valley all the time. So far I haven’t gone into the valley yet. I dare not.”

Nika tried his best to recall the places he had been to.

Lucien and Natasha listened to him carefully without cutting him off. When Nika finished, Lucien said to him, “thank you for giving us so much information. You can take the books with you and find a man named Rehau in the Metarin oasis in the eastern desert. Rehau will lead you to an organization that studies magic jointly, an organization built by the sorcerers around the world. When you get there, you will have a better environment for studying magic.”

Nika knew what a sorcerer was after reading the introductory books. He nodded hard. “I can’t wait. By the way, are the three sages still alive?”

Lucien simply nodded and was about to leave with Natasha. At this time, Nika finally realized that he never asked the mysterious visitor’s name. “My distinguished guest, may I know your name? When I arrive at the oasis, who shall I refer to?”

Nika remembered scarcely that the groups for sharing books in the nearby area required a referrer.

Before Lucien replied, Natasha grinned and said, “his name? His name’s Lucien Evans.”

Nika was shocked. He suddenly lost all his words.

At this time, Lucien and Natasha had flown out of the castle.

...

Only a tint of dark red hung over the horizon. The early stars were hiding within.

“I think that the creepy valley that Nika mentioned is Death Valley, the previous divine realm of the Lord of Underworld. It’s also the origin of the Solna River, and where Alterna and the mysterious existence from the World of Souls fell.” Lucien introduced briefly.

“Then we have to go and check it out,” said Natasha seriously. “We can probably find something to fight against Demigod-lich. We can’t keep hiding.”

“What a pity that you’re not yet able to pick up the Shield of Truth, or we’d have no worries at all.” Lucien joked.

Natasha glared at Lucien. “I have to be a gold knight to be able to pick it up. Also, legendary items are as scarce as the legendaries. There’s no way that we can find another now.”

Basically, except for the few top legendaries, most legendaries or countries only had one to two legendary items.

The breeze coming through the tree branches was rather refreshing. However, it somehow felt too quiet, unusually quiet.

Something suddenly occurred to Lucien, and he asked, “when was the last time we spotted the specter servants sent by Demigod-lich?”

The look on Natasha’s face changed. “This morning.”

“Go!” Lucien suddenly tensed.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 494: The Great Danger

Right now, both Lucien and Natasha dared not to fly. If they flew close to the trees, they would be blocked by hills and tree crowns, which would slow them down and delay them even more; if they flew high up in the clear sky, they would easily be spotted.

After casting Advanced Speed on himself, Lucien was moving almost as fast as Natasha, who was a radiant knight. They flashed through the dark forest like two streaks of shadow.

As they were running, a burst of bright light exploded in front of Lucien’s eyes. He lost his sight for a couple of seconds because the light was so unexpected and dazzlingly bright.

Natasha, however, was made immune to the bright light by her blood power. She changed her direction in midair and jumped at a big tree nearby.

The early evening stars had been dyed with red by the setting sun. In the warm hue stood an alluring beauty in a long, white robe.

It was Asin, the God of Love and Beauty! Natasha instantly recognized who she was.

Without any hesitation, she wielded the sword in her hand, an unreal crevice that seems to not belong to this world appeared with the movement of the sword and directly whacked the light of the dusk star into two.

Before the defense shield was destroyed, Asin's body dimmed and was about to integrate into the darkness.

However, before Asin disappeared, Lucien had activated a magic spell with his spiritual power. An invisible wall appeared on the shadow. Asin hit the wall and bounced back. Then Natasha's sword cut Asin's throat open.

There was no blood coming out, only a thick cut. Against the power of Pale Justice, the two defense spells activated were torn open like a thin piece of paper. When Asin's head fell onto the ground, her body also quickly perished.

In the Life Ritual, Asin had already died and become an undead creature manipulated by Congus and was therefore unable to ward off Pale Justice, which was at the legendary level when swung against an undead.

Bits of God's Glory drifted out from Asin's body and attached to the cracks in Natasha's armor. Meanwhile, the rotten body had lost its power and turned into Asin's original look — a centaur.

Natasha was very surprised, but it was not the perfect time asking why. She came back to Lucien and said, “let’s go. Asin tried to stop us even when he knew it would be a great risk. It means that Demigod-lich is already nearby!”

Asin’s domain included that of tracking and hiding, that’s why Lucien and Natasha did not find out that they were being followed. If Demigod-lich was still far away from them, Asin, who still had a little bit of intelligence remaining, would not reveal Her presence in front of Lucien and Natasha.

Lucien’s sight resumed. He turned around and was ready to head for the dark forest over the cliff.

Suddenly, bitter crying and howling approached them. The atmosphere instantly became overwhelmed with the aura of death. Water and life force started to leak away.

Demigod-lich was here!

Lucien and Natasha realized it at the same time. Natasha swiftly turned around and help Pale Justice straight up in front of them to block the fatal sound waves brought by Demigod-lich’s Howling.

In the crying and howling, birds within the radius of two hundred meters fell down to the ground one by one, their bodies already partially decayed before they even touched the soil.

Pale Justice lit up. Its light was warm, soft, but determined. In the horrible and sharp howling, the sword trembled fiercely, as if the power had reached its limit.

Facing a legendary over a thousand years old, an experienced sorcerer with endless spells, there seemed to be absolutely no chance for them to win at all. To die in peace would be a blessing from the God of Truth.

The dangerous power came closer and closer. The distance between them would soon be less than two hundred sixty meters!

Lucien, at this time, took a step forward and lifted his left hand. Dazzling moonlight came out from his hand, and black flame twined around it.

“En?” Accompanying the voice, white light of life force and pure moisture joined together, and they formed a wall of defense dazzling in green and grey light.

Lucien’s left hand fiercely hacked downward, but nothing happened.

He immediately turned around and dashed. Through the telepathic bond, he shouted to Natasha.

“Run! Out of the three hundred meters range, then we may still have hope!”

Lucien just made Alterna temporarily stopped suppressing the power of the mysterious existence in the World of Souls, pretending that Alterna was ready to fight to frighten Demigod-lich.

Lucien could only use this method once. Although it would work if Lucien simply let Alterna out, in the end, Lucien would still die from the mysterious existence's pieces losing control. Unless there were no other choices, Lucien would not turn to this last plan.

Understanding how urgent the situation was, Natasha immediately pulled out the sword and caught Lucien up. She was faster than Lucien, so she grabbed Lucien's arm and dragged him to run around the cliff.

Under the great pressure, Natasha was running even faster than she thought she could. In the darkness, the two figures became two almost invisible shadows.

The angry voice came from far behind, advancing very quickly.

"I'm going to turn both of you into corpse servants!"

The concrete colors of black, white and grey extended out and covered Lucien's body. This was the consequence of Alterna temporarily let go of the pieces.

Fortunately, Natasha was prepared for this. She grabbed Lucien with her left hand and kept running for their lives as fast as she could.

When the long mountain road ended, in front of Natasha there were two options: On her right-hand side was the dark forest, while on her left was the extremely deep lake that Nika mentioned. Meanwhile, the horrible power approaching them from behind was closer and closer.

According to Nika's words, the lake was at least four to five hundred meters deep. She slightly slowed down and cut off the dull colors on Lucien with her sword. Then, she pulled Lucien together with her and jumped into the lake.

The world suddenly became silent. They sank fast in the water.

Not yet reaching the radiant knight level, Lucien was not able to move or breathe easily as he wished underwater. He also dared not to cast Sea Cloak, as Demigod-lich might sense the magic waves.

Natasha took a glance at Lucien and pulled him in her arms. Then her lips attached to that of Lucien and infused fresh air into his mouth.

Lucien had no time to taste the kiss at all. He was sinking fast with Natasha.

Pointing at the cliff, he gestured to Natasha that there was a slant limestone cave.

Under his black cloak, Demigod-lich stared at the two paths and came into a dilemma. He cast a couple of spells but none provided a solid answer. He was rather pissed: In this bloody world, the ultimate range covered by his spiritual power was about only two hundred meters. Even with those investigation spells, the figure could only go up by around a hundred meters.

After one day of tracing, he already knew that Lucien's track of destiny was unusual and that Natasha was shielded by the power of Alterna, so he did not waste his time on casting prophecy and horoscope spells.

However, as a legendary sorcerer, Congus the Demigod-lich was by no chance a fool. After a while of thinking, Congus sent out his Devourers, Dead Giants, and mummies to the dark forest to search for Lucien and Natasha. Meanwhile, Congus himself flew to the lake and cast the spell above the lake.

“Toxin of Filth.”

Suddenly, the waves in the lake turned pale and the color quickly expanded. Fish floated to the surface of the lake, half-rotten.

The lake gurgled as if it was boiling. A shadow huge as large as a castle surfaced. It was a giant monster with a dragon bloodline!

However, it had also gone rotten!

Underwater, when Lucien and Natasha saw the slant cave, both of them were very encouraged.

However, at this time, Natasha noticed that the color of the lake was turning pale very fast. The nearby algae and weeds were all gone, together with the fish. Surrounding them was the sheer silence.

“Go!” Natasha yelled through the telepathic bond.

Swimming for their lives, their speed had reached their physical limit.

When they were almost there, the muddy paleness had also arrived.

Natasha, at this time, grabbed Lucien's arm and pushed him into the cave when Lucien was totally unprepared.

Meanwhile, she turned around and pulled out Pale Justice against the death power.

The power of the sword divided the paleness into halves. Pressing against the sea cliff with her left hand, Natasha turned over and jumped into the cave.

"Watch out!" Lucien hurriedly cast a spell and stopped the paleness in the shape of disgusting tentacles from catching Natasha.

As soon as Natasha jumped out from the water in the cave, she also turned around and hacked her sword at the pale tentacles.

With joint effort, they finally got rid of the filthy paleness. However, Natasha's armor, the Violet Guardian, had been severely damaged. There was even a hole in the back.

Natasha had never had such a dangerous experience before, and she now felt extremely exhausted. But she knew that they could not stop here as they have not escaped from the danger yet. She forced herself to move on and said to Lucien,

“Keep moving. We’ll be safe on the other side.”

“Will you?” A cold voice came from the front of them.

Demigod-lich emerged from nowhere in his black cloak.

All their efforts ended up to be in vain. For a second, both Natasha and Lucien had lost all their hope.

However, desperation only existed for a blink. After a brief communication through the telepathic bond, Natasha picked up her sword and swung it at Demigod-lich.

“Life Depri...” Congus knew that Pale Justice was extremely powerful to specters and could actually injure him, so he was very cautious. He was ready to kill Natasha with one single strike.

However, Natasha suddenly disappeared from where she was. Congus lost his target, while Lucien was holding Sun Staff inlaid with the big gem on the top.

“A ninth-circle maze... interesting...” Congus sneered. “But you’re on yourself now.”

He was ready to confine Lucien using Spirit Confinement.

Lucien begged in desperation. He seemed to be in a demented state.

“All you want is to kill me, right? You want Alterna and the pieces, right? Come and get them!

“But please let her go. She has nothing to do with this. She is implicated because of me, and, yes, she’s a descendant of Her Excellency Hathaway!”

Congus was a bit amused, as he was a bit surprised to see that Lucien, who was praised as always remaining well-mannered and calm, had lost all of his dignity. “For this very reason, I won’t keep her alive. If they know, Hathaway and that old bastard Lord of Storm would find every possible way to kill me.”

Congus stared at Lucien and continued. “What a pity. You could have the chance to become a grand arcanist, and your achievement could exceed my students’, or even mine. But you overestimated yourself. Your involvement in the World of Souls and the fact that Maskelyne gave you his amulet are doomed to kill you.”

In Congus’ eyes, Lucien had completely lost all hope.

Lucien burst out into tears. “Let her go! I give you all you want! Alterna, and the pieces!”

What happened next slightly shocked Congus: Lucien's right hand suddenly grabbed his left arm and directly pulled it off from his body. The white bones and red flesh formed a sharp contrast, astonishing by the sight.

"You want it? I give it to you! All!" Lucien cried out aloud and threw his left arm at Congus.

Had Lucien totally gone mad?

Although feeling it quite unexpected, Congus did now lower his alert. Using Mage's Hand, he caught Lucien's left arm in great caution.

At this time, the left harm burst out dazzling silver light and the colors of black, white and grey quickly extended. The colors instantly infected the mage's hand and then completely enveloped Congus.

All the exaggerated looks and emotions disappeared on Lucien's face. Calmly, he lifted up Sun Staff and pointed it at the void.

Natasha's figure emerged in the air. Without any hesitation, she wielded Pale Justice and hacked it directly at Demigod-lich!

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Chapter 495: Reward

The long sword looked ordinary, radiating a soft but determined glow. As the silver-purple in Natasha's eyes became pure crystal-clear, two illusory splits that looks as though they could split the world apart suddenly appeared on the blade. In a mere second, the sword had reached Congus' head.

The vital part of a lich was not its heart and neck. Only by damaging the head, where the soul resided, could one effectively injure a lich.

Under the weight of the "Pale Justice", streaks of transparent cracks appeared in the boring mix of black, white and grey. Two needle-like red spots were revealed underneath.

Puff... It sounded like the sword just hacked onto a piece of rotten wood. All the emergency defense spells were rendered invalid by the power of the mysterious existence in the World of Souls.

"Ah!!!" A bitter and piercing shriek burst out.

And Natasha was directly blown away by the power. Blood came out from her eyes, nose, and mouth.

This was not Demigod-lich's Howling, but the spiritual power waves released by Congus in great fury. Although with Pale Justice's protection, Natasha was still severely injured. Meanwhile, Lucien suffered even more from the great power. He felt beyond dizzy, and there was a strong taste of blood in his mouth.

"Good... Good!" Congus's furious voice seemed to come from far away.

Both Lucien's and Natasha's hearts sank for a second.

Was Congus still "alive"?!

Suddenly, Congus's black cloak split from the middle. The white skeleton inside collapsed to the ground and decayed instantly. The smell stank badly.

On the skull, two deep cracks appeared, under which warm holy light twinkled.

Then with a crispy sound, the skull cracked open. The smaller golden skull in the middle also bore undecipherable unreal injuries.

Without the protection of the defense spells, this one single strike was almost as powerful as the power of Alterna to Congus.

Pale Justice, the terminator of all evils, was a legendary weapon at this moment!

The silver moonlight seized control over the mixed colors of black, white and grey, preventing it from spreading out.

“I will be back. You’d better come up with some better tricks! ” Congus proclaimed in a voice was full of viciousness.

The golden skull broke into three pieces and clattered on the ground, while Congus’ soul slowly faded from the scene.

“Even with this he still isn’t entirely dead! Liches, no, sorcerers are so troublesome!” Natasha complained half-jokingly in a finally relaxed mood.

Lucien was already lying on the ground, unable to move. He felt that his neurons twitched under the sharp pain. However, he felt such ease in his mind. Despite the cost, they had defeated Demigod-lich!, Although he had been stuck at the accident of the legendary level for hundreds of years, he was still a true legendary sorcerer! Without a doubt, they were very proud of themselves.

“Among... Among all the sorcerers, necromancers are the hardest to... to kill.” Lucien gasped through the sentence due to the great pain. But after he pulled out a tube of Water Song and drank it all, he felt better. Then he continued. “But we nailed it! Now Congus has to go back to the main material world for his resurgence using his phylactery since he had used up his most convenient backup last time. This means we’ll be safe for at least one day.”

Natasha stood up and carefully brought Lucien’s left arm to him. “We can get ready by making the most of the day. Then as long as we can stay alive for one more day, given that the pieces can behave themselves like today, granny Hathaway and the Lord of Storm shall be arriving. By the way, can you put this back?”

“I’m not a radiant knight,” said Lucien. But he still stood up slowly and took over his left arm. Pressing it against the cut, the flesh and nerves started growing, and the bones were covered in a layer of dim white light.

Carrying the Saint Badge given by Ell, Lucien was as strong as a grand knight. Plus his blood power, the magic potion Water Song, and the power of Alterna, although he could not fully recover, Lucien could still roughly put the left arm back. However, the pain and the torturing itch from the growing of flesh were so intolerable that Lucien had to bite his lips very tight to stop himself from crying out loud.

At this time, a cold hand touched Lucien’s face, soothing his pain while delivering great willpower.

Natasha frowned slightly, but she joked deliberately to distract Lucien. “You finally get to know how I felt when there was a hole in my lower abdomen, huh? A grand knight can quickly recover, but it’s an awful torture.”

Beads of sweat covered Lucien’s forehead, but were then gently wiped off by Natasha. A few minutes later, Lucien finally managed to force a smile and replied, “I couldn’t tell by then. You were even discussing how to barbecue your own organs.”

“Hehe, do you want me to cook one for you now?” Natasha grinned. Seeing that Lucien now felt much better, she asked. “How’s Alterna right now? Is your arm growing back okay?”

Lucien nodded. “Alterna just released the control, so the pieces of the mysterious existence had a chance to recover a bit. Without my blood power and spiritual power, Alterna might not be able to always stay in control. If that happens, we probably won’t be able to escape to a three-hundred-meter distance in time.”

Then Lucien tried to move his left arm and estimated. “I can lift it and do some simple actions, but not the complex ones, not to mention the delicate gestures for casting. I have to use a Necromancy rite to fully recover.”

Natasha felt relieved knowing that there wouldn't be any permanent injury left in Lucien's arm. Like a victor, she lifted Pale Justice and said in good spirit, “although we haven't fully killed Congus, I'm sure I'm the first level-seven knight ever who managed to kill a legendary during direct combat! That's awesome! Absolutely awesome!”

She paced around full of excitement, her face flushing slightly.

“This's the adventure I long for! A friend that knows me well, powerful enemies, dangerous fights. If I can go back alive, this is gonna be a memory of my lifetime!”

“Me, too,” said Lucien seriously, staring at Natasha's lips, “but we'd better not pursue this kind of fight all the time, or we'd die sooner or later.”

“Of course, if it wasn't because of you, I would have gone back to Varantine's area directly.” As the future top leader, Natasha understood how important it was to keep herself safe. She arrived in Erdo this time on her own because she had previously received Hathaway's message that Lucien went missing. Thus, she had purposefully picked the commission to explore and investigate the space, so that she could search for Lucien in the area controlled by the Church, where Hathaway and the Lord of Storm were not suited to enter.

It took her two months before she found Lucien on the remote Erdo peninsula.

Natasha then added in excitement. “I’m gonna put this on record in my family history. Descendants of my family will regard me as a real knight with great bravery and determination, and they’ll know that she has a sorcerer friend.”

After a short pause, Natasha smiled at Lucien. “I’m also gonna put on record that beside defeating Demigod-lich, she also took away the first kiss of a grand arcanist. Well, I’m sure you’ll become a grand arcanist in the future.”

She expressed her positiveness towards Lucien’s future achievements. At this time, thinking positively gave her the confidence to face the even greater danger coming for them the day after.

They had to equip themselves with hope to face desperation.

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Lucien smiled and asked carefully. “Don’t you feel... ugh.. disgusted when kissing a man?”

Natasha rubbed her chin and thought about it carefully, but then she said a bit confusedly, “I thought I would, but it wasn’t as bad as I imagined. Maybe it’s because you are my best friend, or maybe it’s clean as that was your first kiss.”

She smacked her lips, as if she was trying to recall how the kiss felt.

Lucien had to admit that Natasha’s masculinity was still impressive to him. Meanwhile, he was quite happy about it because this was good progress between Natasha and him.

“Alright, let’s go and check the Death Valley out,” said Lucien. “We’ll try to see if there’s a way to keep us safe.”

“Okay.” said Natasha. She wiped off the blood on her face and grabbed Lucien’s arm.

Before they left the cave, they saw something shining dimly on the ground.

“What is it?” Natasha approached it and found that there was an ancient-style ring hiding underneath the rotten golden skull.

Lucien’s eyes suddenly lit up. ” All the rest of Congus’ magic items were destroyed under Alternas’ strike. And he didn’t return to the main material world and his demiplane after that, which means this is a...”

“Legendary item!” Both of them exclaimed at the same time full of wild surprise.

Lucien walked closer to the ring but did not touch it. He explained to Natasha.

“Many magic items have creepy powers. Take my magic robe as an example, I can hide my soul in it and then wait for a body to occupy when someone tries to take away the robe. The ring may be Demigod-lich’s only legendary item, so we have to be careful. Protect me with Pale Justice; It is a legendary item when it comes to defence against soul attacks or curses.”

Natasha nodded. She pulled out the sword and grabbed it tight.

Lucien calmed himself down and cast Identification on the ring.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 496: Congus Ring (A Longer Chapter)

“? ? ?”

Lucien didn’t know how he should react when he saw the identification result. The Identification spell yielded no information at all. He figured that it was probably because the ring was much more powerful than his current level.

“What is it?” Natasha noticed the change in Lucien’s expression.

Since there were only the two of them here, Lucien did not hide his feelings.

Lucien nodded. "I'm trying to analyze it. Watch out for me. If anything goes wrong, cut off the connection between the ring and me immediately."

"Be careful." Natasha held her sword tight and stood beside Lucien.

Lucien spread out his spiritual power and carefully touched the simple black ring with it.

Suddenly, Lucien's spiritual power was dragged into an illusionary land. He stood on the lifeless earth covered with cracks and under the gloomy sky. Surrounding him were clusters of dried grass and greyish-white rivers. However, the white sun in the sky radiated a strong life force.

On the barren land, graves and black tombstones were everywhere. Many of them were slanted or broken. There were so many of them that they looked like clusters of short bushes on the deserted land.

However, the scene revealed a completely different picture in Lucien's eyes. The tombstones, the graves, the rivers, and the filthy clouds connected with each other in a way that was too complicated even to him. The complicity of the structure exceeded that of any spell structures that Lucien had ever seen, and even merely looking at it made Lucien feel dizzy and weak.

Lucien first ruled out all the illusionary images and then started analyzing it bit by bit. The work was hard, but Lucien was not aiming at figuring out the whole structure but only knowing the function of the ring.

Casting Identification from time to time, half an hour later, Lucien finally figured out where the control core of the ring was.

Withdrawing his spiritual power, Lucien said to Natasha exhaustedly, “I need to take a fifteen-minute break now. Then I’ll stimulate the control core of the ring and activate the spiritual imprint left by Congus within. You seize the chance to wipe it off using Pale Justice.”

During the past three years, Lucien had been working on many cutting-edge math problems with the arcanists from Tower including Levski, therefore, the legendary-level structure within the ring was not completely out of his comprehension. He was actually able to use some smarter ways to crack it. However, because of Lucien’s lack of Necromancy knowledge and his relatively low level, although he had no problem with math, he still had to refer to violence. But with the adequate support of his knowledge, using violence would be much easier now.

“You can find a way to stimulate it? It’s a legendary-level ring.” After knowing that Lucien did not get any feedback from Identification, Natasha’s previous excitement faded away. Sometimes, a legendary level item did not bring one good fortune or power, but spelled a disaster, especially when the difference between the levels was too big.

Lucien smiled, although his face still looked a bit pale. “Why not? Come on, I probably can become a grand arcanist before turning thirty. I can at least roughly figure out a legendary structure.”

In front of the woman he admired, every man would try to show off his capability, no matter how old he was.

“When I first got to know you, I didn’t realize you were this smart. Honestly speaking, every time when I saw you guys playing with those numbers and shapes, I was always very impressed, although I can’t quite understand.” Natasha rubbed her chin and changed her tone as if she was talking to a junior. “But be careful, as I was told that overstraining your brain would make you turn bald.”

Natasha did receive a full set of magic apprentice curriculum when she was young. Her mother taught her pretty much about everything except for meditation, including spell-casting, math, geometry, Element, Electromagnetism, Force Field, Astrology. Her mother hoped that Natasha could become a profound noble lady.

In other words, Natasha had at least a high school diploma if it had been in today. Besides, she also knew history, fighting, coat of arms, and manners very well.

Lucien was a bit amused. “You think a sorcerer can’t deal with alopecia?”

“Well... I think you’re right, but lots of nobles are worrying about it. Maybe you can help. It’s always your motivation, isn’t it? To benefit the public using magic.” said Natasha.

The topic of their conversation kept drifting like all the time.

When Lucien first mentioned his ambition in front of Natasha, his words impressed Natasha greatly. Although as a top noble, Natasha could hardly fully understand the lives of the ordinary folks, there was no doubt to her that there was a lot of money for the nobles to dig in for in Lucien’s idea, and the country could also thrive from it.

Evans Hair Tonic? Lucien thought to himself.

But he wasn’t a big fan of the product name at all. He shot a glance at Natasha and then shook his head in great determination. “Enough. Let’s start.”

Natasha was quite content that her joke caught Lucien again. So she got more serious and held the sword tight again.

Lucien took a deep breath and again extended his spiritual power onto the ring. This time, his spiritual power did not just stay on the surface, but suddenly dived in, heading for the horrifying clusters of tombstones.

Then, based on his rough understanding of the place, Lucien came around the defense on the outside and then directly headed for one of the ordinary black tombstones.

A red line of epitaph suddenly appeared on it:

“This is the best place for confinement, as everyone will eventually be confined in this small coffin.”

A name was inscribed underneath — Congus.

The scarlet words started distorting, turning into horrifying monster mouths, and they instantly tore Lucien’s spiritual power apart into pieces. Behind the gravestone came out a blurry specter. Its eyes were shining in jade-green light.

“Now!” Lucien said aloud to Natasha through the telepathic bond. He was in agony as his spiritual power was suffering from the bitter impact.

This was the best chance!

Natasha was well prepared, and she fully trusted Lucien. Following Lucien's instruction, she hacked at the ring.

Greyish-white smoke was released from the ring, and it sounded like that the cluster of smoke was crying. However, under the power of Pale Justice, the smoke quickly disappeared.

Now the black ring looked very dim. The gloss on it earlier was now gone.

Lucien took some time to recover from the pain and started leaving his spiritual imprint in the ring. Meanwhile, Natasha kept staying alert in case there was a further trap left by Congus.

As soon as Lucien finished leaving the imprint, suddenly, the ring started sucking in Lucien's spiritual power like a huge vortex. Within seconds, pretty much all of Lucien's spiritual power had been drained. He had to turn to his Holm Crown ring, Origin, to get out the extra spiritual power that he saved earlier.

Meanwhile, Lucien seized the chance and turned the black hole in his cognitive world to the front, facing the huge spiritual power vortex! The two holes were like two suction pumps rivaling against each other!

The black hole finally distorted the entire space. The speed of Lucien losing his spiritual power suddenly slowed down. Then Lucien heard something snapped, and the suction from the ring instantly disappeared.

“Are you alright?” Asked Natasha concerned, seeing that Lucien’s entire face had turned very pale.

Lucien sighed. “I did leave my spiritual imprint in it, but this ring is not something that I am able to use right now.”

Then Lucien shared the information of the ring with Natasha through the telepathic bond:

“Congus Ring, level-one senior-rank legendary item. The wearer has to be close to the ninth circle, or he would be drained up of all spiritual power and turned into an idiot.

“The qualified wearer will be immune to all the magic spells from the first to eighth circle, immune to Confinement, Shadow Killer, Energy Drain, Command, and Banshee Howling. Also, the wearer will have a good defense against legendary-level spells in the field of necromancy and illusion, even if they are cast by a top legendary.

“The wearer’s physical fitness, life force recovery speed, and physical defense will also be improved by to levels, reaching the limit of that of a gold knight. Meanwhile, there is also an extra level of magic resistance improvement up to level-two legendary, and the wearer will be immune to any toxin and disease spells lower than the legendary level, as well as some cursing spells based on necromancy power.

“In addition, the wearer is automatically cast with Advanced Invisibility (4th circle) and Advanced Speed (6th circle), unless the wearer chooses to deactivate them. Every day, the wearer can cast Confinement (9th circle) for four times, Undead Scourge (9th circle) for three times, and Time Stop (9th circle) for two times.

“Meanwhile, the ring contains horrible magic power that gives its wearer the ability to cast unimaginable legendary spells. The wearer will be able to cast Spirit Confinement twice a day, Demigod-lich Howling twice a day, and Undead Rampart once.

“This is a super powerful ring made by a formidable demigod-lich!

“Both death and confinement frighten people.

“Congus”.

Natasha remained silent for a while and then sighed. “This is such a powerful ring. If Congus had chosen to use Time Stop, that would have been the end of us.”

“I don’t think so.” Lucien shook his head and pointed at his left hand. “I have two demigods inside of my body. Although neither of them could fight directly, their mere presence can make me immune to many spells, including Time Stop. Congus for sure already knew about it.”

The ninth-circle spell, Time Stop, only slowed down time-lapse within a small region. It was not for completely pausing time.

Natasha nodded, and then she sighed. “What a pity that you can’t use it... I thought we’d have much hope surviving in the next day and a half.”

“We can’t, but someone else can. As long as we can find a target close to the ninth circle and control him, we can make him wear the ring for us. Then problem solved,” said Lucien seriously.

Natasha’s eyes lit up. “That’s right! Especially that the false gods here in this world are not as powerful as those of the same level from our world! So the target you’re talking about is...?”

“Ell, the Lord of Redemption.” Lucien already had the answer.

Then he took out the crystal ball and started searching for Ell’s whereabouts.

However, the crystal ball yielded no result at all. It never happened before.

Lucien frowned. “Something’s wrong with Ell. I missed something.”

“Try Francis. Maybe he’s still around Ell.” Natasha suggested.

Lucien nodded and started casting again. Then after a short while, Lucien suddenly looked up and said to Natasha, “Francis is very close to us! Maybe he’s right in the Death Valley!”

Horoscope could not provide the exact location of Francis, but it’s results were enough for Lucien to make a preliminary judgment based on it.

“Although we don’t know what they’re planning, it could be a chance for us,” said Natasha. Then she turned to look at the ring, and disappointment was still in her eyes. “If we could use it, no matter what plan we take, it will be much easier.”

Lucien smiled. “There are two ways to reach the ninth circle.”

“What do you mean?” Natasha lifted one of her eyebrows.

Lucien continued. “First, your spiritual power will have to reach the ninth circle, but this isn’t possible right now. So there’s another way around: to have a fully substantialized cognitive world.”

“So you are saying...” Natasha started having some clues.

Lucien nodded. “When I came up with New Alchemy, my cognitive world already reached close to the eighth circle. In other words, my arcana level is higher than my magic level.”

Although one’s arcana level came from the accumulation of arcana credits, therefore it seemed less reliable compared to the magic level, but to some degree, it reflected the level of one’s cognitive world.

“But this still takes time. You don’t have time to do research right now, do you?” Natasha asked.

Lucien picked up the ring and asked Natasha to go with him.

When they came out of the underwater cave and to the other side of the mountain, Lucien found another hiding cave and said to Natasha in a low voice.

“I don’t have time right now, but I’ve been working on my research for long enough.”

As he was speaking, Lucien took out piles of files from his pouch and said, “these are data collected by Mr. Douglas with regards to the satellites and the questions he came up with. For the past three years, I’ve been working on solving them.”

“That’s why when you called me, your voice sounded so close and clear, right?” Natasha recalled. “And when I asked you why you didn’t answer.”

“Yes.” Lucien nodded seriously.

In the past three years, Lucien had been working with Levski and other arcanists on the Evans Geometry, which brought them lots of problems that could only be solved by tensor analysis. Therefore, Lucien had been working hard on deducing the special theory of relativity and the general theory of relativity.

Although Lucien had not progressed much in the latter, the former had already been almost ready!

The past three years of planning, accumulating, and waiting should finally fruit now!

Lucien unfolded his alchemy hut and started developing his paper under Natasha's curious stare.

“On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies and Mass-energy Equation.”

Outside of the cave, the sun had completely set down..

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 497: Time and Space

It was rather cold in the mountains at night. The summer heat had gradually faded away. When the light breeze found its way into the cave, both Lucien and Natasha felt very refreshed.

Natasha watched Lucien spread the parchment roll in great curiosity. Lucien activated the magic circle, turned on the crystal light, and picked up the quill-pen.

It wasn't her first time seeing an arcanist writing a paper, but she never knew that an arcanist could focus on developing his paper in such an environment and such a dangerous situation. Lucien always surprised her.

Holding her breath, Natasha watched Lucien finish writing down the title of the paper and start working on the introduction.

“The paper is developed on the basis of the relativity principle and the principle of the constancy of light velocity. Therefore, the preconditions are as follows:”

Howling of beasts came from distance.

And louder howling followed. Together, they sounded intimidating.

Natasha was a bit startled, then she murmured to herself, joking. “When night arrives, it is the beasts’ and animals’ turn to start their day.”

She was a big fan of Arcana Voice, which was recorded and sent to her by Lucien, and learned quite some new collocations and expressions with the radio programme.

Natasha then tried to follow Lucien’s deduction. She wanted to see how much she could understand.

After the first part in which Lucien had some difficulties in progressing, he started to write faster and faster. Lines, formulas, and equations flowed out of his quill-pen like a river. Natasha felt a bit dizzy chasing the lines, so she immediately shook her head and looked up. Her eyes caught the profile of Lucien’s face under the light. The serious and devoted look on his face made him rather attractive.

Her left hand holding her right elbow and her right hand rubbing her chin, Natasha looked at Lucien carefully. From time to time, she said to herself in a low voice.

“What a pity...”

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In an oasis in the eastern desert, a building complex floated in the air like a palace.

Among the buildings, the one that took up that most space was a Church with a tall cross in the front. In the back of it was a study decorated very simply, and in the study was the Pope, Benedict II who looked like an ordinary old man wearing a soft hat. He was reading the information sent back from all patrolled areas while taking a sip of his black tea from time to time.

Suddenly, Benedict II's right hand trembled. The white teacup fell from his hand. But when it almost hit the ground, it seemed to be caught by the wind and flew back to Benedict II's hand.

Slightly frowning, Benedict II put down the teacup and walked to the window. Staring at the starry sky, he felt his breath a bit heavy.

He did not know what had just happened. But he knew it was something big.

He took a deep breath and then took out his staff. He prayed in a low voice, seeking for an indication from his God.

But he received no answers. Benedict II wondered if a fight just took place between Alterna and the existence in the World of Souls.

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To the east of the stormy ocean, along the coast were a number of magic towers.

In one of the magic towers, Douglas, the Lord of Storm, and Hathaway were discussing their next step. The Lord of Storm just came back from his search which had proved in vain. Meanwhile, Oliver and Thanatos were searching in the marsh in the east, chasing after a legendary-level false god. The false god itself was a black dragon, somehow worshipped by some human beings and other dragons, and thus reached the legendary level because of the power of faith. Acclaiming itself to be the Dark Dragon Lord.

Hellen the Witch of Iceland and Hathaway just had their duty shift. The former had returned to Allyn to safeguard the headquarter.

“Don’t worry too much, Fernando. No news is good news.” Douglas comforted the Lord of Storm.

The Lord of Storm disputed, hiding his true feeling. “Why would I worry? Lucien’s always hiding so many secrets and research outcomes. He’s the biggest trouble himself!”

“If there’s no bigger story behind, Lucien should be safe,” Hathaway commented briefly.

In Hathaway’s eyes, Lucien’s intelligence and resourcefulness should be able to keep himself intact.

“But if there is one...” said Fernando gloomily. His red eyes opened big. Outside of the magic tower, dark clouds started gathering because of Fernando’s anger.

They were grand arcanists. Grand arcanists did not believe in coincidence. Facing all the things that had happened, they already had some rough ideas about what was going on.

As they were talking, Douglas seemed to sense something and looked out of the window. He saw that on the other side of the magic tower, the sun was slowly rising. The morning glow dyed the ocean red.

The view was supposed to be breathtakingly beautiful. However, in Douglas’s eyes, the ocean now looked like a horrible blood pool.

“What happened?”

“It’s good, but also not good...”

As an expert in Astrology and Force Field, Douglas could even rival the Prophet in making a prophecy.

Both Fernando and Hathaway looked out of the window. They had no idea what just happened, but they somehow felt contradictory feelings of oppression and freedom in their hearts.

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Natasha did not get bored at all watching Lucien working on his paper, instead, she actually found this to be entertaining. After a while, she looked around, feeling a bit confused. Somehow, she felt that space and time were changing.

The paper became longer and longer. Lucien's good effort in the past three years was now driving his cognitive world one step further, a vital step!

Lucien's cognitive world started emerging around him. In his cognitive world, there were stars orbiting fast, rays shooting out, elements radiating and releasing particle flows, and all of them were experiencing a series of wonderful changes. It seemed that the forever= isolated river of time in his cognitive world suddenly started interacting with space, energy, and all kinds of matters. They were integrating into each other!

A silent storm was forming in Lucien's cognitive world, and the power of the storm was formidable. The structure of time and space in Lucien's cognitive world had completely deviated from the frame and description set up by Douglas and Brook. His cognitive world was getting closer and closer to the truth of the world and was now more complete.

When the deduction almost came to the end, Lucien's cognitive world had finally been fully substantialized!

Lucien did not stop here. He then turned to work on producing the mass-energy formula.

It did not take long. Lucien took a deep breath and wrote it down.

“ $E=mc^2$ ”

Bang! As soon as the simple but profound formula settled down on the parchment, the element light spots in Lucien’s cognitive world split over and rejoined each other. The procedure released formidable power and pushed the other reflections in this cognitive world to the margin.

Bang! At her first glance, Natasha could feel the great power of destruction and booming vitality the formula had. But when she tried to take a closer look at it, the feeling was gone.

Bang! A mushroom cloud rose up from the union of elements, within which there was an extremely complex but still incomplete structure.

Bang! Somehow Natasha turned to look at the entrance of the cave. Against the small piece of sky she could see, an illusionary blazing sun suddenly appeared. Meanwhile, all the beasts’ howling had returned to silence.

Bang! The Pope also saw the white sun in the sky. Its intimidating power and light overwhelmed the light of all the stars in the sky.

Bang! The grand arcanists' sights slightly froze as they looked towards the seaside, where the new sun rose up to the left of the orange morning sun!

Bang! Ell could not help raising his right hand to block his eyes. Somehow, he was a bit afraid of the new sun.

But after Natasha's one single blink, the sun had disappeared. It was still very dark outside, the burning sun was nowhere to be seen.

The howling resumed, but now the beasts were crying in fear.

Benedict II blinked. When his eyes opened again, the stars were still bright and clear in the night sky, as if what had just happened was only an illusion.

Benedict II's eyes stared at the far side of the sky. He remained silent for a long time. Even he did not understand what just happened. He felt that his heart was thudding heavily.

In the magic tower beside the ocean, Douglas asked, half out of curiosity and half out of worry. "Did anyone just crack the secret of the sun? But why did we also see it? The half-substantialization of one's cognitive world can indeed affect the real world, but that was too much..."

The half-substantialization of one's cognitive world which affected the real world was a sign of reaching legendary.

Hathaway shook her head. “Might now be legendary. Remember this world is different, the strange things constraining spiritual power.”

Douglas nodded in agreement. Then he looked at Fernando who did not say a further word. “What is it, Fernando?”

The Lord of Storm rubbed his brows. “I think it might be Lucien. I gotta find him as soon as possible. Now he might be on his way to destroy the world.”

As a loyal listener of Arcana Voice, Fernando had learned quite a few of trending phrases.

“It is possible.” Hathaway nodded. “But we don’t know where he is.”

“At least we know he’s still alive.” Douglas comforted them.

.....

Natasha saw Lucien put down his quill-pen. She asked gently. “Has your cognition word substantialized?”

“Yup, should be able to put on the ring now,” answered Lucien, who was still feeling the changes in his cognitive world.

Natasha released a sigh of relief and asked curiously, “what are those formulas about?”

“Basically, they are proving that time slows down when you move approaching the speed of light. Meanwhile, space contracts, and mass increases. So when something’s moving very, very fast, clocks run more slowly, and an object’s length is measured to be shorter...” Lucien tried to explain them as simple as possible. “And energy can be converted to mass and mass to energy.”

Natasha knew some basics about it, but she was now still more than confused and shocked, “They are related? But... but shouldn’t time and space be independent from each other? Technically speaking, space and time should just be... you know, measurements...”

Before Lucien tried to explain further, she hurriedly said, “put it more simple, please.”

Lucien thought to himself for a while and then said very seriously, “to put it simple, mass is energy, energy is mass; time is space, and space is time!”

The howling of beasts from afar became more and more bitter.

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 498: Prototypes of Magic

Natasha's lips twitched. She wisely ended the topic. Such missions whose brief introduction was already dizzying enough were best to be left for the arcanists to understand.

She eyed Lucien up and down and asked half curiously and half concernedly, "What else have you achieved except for the substantiation of the cognitive world to the ninth circle? I'm told by both Grandma Hathaway and my mother that when similar research results were made, the cognitive world would interact with the corresponding mechanisms in the real world and yield different magic models. Considering the great noises you caused just now, you must've invented a few new magics, right? Are they about time and space, mass and energy?"

The changes of the cognitive world was a main sign that marked the advancement of high-level sorcerers. Half-substantiation corresponded to the senior-rank, substantiation corresponded to archmage, and half-solidification and influencing the real world with projections corresponded to legendary.

"I gained two prototypes of legendary spells, about how mass could be transformed into energy." Lucien understood that they were the incomplete magic structure of fission and fusion. On the other hand, while his cognitive world about the structure of time and space had also changed, he lacked theories that could directly work on them. The best he could do was to optimize the spells such as Time Stop to make them simpler and easier to learn. In order to achieve the legendary spells that could really control time and space, he would have to wait until the general theory of relativity or quantum theory was released.

However, Lucien was the only one who could've obtained the structure of fission and fusion, the two legendary spells, because he was the one who proposed the model of the atomic nucleus and the decay. He was aware of the two phenomena and the chain reaction. If it were anybody else, even if they had deduced the energy-mass formula, they would've needed to learn the relevant knowledge first and made breakthroughs in corresponding research in order to have interaction.

Natasha was immediately attracted. “Legendary spells? No wonder... Lucien, what are you planning to name them?”

The invention of a legendary spell was always difficult. Seeing it with her own eyes gave her a feeling that she was witnessing history, particularly when the inventor was only in his twenties.

“Evans’ Little Boy? Lucien’s Big Ivan?” Replied Lucien casually.

According to the incomplete magic model, the fusion magic currently required top legendary in order to be constructed within the soul without hindering his usage. The more familiar he was with it and the deeper his knowledge was, the more powerful it would be and the fewer requirements there would be. However, even after he completely grasped it, it had to be released by a sorcerer that’s at least at the level-two legendary level through the remote projection spells, magic extension, magic delay and the cooperation of refined materials.

The fission magic, on the other hand, should be able to be constructed by a level-one legendary, after it was fully analyzed through relevant experiments and magics. If there were refined materials, it would be possible for a ninth circle to perform it, too. Thinking about that, Lucien couldn’t help but fantasize. “I wonder if the fusion magic will turn into helium flash or gamma-ray burst when it is beyond the demigod level. That will definitely be world-destroying...”

Hearing the two names, Natasha immediately grimaced at Lucien’s groin. “I don’t think the two names are very good. They seem to be implying the two different states of the same object. You may want to change them.”

Lucien was immediately embarrassed. It was indeed as expected of “gentleman” Natasha. He waved his hands and said, “The magic model is still incomplete. Let’s consider the names later after they are completed.”

“Okay. I’ll come and help you name one of the legendary magics. I’m very good at words!” Natasha decided to take over the interesting job, although she was kind enough to leave one of the names to Lucien. “Right, what kind of magic will they be like?”

Lucien briefly described them. As she listened, Natasha couldn’t help but turn around and look at the dark night outside. In shock, she remarked joyfully, “Perhaps, you will be given titles such as God of Sun, or Eternal Scorch.”

“I don’t that I can achieve it even if I advance into the level of the God of Truth...” Lucien replied frankly and continued to influence Natasha’s religious stance, trying to make her God really retreat to the spiritual domain. It was a long-term, arduous job that concerned his future happiness. Lucien did not intend to let go of it.

Natasha thought carefully for a moment. “The power of God’s Arrival was far from the ultimate view that you just described. However, it might have been because the power was reserved and controlled accurately. What a shame. Your ‘Little Boy’ is still incomplete, and we do not have magic materials of sufficient purity and quality. Otherwise, we could establish a magic trap that is a curse on the surface and a nuclear bomb below. Then, chances are that we could kill the Demigod-lich one more time with the cooperation of the Congus Ring.

For now, she referred to the magics with the names Lucien randomly came up with.

“Things will never go as smoothly as we imagine. Also, although my cognitive world has turned substantial, my spiritual power is still in the seventh circle, and I am still a half-seventh-circle sorcerer who hasn’t constructed the seventh-circle magic yet. My spiritual power from the ninth circle is not so close. Even though it is significantly improved because of the influence of the two demigods, I estimate that my spiritual power will reach the eighth circle at best a week later. It will take years before I advance into the ninth circle.

Lucien evaluated his status objectively without any frustration. He said with a smile, “Our original purpose was to put on ‘Congus Ring’ to increase our chances of survival. Since the purpose has been fulfilled, there’s nothing to regret.”

Although it was possible that Congus’ head would explode if the paper was directly ‘thrown’ to him, Lucien believed that Congus must’ve learnt the lesson that he should not read or pick up Lucien’s stuff carelessly after suffering two setbacks.

While talking, Lucien put on the black, iron ring that had vintage stripes.

The moment it touched his flesh, it started to absorb Lucien’s spiritual power crazily. As his spiritual power quickly faded away, his cognitive world began to slightly shake, but the substantiation space and projection rapidly increased his spiritual power and slowed the flow.

After a few seconds, the crazy absorption slowed down. The black surface of the ring lost the previous dimness and emitted cold, weird metal colors.

Lucien moved his body and exclaimed in surprise, “Magic resistance, healthy, physical defense and the other qualities that ‘Congus Ring’ improve can coexist with the effects of other magic items, provided that they do not surpass its upper limits. This is truly a ‘divine item’!”

In such a way, even if Lucien did not transform, he would have the magic resistance of the eighth circle and the body quality of a level-five knight.

“Also, it nullifies and weakens a lot of magics.” Natasha observed ‘Congus Ring’ in amazement.

Lucien shook his head with a smile. “Nullification does not always work and can be avoided. For example, the hostile spells may target the environment instead of me and then hurt me by the changes in the environment. Also, after I put on the ring, I cannot cast magic defense below the ninth circle on myself. However, the spells prepared in advance will not be affected. So, it will depend on the actual circumstance whether or not to wear the ring.”

“All in all, you can perform the legendary magic now. We will not be as helpless as before when we are faced with Demigod-lich again. Where are we going next?” Although it was only midnight, and there was still one day left before Demigod-lich arrived, Natasha knew very well that the better prepared they were, the more hopeful they would be.

Rubbing the ring, Lucien said, “One legendary magic will be enough to drain the power of the ring itself, as well as my own spiritual power. Therefore, we have to find the best opportunity. Now, let’s go to the Death Valley to ‘find’ Ell.”

“Didn’t you already put on the ring? There’s no need to catch Ell again, is there?” Natasha was somewhat confused.

Lucien smiled. “Something is wrong with Ell. We have to investigate it in case of any accident. Also, it is exactly because I have put on the ring that we need to catch Ell. Demigod-lich couldn’t have seen it coming that I could substantialize my cognitive world or put on the ring so quickly. Then, if he sees us together with Ell, who do you think he will be wary of?”

Because Alterna and mysteries existences from the World of Souls were attached to him, Lucien was bold enough to make plans about trapping a legendary sorcerer. Otherwise, it was possible that Demigod-lich already sensed the danger the moment he settled his plan, like the Lord of the Undead.

“How cunning of you.” Natasha observed.

“Alright, let’s go.” Lucien retreated to his alchemy table and his paper. He was about to start walking, when he thought of something else. “Natasha, you mentioned that I caused rather great noises?”

Natasha nodded affirmatively. “When you wrote the paper, there was a feeble feeling of time-and-space change around. By the time you were almost done, a new sun rose in the dark night outside, scorching and terrifying. The monsters and beasts were so scared that they are still crying at present. Although it lasted only one or two seconds, I’m certain that it was not an illusion.”

“How did it happen?” Asked Lucien in surprise. Didn’t such a phenomenon indicate the half-solidification of the cognitive world, which was starting to affect the real world? But he was still far away from legendary.

Interpreting his understanding to her, Lucien looked at Natasha in confusion, hoping that she could shed her insight.

Natasha looked at Lucien helplessly. “I’m terrible at such things. Well, perhaps it’s because this world is unique. After all, even the spiritual power and the willpower are suppressed.”

“Perhaps...” Lucien considered the possibility but did not think it through. In the meantime, he noticed the brilliance of Asin’s godhood on Natasha’s left arm. His lips cramped, but he decided not to remind her and simply wait for it to die away.

Natasha, on the other hand, noticed Lucien’s eyes. She turned her head and looked at her left arm. “Is this God’s Glory?”

“You can see it?” Lucien was even more surprised.

Natasha blinked her eyes, having no clue why Lucien was so surprised. She said innocently, “I can see it all the time, and so can other people. What’s wrong?”

“That can’t be right. In the main material world, people without special methods or items cannot see God’s Glory.” Lucien believed that Natasha was not lying to him. Then, Ell provided the laurel box at the beginning only because Francis, Jacob and the rest of them could not touch God’s Glory, not because they could not see it?

“Perhaps, it’s because this world is idiosyncratic.” Natasha proposed the same reason. She was really not good at such things.

Lucien paced back and forth. “The idiosyncrasies of this world... God’s Glory, according to my hypothesis, is the amalgamation of special electromagnetic waves. Then, how can they be seen by untrained people?”

Suddenly, Lucien had an epiphany. “Perhaps it’s because the magnetic field of the body and soul of the intelligent creatures of this world are slightly different from that of the main material world. It makes their power of faith stronger and easier to disperse. Also, because the fake gods in this place do not have specific doctrines and rituals, the special electromagnetic waves that is ‘power of faith’ mostly leak and spread out in the air, causing severe electromagnetic contamination that suppresses the spiritual power which is also likely to be an electromagnetic wave. Does it mean that the release of willpower is also based on electromagnetic waves?”

“By the same logic, because the special electromagnetic waves of different ‘frequencies’ are all over the place, godhood will ‘interact’ with part of them, resulting in the brilliance. That’s why it can be

seen by ordinary people. When my cognitive world changed, it reverberated with certain electromagnetic waves in the outside worlds and caused the anomalies.”

“However, what about the projection and interaction of the real world, and what about the new magic models? Perhaps, my previous guesses are just part of the truth but not the whole of it.”

Looking at Lucien’s meditative look and hearing his murmur, Natasha comforted him with a smile, “It must be the mysteries of the highest level and cannot be figured out all of a sudden. Let’s take our time. We can find intelligent creatures and study the differences of their magnetic field later.”

“Yes, Demigod-lich is what matters most right now.” Lucien stopped thinking and hinted at Natasha to leave for the Death Valley together with him.

At this moment, Natasha laughed like a fox. “I thought of something. Asin, that ‘God of Love and Beauty’, seemed to have been a male centaur in the past, as proved by his dead body. However, after he melted part of godhood, he turned into a beautiful lady.”

While talking, she rubbed ‘God’s Glory’ on her left arm, although she could not feel anything.

“No random thoughts.” Lucien looked at her solemnly.

Natasha cackled and said, “Am I such an inconsiderate girl? The godhood conflicts with your cognitive world. How can I use it when it will harm you? Huh, I need to ask Grandma Hathaway to build an extraordinary item with the godhood. Do you think I should make an earring, a ring, or a belt, a tiara, a long skirt?”

“A longsword.” Replied Lucien emotionlessly.

Natasha asked in surprise, “Why?”

“A longsword forged with the godhood of a senior-rank fake god can only be wielded by a radiant knight or a talented ordinary knight. Therefore, nobody will take it away by mistake.” Lucien continued emotionlessly.

Natasha chuckled and said, “that works too. How do you think it should be named?”

Lucien thought for a moment and suddenly said in amusement. “It will be the Sword of Contract and Victory. When the young man draws the longsword, his fate is changed.”

Then, ignoring Natasha’s confusion, Lucien walked out of the cave.

Chapter 499 - What You Want Is What You See

Chapter 499: What You Want Is What You See

When they approached Death Valley, both Lucien and Natasha found it hard to believe their eyes. The valley in the darkness lost the gloom and scariness that it was famous for in the tales. It was covered in a mist, and the devastating cries of ghosts were gone. Indescribable tranquility was spreading out, making the intruders reluctant to disrupt the deepest sleep. Also, as they looked at the horizon, they could vaguely see the mild and sacred brilliance from the valley.

“Is this the Death Valley?” Natasha looked back at the cold, creepy forest to make sure that they were not in the wrong place.

Frightening roars were still echoing in the forest now and then, suggesting that the dead slaves of Demigod-lich were still searching for Lucien and Natasha.

Lucien shook his head. “This is exactly Death Valley. It seems that something is really wrong with Ell. I’m going to sneak in for reconnaissance with The Eyes first. We cannot break in recklessly.”

Then, Lucien took off ‘Congus Ring’ first and cast many defense and alarm spells on Natasha and himself. Then, he took out the crystal ball and rubbed it, allowing it to spit out a dark meatball the size of a thumb, which had deep wrinkles all over the surface.

The meatball suddenly opened, revealing a pale eye that was filled with black lines. Then, it split into nine and melted into the darkness while they flew towards Death Valley.

Lucien, on the other hand, followed them with Natasha and hid themselves in the hollows in the cliffs not far away from Death Valley. The spiritual power was severely suppressed in this world. Even the reconnaissance magic like ‘The Eyes’ had been greatly shortened.

The unusual darkness inside the crystal ball was gone and replaced by the view that The Eyes saw. They were sneaking into Death Valley from different angles.

“Is that...” Pointing at a certain part inside the crystal ball, where a ghoul-like creature more than two meters tall was entering Death Valley cautiously without any knowledge of The Eye behind it, Natasha asked, “... Congus’s spectral slave?”

“It should be. Considering the time elapsed, they must be done searching the woods. Also, Congus is still in the main material world and cannot remotely command them. Well, it is a Soul Catcher.” Lucien slightly frowned.

Natasha did not know the monsters as well as Lucien did. She asked curiously, “A Soul Catcher? It sounds rather intimidating.”

“Yes, it is a weird and strong spectre. Don’t be tricked by its ghoul-like appearance. Look at what is below its rotten abdomen.” Lucien explained gladly, reminding Natasha that she should not underestimate such creatures in the future.

For a better view, Natasha leaned on Lucien without any reluctance. Her perfume could be smelled clearly, which made him blush slightly.

“There are three tiny but vivid faces on its ribs. They are in obvious pain.” As The Eye changed direction, Natasha finally saw the front side of the Soul Catcher.

Lucien pointed at the abdomen of the Soul Catcher. “Those are the souls of the creatures it has killed. Since there are three prisoners, it means that it is a Soul Catcher that has mutated, equaling to the senior rank. Those souls can bring it enough energy to use abilities similar to magic. It can be regarded as a caster of the same rank who is good at Necromancy and Illusion. When it is attacked by magic, the magic effects and the damages of certain types will be transferred to the three souls. Until the three souls are destroyed, the Soul Catcher will be utterly unaffected, and the enemy’s magic will be rendered useless.”

“Of course, the magic in the category of physical attack works much better on them. For knights, the most important thing is not to mistake them for ghouls or to be hurt by their magic-like abilities.”

Dimples appeared on Natasha’s face. “They are indeed weird. Let The Eye follow it and see what changes it will bring to Death Valley.”

Lucien would’ve done the same thing even if she hadn’t said so. He already asked one of The Eyes to followed the Soul Catcher quietly.

Inside Death Valley, the exuberant vines blocked the starlight, making the place dark and silent.

As the Soul Catcher and The Eye moved deeper, the darkness was thicker and thicker, and fewer and fewer things could be seen on the crystal ball. Finally, all the nine scenes fell into complete dark, as if they were caught in the unusual nothingness created by extraordinary forces.

Lucien tried to power The Eyes, but his command had no response from anything. The nine Eyes seemed to have been completely melted into the darkness.

Suddenly, a gentle light arose on the crystal ball, illuminating the Soul Catcher. It was fighting an angel who had a pair of wings in the back. Ahead of them was the realm of light that looked like dawn.

It was not until then that Lucien realized that six of the nine Eyes had been lost. Apart from the one following the Soul Catcher, only two passed the darkness ahead.

“An angel? What is this place exactly?” Natasha exclaimed in the telepathic bond.

Lucien hurried to control the other two eyes to change their directions, circumvent the battle, and move deeper inside.

The Soul Catcher was rather strong, and it did not take long before it killed the ‘angel’. It intended to press on, only to be surrounded by more and more angels. There were even many Virtues and Cherubim that had four wings. However, their arrival only made it easier for Lucien’s Eye to sneak in.

The view of The Eyes became clearer. Natasha’s scarlet lips opened and shivered beyond her control.

It was a beach gently patted by waves. On the beach, pure souls were playing distant and yet pleasant hymns with harps and other musical instruments, while they let out devout and magnificent prayers:

“Praise the Almighty Lord, praise the omniscient and omnipotent Savior...”

The whole beach was enshrouded in sacred brilliance, as if it were in the middle of a cluster of light. Far away from the beach, there was a city with twelve gates, which had the same length, width and height, and which was decorated with agates, jades and other gems. Above the city, there seemed to be six similar divine domains, and the same merry scenes could be found in four of them.

The two floors on the top were beyond the sight of The Eyes. However, both Lucien and Natasha could guess what was in them.

“Blasphemy! This is the greatest blasphemy! Who has duplicated Mountain Paradise?” Natasha was never too obsessed about the content and theological knowledge on the church classics. That was why she could be influenced by Lucien and live in peace with him. However, the blatant mimicry stimulated her piety and made her feel that the builder was full of maliciousness.

“You are one, and everyone. You are the moment, and forever...”

The hymns and prayers came over through the crystal ball. Lucien slightly frowned. Even the prayers and rituals in the Saint Truth’s Cannon had been copied, too? What did Francis want? Did he really want Ell to be a ‘duplicate God of Truth’?

Got to say that it’s rather creative... Lucien secretly complimented, but when he turned around, he discovered that Natasha was so infuriated that her hands were shivering. However, since Lucien was still in danger, and the most important enemy right now was the Demigod-lich, she did not indulge herself but held back her anger.

Lucien was more or less moved. He couldn’t help but extend his left hand and grab Natasha’s left hand that was not holding the sword, pressing it gently to give her warmth and comfort.

Natasha subconsciously retreated her left hand, but she soon understood what Lucien meant. Her eyes turned gentle, and she slightly nodded her head, hinting that she was alright. When her hands stopped shaking, she slightly exerted her strength and withdrew her left hand.

Apart from the dance and the escape, it was the first time that Natasha and Lucien had held their hands. Both of them fell into a brief silence, thinking about their own things.

At this moment, a man in a white robe, with six pairs of illusionary wings on his back, appeared above the crowd of angels. He slashed down with his sword, turning into a black hydra that suppressed the Soul Catcher. It seemed that the senior-rank spectre would be killed shortly.

“Francis did this?” Natasha was aware that Francis was once Ell’s follower, but she did not expect that he would become a counterfeit Seraph.

Lucien hurried to prove his innocence. “To obtain intelligence, I once transformed and blended into Ell’s church. I ran into Francis there. He was adept at theology and had been alluring Ell to be the God of Truth. This Mountain Paradise must’ve been fabricated under his instruction.”

As for his participation in the deception when he hoped to learn about the growth of the God of Truth from close up, it must not be learnt by Natasha!

“It’s him! Isn’t he a night watcher? How could he have committed such blasphemy?” Natasha tried to hold back her shock.

Lucien was equally shocked. “He is a night watcher?”

Before, Lucien had been too anxious when he was hunted to ask Natasha why she would cooperate with Francis. The man was a night watcher of the South Church? He was more like a blasphemer than Lucien, the Fallen Angel at the nineteenth on the Cleansing List!

Natasha nodded seriously. “At first, I did not know that he was a night watcher. Dannel, the Fire of Purification, and Masada, the cardinal, did not know it, either. However, when Francis spoke to them in private, he seemed to have offered certain tokens that won their trust. Then, they told me that Francis was the ‘Thinker’, who ranked the twelfth among the night watchers. He is a mysterious night watcher who only has a code name.”

“It was said that he was deployed to the North Church as a spy. For that, his name appeared on the Cleansing List. He was another man of mysteries whose files were kept confidential.”

“Did he really betray and join the North Church? No. The North Church couldn’t have tolerated such blasphemy, either. Did he have another identity?” Lucien smelled the scent of a double spy.

Natasha shook her head. “In any case, whatever his purpose is, such blasphemy must be punished. After we are really out of danger, or if you decide to attack Ell, I will execute him in person.”

However grave... Lucien secretly wiped his cold sweat, only to discover that Natasha was looking at him in a fake smile. “You once joined Ell’s church. You must’ve contributed to the blasphemy, didn’t you?”

Lucien was about to deny it, when Natasha said solemnly, “Don’t lie to me.”

Thinking for a moment, Lucien confessed to the role he played, the ‘efforts’ he made, and his purpose to study the mysteries of the gods. “... I did not hold any ill intentions. It was all meant to study the truth of this world.”

“I know that you’ve been trying to influence me,” Natasha suddenly sighed, “Perhaps because my attitude towards the Lord was affected by my mother and Grandmother Hathaway in the first place, I did not attach much importance to the Cannon and the Doctrines. The Lord is more like a cornerstone of chivalry. Therefore, I can accept your arcana studies. Perhaps, the Lord will completely turn into a spiritual symbol for me in front of your research results and the undeniable facts, but not now. I have my own boundaries. I hope that you can respect me. You are free to do whatever you want in private, but don’t let me see it.”

Lucien promised very solemnly, “Okay.”

After the communication, both of them seemed to have dropped some burdens. They continued observing the ‘Mountain Paradise’ in Death Valley.

Suddenly, the black, white and grey on Lucien’s left hand spread out, consolidating him again.

Under the influence of Alterna up ahead, the frequency of the pieces falling out of control seemed to be growing.

Solemnly, Natasha slashed Lucien with Pale Justice. After three slashes, the monotonous colors were broken and recalled. In the meantime, The Eyes were swallowed by the holy light when they lost Lucien’s control.

“Let’s evacuate first,” Lucien proposed, “We haven’t figured out what is wrong with Ell yet, and this divine domain is his home field. We cannot attack recklessly. At least, we need to draw him out.”

Because the magics on Congus Ring worked on the outside world, Lucien feared that it would lose the cover of Silver Moon Alterna, which would raise Demigod-lich’s wariness and make him realize that Lucien could use the ring. Therefore, Lucien intended to ‘catch’ Ell via other magics.

Hardly had he concluded his sentence when someone flew out of Death Valley. It was exactly Ell, whose target was Lucien and Natasha!

Throne of Magical Arcana

Chapter 500: Relief

“No bait is needed. He’s already out.” Natasha was smiling in the telepathic bond, obviously making fun of Lucien’s ‘prophecy.’

Ell was still wearing a crown of olive flowers and a white robe, but he appeared more hallow and tranquil. Holy light was vaguely flowing on his skin, and seven floors of Mountain Paradise were reflected in his eyes, making him even more sacred and solemn.

Holding a longsword as dark as ink, he lunged at the two of them. Stinky, decayed fluids were dropping from the sword, only to be absorbed again by a mysterious force in circulation.

“He had been seeking to absorb the godhood in the fields of death and moon. It is possible that he was tempted by the pieces of the mysterious existence of the World of Souls and decided to check it. Such fake gods are susceptible to the attraction of clergy and godhood, to the point that they may lose their sanity.” Although Lucien said that, he still found it odd. Ell was almost killed by him last time and was barely able to put up any resistance. Why was he charging at Lucien so confidently when he saw them again?

Lucien hurried to cast spells such as Bull’s Strength and Bear’s Endurance on to Natasha.

By the time Ell entered the range, Natasha wielded her sword and sprinted at him, and Lucien simply performed ‘Advanced Dispel Magic’.

Ell, who was about to use Command, immediately saw the light on his body fading away, like blossoming fireworks. The two spells that he cast on himself in advance were immediately broken. In the meantime, Natasha had already flown to his front. Pale Justice was slashed down, raising an illusionary slash that could cut any material.

In haste, Ell raised his sword and blocked Pale Justice, only to be blown back by Natasha, losing his balance. He was too overwhelmed by the violent attacks to perform divine powers.

Lucien, on the other hand, activated the magic model unhurriedly. As his greenish eyes flashed, Ell immediately felt that his magic resistance plummeted. Therefore, the seven floors of Mountain Paradise in his eyes suddenly radiated, as if it were arriving at the real world. Bathed in the holy light, Ell grew significantly stronger, which led to the changes in the environment. The darkness ebbed, and the light surfaced again. Holiness and solemnity spread out, suppressing all the evil forces.

“Semi-illusory willpower frontier? Ell has advanced into a gold knight?” Lucien and Natasha exclaimed through the telepathic bond at the same time.

After three consecutive clashes, Natasha was forced to step back in midair. Then, Ell looked at Lucien with his sacred and pure eyes. “I command you to die...”

Before he finished the spell, Ell vanished into nothingness, because Lucien raised his right hand, which grabbed a scepter where a huge gem was embedded.

The bright, holy willpower frontier around was gone. Darkness embraced everything again.

“He is stronger than before, but he hasn’t reached the level of a real gold knight. I can resist him.” Natasha hurried to inform Lucien of her discovery.”

Lucien slightly nodded. “He should be able to borrow the power of the divine domain within a certain range. No wonder he was bold enough to come out. However, the ability to use the power of the divine domain beyond the divine domain in itself suggests that Ell’s capabilities are close to a gold knight. It seems that he has received abundant ‘power of faith’ after combining the God of Sun, the Mother God of the Earth, and other churches.”

While talking, Lucien set up magic traps in specific locations according to Maze. At this moment, another shadow flew out of Death Valley, with six wings on its back. Surrounded by lightning, he had come to aid the ‘Great God Ell’.

“The God of Thunder and Lightning, and now the Angel of Thunder and Lightning?” As the distance between them was shortened, Lucien recognized the bald, muscular male.

Solemnly, the Angel of Thunder and Lightning waved his wings and tried to stop Lucien’s operation, but out of the blue, he vanished into thin air, too.

Observing Lucien perform Maze consecutively, Natasha remarked in amazement, “How marvelous magic is! You will never be scared of being outnumbered.”

After setting up the magic trap, Lucien did not wait for the weird maze to end on its own but raised the Sun Staff to release Ell.

Ell seemed to have given up the idea of cracking the Maze. He was focused on enhancing himself with divine powers, but out of his expectation, Lucien canceled the maze after deploying only one trap. He was rather lost for a moment.

Black tentacles suddenly rose from the ground to the sky, entangling Ell. The elemental magic seemed to be from nature and was not under the suppression of Ell’s divine willpower frontier. Also, the tentacles seemed immune to the damage of many different types.

In the meantime, Natasha lunged forward and stalled Ell whose activity had been limited, not giving him any chance to react.

Lucien’s black eyes became fuzzy, and Ell was stunned where he was. In the next moment, Lucien stepped forward, and the light of intelligence in Ell’s eyes was weakened to the minimum. He was like a beast that lost the ability to think.

Due to the Congus Ring and the substantiation of his cognitive world, the time cost for Lucien to cast spells had been reduced again. When he performed magic below the sixth circle, it was almost close to when he was wearing the fake Davey's Robe.

"It works really well to deal with fake gods who are prone to godhood through Distraction and Retardation." Lucien flew to the front of Ell, who had been controlled by Natasha. His eyes became deep and dark. At a closer look, one would also notice stars spinning in sophisticated, captivating traces.

Ell grunted, and his eyes gradually became clear. However, he looked more respectful than ever. He said in a low voice, "At your service."

"Very good." Lucien nodded his head and gave 'instructions'.

"I feel that fake gods are rather easy to deal with. If it were a level-eight radiant knight who had a semi-illusionary willpower frontier, your Distraction and Retardation would've been weathered through by their willpower." Said Natasha half in confusion and half in amusement.

Lucien nodded and replied, "fake gods are terribly formidable in certain aspects, but their weaknesses are just as significant. For example, I cannot deal with Ell with magic in terms of Necromancy, Earth or Hypnotization. Those aspects are the focus of his clergy. So, most of the effects will be diminished, if not nullified. Also, since the battlefield is in Death Valley, the illusionary magics will also be suppressed by the divine powers, and it is not so easy to make them work."

Pausing for a moment, Lucien whispered to Natasha through the telepathic bond, "It is rather strange that we have taken him down without running into any danger, particularly when we expected that something was wrong with Ell beforehand."

“Wasn’t it caused by the divine domain that’s a duplication of Mountain Paradise? Perhaps, your astrology just now was inclined to the Lord. That’s why you found nothing.” Natasha offered her opinion, but she was not certain about it, because Lucien was the expert in this regard.

Lucien decided to try again. He took out the crystal ball and performed astrology again. This time, when the sky of fate was displayed inside the crystal ball, Ell’s Host Star of Destiny was clearly revealed.

“Did I really foretell the God of Truth just now?” Lucien shook his head in confusion. Looking at Ell who showed no anomaly under his control, he said to Natasha, “Perhaps what you said is true, but why did Ell’s fate overlap with the God of Truth’s inside the divine domain?”

“It was not an overlap but a deviation of your prophecy.” Natasha disapproved it quickly. If she acknowledged the overlap, wouldn’t she be acknowledging that Ell was the God of Truth or His incarnation? That would’ve been a heartless satire and blow to her belief.

Lucien stopped wondering. “Let’s go to the divine domain and try again. We can also kill Francis by the way and make arrangements to deal with Demigod-lich.”

...

Inside Ell’s divine domain, the Soul Catcher had already been killed, but Francis was already gone.

“So vigilant? No wonder he could be a spy in the North Church, and his name could be found both on the rank of night watchers and the Cleansing List.” Natasha gnashed her teeth. Then, she found a secret spot with Lucien, where they performed astrology behind Ell.

“His Host Star of Destiny becomes fuzzy. Is it really because of the divine domain?” Frowning, Lucien looked at the fuzzy light spots inside the crystal ball. Then, he began to consider how to deal with Demigod-lich. “This divine domain that duplicates Mountain Paradise suppresses spectres badly. Demigod-lich will be greatly weakened here, and Ell will be boosted to the peak of a gold knight. Therefore, this will be the best battlefield to deal with Demigod-lich.”

“Okay. We will attract Demigod-lich in the front, and Ell will ‘ambush’ him from the back. When Demigod-lich is distracted, you will deal with him through legendary magic.” Natasha proposed a rough plan.

Lucien said solemnly, “We have to control the timing accurately. Otherwise, there will be no way for us to resist Demigod-lich’s magic except for ‘Barrier of the Dead’. In such a way, everything will be exposed. Therefore, we have to rehearse repetitively.”

“Also, Demigod-lich has Magic Trigger, Magic Order, and other magics on him. It will be highly unlikely to kill him with one legendary magic. We have to set up traps or magic circles that can disrupt the effects of Chaos Teleport, Shadow Jump, Blink, Shadow Well and other magics. Then, we will hide them with the power of the divine domain.”

Since he did not know which of those magics Demigod-lich had selected for life-saving purposes, Lucien could only take random guesses according to the magic book based on his level. As a result, the preparation work was too tedious to be completed in one day. Therefore, Lucien chose a few most likely magics according to his prophecy and his experience.

Looking at Lucien preparing the magic traps wholeheartedly, Natasha rubbed her chin and said, “I finally understood what my teacher meant by saying, ‘don’t ever fight a prepared sorcerer’.”

“This can only slightly increase our chances. The legendary are too strong to be taken down just by preparations in advance. Besides, we still have to lure him to come to the divine domain without getting killed.” Lucien heaved a sigh.

Natasha raised her eyebrow in confusion. “I thought we were going to wait for him to come to this place.”

Lucien shook his head and said, “he’ll be alarmed if so. We’ll circle the Death Valley according to this route. The moment our zone of activity is suppressed, we will return to the valley.”

While talking, Lucien squatted down and drew a map on the ground, illustrating the importance of positioning.

After he was done, Lucien rose and said, “Now, let’s rehearse with Ell first in case we are caught unprepared.”

The wind blew over and wiped the arrangements on the ground. Lucien sighed, “I hope none of them are used in the end, because it will mean that we did not run into Demigod-lich and successfully hid ourselves for the last day and a half. That’s what I’m hoping for most.”

“So am I. However, only by making full preparations can we ever be greeted by such luck.” Natasha patted Lucien’s shoulder in a smile. Then she asked in the telepathic bond, “Right, why did you secretly control the Angel of Lightning and Thunder through Command just now?”

Looking at the holy light and listening to the hymns ahead, Lucien replied in a smile, “In case of accidents.”

...

A day later, when it was almost midnight, the ever-rising howls in the dark forest came to an abrupt halt, as if the place had become a hell of death and silence.